

Caddo Nation of Oklahoma

(Oklahoma Social Studies Standards, OSDE)

Tribe: Caddo Nation of Oklahoma

Tribal websites: <http://caddonation-nsn.gov>

Northwestern Louisiana was occupied by the Caddo Indians during the period of early Spanish, French, and American contacts. By combining history and archaeology, the Caddo story can be traced back for a thousand years—a unique opportunity made possible by a long tradition of distinctive traits, especially in pottery forms and decorations. Our story of the Caddo Indians in Louisiana, therefore, begins around A.D. 800-900 and can be traced by archaeology well into the historic period.

The center of Caddoan occupation during contact times and throughout their prehistoric development was along Red River and its tributaries, with extensions to other river valleys in the four-state area of northern Louisiana, southwestern Arkansas, eastern Texas, and eastern Oklahoma. The successful agriculture of these farming peoples was best adapted to the fertile valleys of major streams like the Red, Sabine, Angelina, Ouachita and—in Oklahoma—the Canadian and Arkansas rivers.

Department of Culture, Recreation and Tourism

Louisiana Archaeological Survey and Antiquities Commission

Anthropological Study No. 2

THE CADDO INDIANS OF LOUISIANA



Green Corn Ceremony of prehistoric Caddo Indians: Presumed village, dress, and utensils about A.D. 1050 as reconstructed from archaeological findings. Mounted in Louisiana State Exhibit Museum, Shreveport. Photograph by Al Godoy.

Baton Rouge, Louisiana

In spite of their linguistic (language) connections with Plains tribes like the Wichita, Pawnee, and Ankara, the Caddos in Louisiana had customs much like those of other Southeastern tribes. They maintained trade and cultural contacts with the lower Mississippi Valley tribes of eastern and southern Louisiana for many centuries.

1. Migration/movement/forced removal

Oklahoma History C3 Standard 2.3 *“Integrate visual and textual evidence to explain the reasons for and trace the migrations of Native American peoples including the Five Tribes into present-day Oklahoma, the Indian Removal Act of 1830, and tribal resistance to the forced relocations.”*

The Caddo are one of the few tribes who have inhabited the region around the Red valley region for thousands of years. Our main HOMELAND was located south of the Arkansas River in the valleys and tributaries of the Quachita, Red, Sabine and Neches rivers.

In 1723, to counter French attempts at establishing a western trade, the Spanish established an outpost, Nuestra Senora del Pilar de Los Adaes (Bolton 1914). The Spanish presidio, or fort, became a hub for clandestine traders-French, Indian, and Spanish-and lasted for some 50 years (Gregory 1974). Horses, cattle, and Lipan Apache (Connechi) slaves were traded via Los Adaes, and by the mid-eighteenth century the Spanish governors had named the site the capital of Spanish Texas.

The Caddo-Adaes, Natchitoches, Ouachita, Doustioni, and all the others-were caught between the political and economic machinations of the European powers. Gradually, the seesaw of European boundaries crossed what the Caddo all knew as their tribal territories. Traders resided in their larger communities, and seasonal hunts to the west tied them to the mercantile policies of the French and Spanish. After Louisiana was ceded to Spain at the end of the French and Indian War; French traders were left in charge of most Indian affairs in Louisiana because of the quality of their relationship to the Indians. For example, Athanase de Mezieres (Bolton 1914), St. Denis's son-in-law, became a power on the frontier because of his close relationship to the Caddo.

Caddoan-European ties remained close until 1803 when the Louisiana Purchase brought Anglo-Americans into contact with the Caddoan groups. The Anglo-Americans had new trade and military policies, and in spite of their agreement to recognize all prior treaties between France, Spain, and Indian tribes, they were not very careful to do this. The French and Spanish had ratified land sales by tribes and had insisted that their citizens respect Caddoan land and sovereignty, but the Americans saw new lands with few settlements, and were quick to encourage white settlement. The old Caddo-French-Spanish symbiosis was ending.

The Caddoan-speaking groups began to move together by the late eighteenth century. The Kadohadacho apparently absorbed several smaller groups-Upper Natchitoches, Nanatsoho, and Nasoni-and shifted south. Osage raids had taken their toll and the

Kadohadacho moved to Caddo Prairie, farther from the plains, on marginal land (Swanton 1942). They settled on the hills to the southwest of the prairie (Soda Lake) near modern Caddo Station and added their numbers to the other Red River tribes in Louisiana.

