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A spatial and temporal comparison of prehistoric pottery in Dunklin County, Missouri

The Mississippi River Valley, specifically southeast Missouri, contains one of the richest archaeological records in the United States. In the past, there have been many well-noted studies conducted on the archaeological record in the region. The most notable of these studies is the survey, which was conducted 1940-1947 by Phillips, Ford and Griffin. Although the study proved important on many levels, the creation of a prehistoric pottery typology for the Mississippi River Valley proved to be of particular interest. This typology continues to be used today with little to no modification. This typology is important because it focuses on one of the most important tools used by archaeologists to interpret the archaeological record, pottery. Pottery is important, not only for its virtual indestructiveness, but also for its ability to help determine chronology, trade patterns, migration patterns and more. In this study, I focus on surface collected prehistoric pottery from Dunklin County, Missouri. I have classified the pottery based upon the definitions set by Phillips et. al and Williams (1954). Further, I have noted the frequencies in which the types occur; in order, that I may seriate the sites based upon this data. This has given me my temporal data on each site. My spatial data comes from plotting the sites on a map. This project is not meant to draw any conclusions as to the movement of the people, trade patterns, and the like. Instead, I am presenting the solid evidence of what is present. I will leave the interpretation up to more experienced researchers.