Beset by many problems, the American agents at Natchitoches began moving the agency about, trying to keep the Caddo away from white settlements. It was moved to Grand Ecore, Sulphur Fork, Caddo Prairie, and finally to Bayou Pierre about six to seven miles south of Shreveport (Williams 1964).

The Louisiana Caddoans also found themselves estranged from their cultural kinsmen in eastern Texas. First, the East Texas tribes remained under Spanish domination while their neighbors were American. Policies in Texas were quite different until the Texas Revolution and the foundation of the Republic in the 1830s and 1840s. The new Texicans refused to allow old patterns of trade and traverse for fear of having to deal with even larger Indian populations.

The Caddoan tribes were consolidated enough by 1834 that the American agents had begun to treat them as though they were a single group. The term Caddo, an abbreviated cover term for Kadohadacho, one of the larger groups, began to cover all the tribes in the American period. It was this amalgam of tribal units with which the United States decided to deal.

On June 25-26, 1835, some 489 Caddo gathered at the Caddo Agency seven or eight miles south of Shreveport on Bayou Pierre and on July 1, 1835, they agreed to sell to the United States approximately one million acres of land in the area above Texarkana, Arkansas, south to De Soto Parish, Louisiana (Swanton 1942). Two chiefs, Tarsher (Wolf) and Tsauninot, were the leaders of the Caddoan groups present at the land cession.

Present also at the land cession was their interpreter, Larkin Edwards, a man they regarded so highly that they reserved him a sizable piece of land (McClure and Howe 1937; Swanton 1942). Further; the treaty reserved a sizable block of land for the mixed Caddo-French Grappe family. Descended from a Kadohadacho woman and a French settler, Francois Grappe had served his people well. His efforts to protect not only the Caddo, but also the Bidai and others in East Texas, from American traders had resulted in his termination as chief interpreter for the American agents. The Caddoan people continued to respect and honor him.

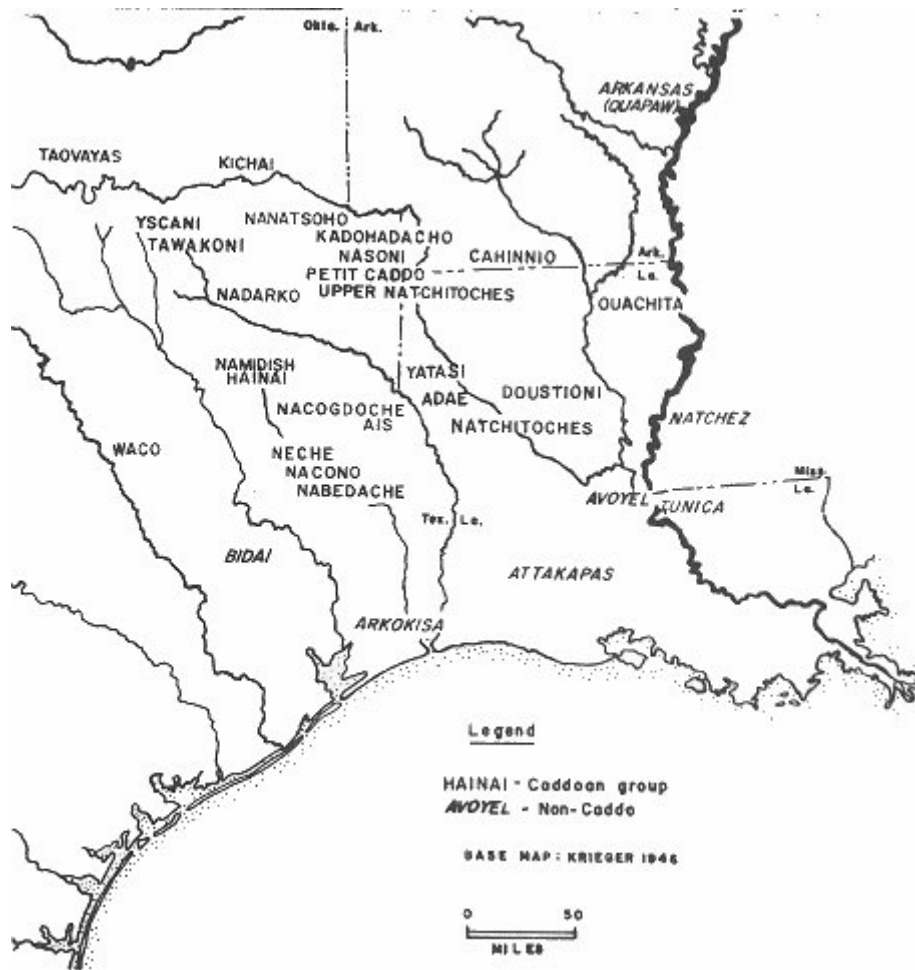
The Caddo were to be paid \$80,000, of which \$30,000 was in goods delivered at the

signing, and the remainder in annual \$10,000 installments for another five years. Immediately Tarsher led his people into Texas and settled on the Brazos River; much to the chagrin of Texas authorities (Gullick 1921). Another group, led by Chief Cissany, stayed in Louisiana. They lived near Caddo Station in 1842 (seven years after the land cession). Texicans actually invaded the United States to insist that the Caddos disarm, the rumor in Texas being that the American agent had armed the Caddo and made incendiary remarks regarding the new republic. The Louisiana chiefs offered to go to Nacogdoches as hostages to show their good faith, but the Texicans refused them on the grounds it might mean recognition of Caddoan land rights and polity in Texas (Gullick 1921).

Eventually these Louisiana Caddo left-their credit was cut off by local merchants, their payments ended, and the United States protection was failing-and headed for the Kiamichi River country in Oklahoma. The Caddoan presence in Louisiana, after a millennium, or more, was over.

Oklahoma History C3 Standard 2.7 “Compare and contrast multiple points of view to evaluate the impact of the Dawes Act which resulted in the loss of tribal communal lands and the redistribution of lands by various means including land runs as typified by the Unassigned Lands and the Cherokee Outlet, lotteries, and tribal allotments.”

- **Original Homeland** - The Caddo are one of the few tribes who have inhabited the region around the Red valley region for thousands of years. Our main HOMELAND was located South of the Arkansas River in the valleys and tributaries of the Quachita, Red, Sabine and Neches rivers.
- **Location in Oklahoma** - Caddo Nation Complex is located East of Binger in Caddo county Oklahoma. The Caddo now visit Louisiana especially Natchitochese and Shreveport to see the places of their traditions.



Original Homelands sold (1835)

On June 25-26, 1835, some 489 Caddo gathered at the Caddo Agency seven or eight miles south of Shreveport on Bayou Pierre and on July 1, 1835, they agreed to sell to the United States approximately one million acres of land in the area above Texarkana, Arkansas, south to De Soto Parish, Louisiana (Swanton 1942). Two chiefs, Tarsher (Wolf) and Tsauninot, were the leaders of the Caddoan groups present at the land cession.

BURKE ACT (1906)

A question that had long plagued the U.S. government involved the citizenship status of American Indians. In 1887 Congress passed the General Allotment Act, or Dawes Severalty Act, which stated that Indians who received land

allotments or voluntarily took up residence away from their tribes were to be given United States citizenship. This seems simple enough on the face of it, but the situation was further complicated because the allotments of land were to be held in trust on behalf of the Indians by the federal government for twenty-five years. Some courts held that an Indian gained citizenship at the end of the twenty-five-year trust period; others maintained that an Indian had citizenship as soon as an allotment was received.

However, the citizen-making language of the Dawes Act specifically exempted the Cherokee, Chickasaw, Choctaw, Seminole, and Creek Indians as well as five other tribes residing in the Indian Territory. The Dawes Act was amended in March 1901 to include them. The citizenship question was further resolved and somewhat clarified with the passage of the Burke Act of 1906 (although it, too, stated that its "provisions . . . shall not extend to any Indians in the Indian Territory").

The Burke Act pertained to Indians who took allotments. The law withheld citizenship until the end of the twenty-five year trust period or until the allottee received a fee patent from the secretary of the interior. It further stated that any Indian who had taken up residence apart from the tribe and who had "adopted the habits of civilized life" was declared a citizen and was entitled to all the rights, privileges, and immunities of citizenship.

Under this act the secretary of the interior was given great authority over individual Indians who had taken allotments. The secretary decided whether an Indian was competent enough to handle his own affairs before he could even receive an allotment, and the secretary alone determined who the legal heirs of a deceased allottee were. If he determined there were no legal heirs, the allotted land could then be sold.

The government, with this act, reacted in the typically paternalistic fashion of the times. The position was one of concern that if Indians with allotments were completely free of federal guardianship, unscrupulous persons would soon cheat them out of their lands. This legislation was also seen by many as an attempt by Congress to hasten the assimilation of American Indians into white culture.

Oklahoma Historical Society source to consider for Indian Removal information:
<http://digital.library.okstate.edu/encyclopedia/entries/i/in015.html>

The Library of Congress documents:
<http://www.loc.gov/rr/program/bib/ourdocs/Indian.html>

Oklahoma Indian Country Guide
http://issuu.com/otrd/docs/2010_ok_indian_guide_final_lores?viewMode=presentation

Information on the Indian Nations of Oklahoma; (use “slide bar” menu at top of page to enlarge screen; use Esc to exit.)

2. Maps

Oklahoma History C3 Standard 2.3 “Integrate visual and textual evidence to explain the reasons for and trace the migrations of Native American peoples including the Five Tribes into present-day Oklahoma, the Indian Removal Act of 1830, and tribal resistance to the forced relocations.” Maps of tribal hometowns before 1830; original homeland map.



The earliest contacts with Europeans in Louisiana were fleeting. The best accounts were left by Henri de Tonti who reached a Natchitoches village in February of 1690. He was searching for the lost La Salle expedition and went on to visit the Yatasi, Kadohadacho, and Nacogdoches (Williams 1964). No other visits seem to be recorded for the next decade, even though Spanish efforts to Christianize the East Texas Caddo intensified. Contact is indicated by the 1690s in such practices as the tribes holding Spanish-style horse fairs (Gregory 1974).

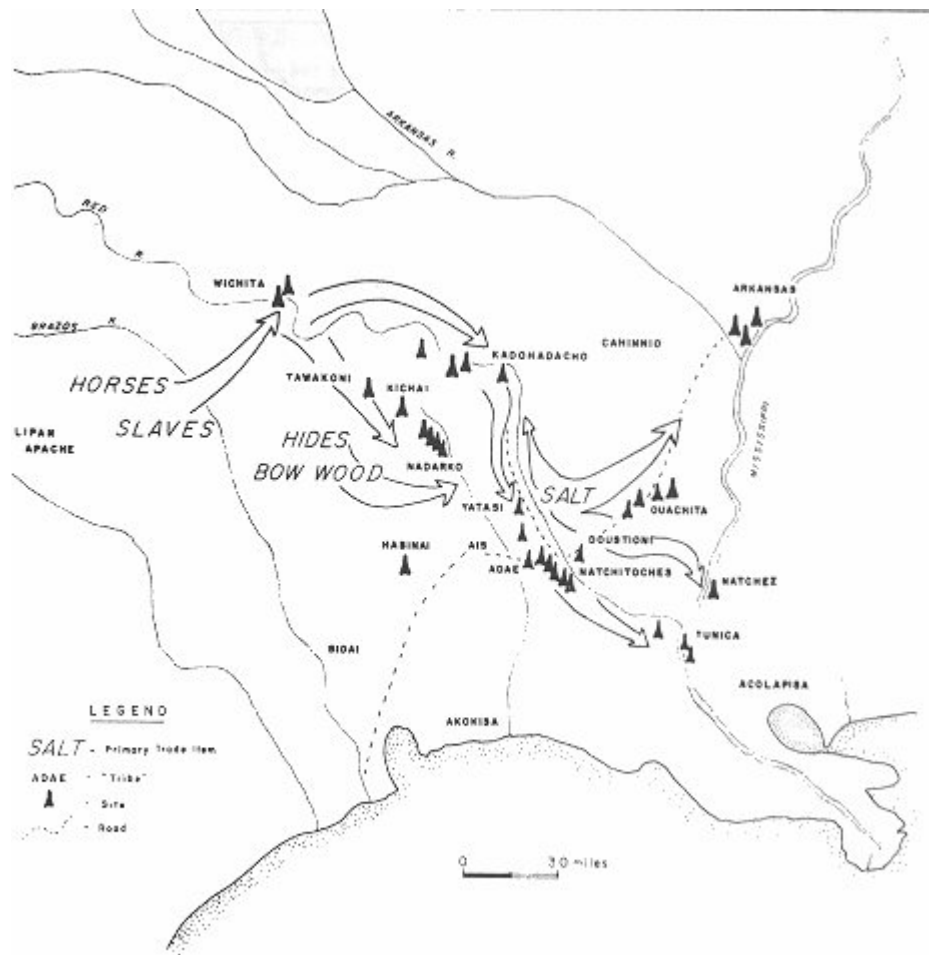
In 1701 Governor Bienville and Louis Juchereau de St. Denis, guided by the Tunica chief, Bride les Boeufs or Buffalo Tamer; arrived at the Natchitoches area. They visited the Doustioni, Natchitoches, and Yatasi villages, and then returned to New Orleans. Bienville was especially desirous of contacting the Kadohadacho to the north (Williams 1964; Rowland and Sanders 1929). This trip, ostensibly for exploration, was probably an attempt to obtain two commodities the French in lower Louisiana were desperate for: livestock and salt (Gregory 1974). The Tunica had long engaged in the Caddoan salt, and later; horse trades (Brain 1977), and like them, the Natchitoches quickly began capitalizing on their French connection. The Natchitoches employed an old Caddoan trade strategy, that of moving to the edge of another tribe's territory, in order to be near their customers, and later returning to their own territory. Accordingly, the Natchitoches claimed a crop failure and relocated to the vicinity of Lake Pontchartrain, to trade with the French. Eventually, in 1714, they returned to Red River with St. Denis (McWilliams 1953). Likewise, the Ouachita had just moved back from the Ouachita River where they had relocated in order to trade with Tunican speakers (Gregory 1974).



St. Denis and the Natchitoches Indians, 1714. Mural in Louisiana State Exhibit Museum, Shreveport. Photograph by Al Godoy

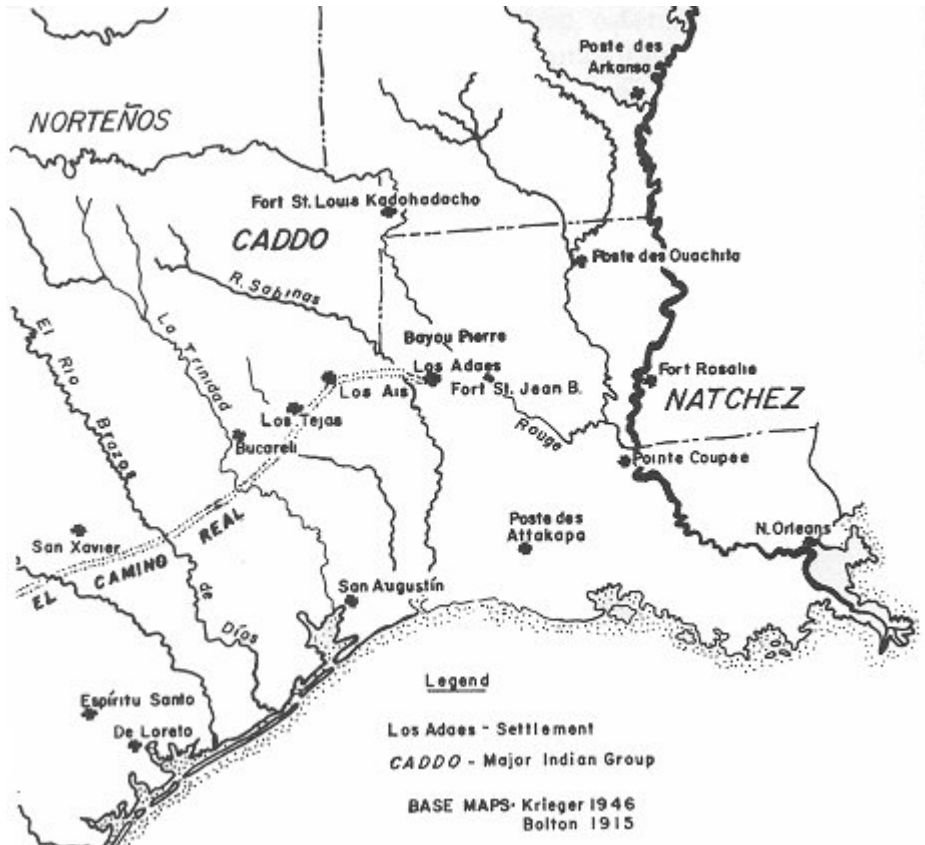
After St. Denis returned to Red River in 1714, the Caddoan people in Louisiana were to be impacted constantly by European migrants. Indian polity and territory were eroded severely by more European settlements and the depredations of displaced

populations of other Indian tribes like the Choctaw, Quapaw, and Osage.



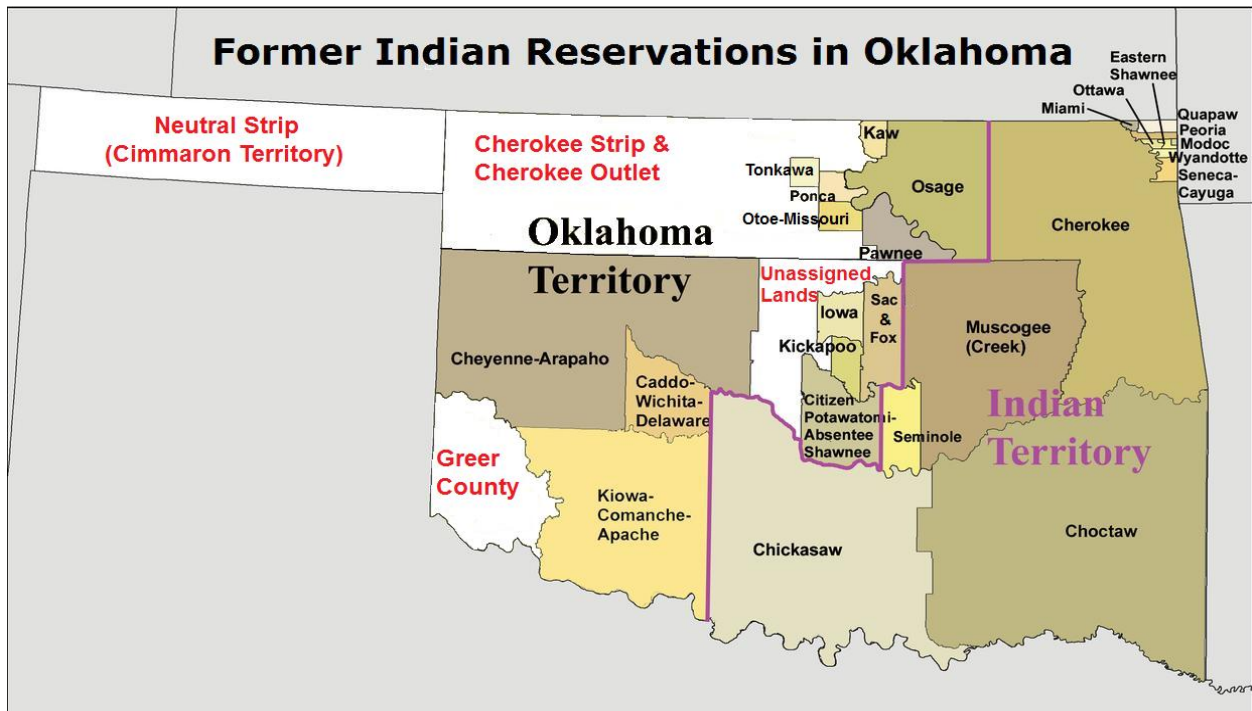
Caddoan interaction in the eighteenth century.

Fort St. Jean Baptiste aux Natchitos was founded in 1714; it was the earliest European settlement in northwestern Louisiana. The East Texas missions, started in 1690, had not introduced many non-Indians to that area. The French settlements were different, however; and the Caddoan people began to see a gradual augmentation of European population. The French had, in general, good relations with the Caddo and by the 1720s a number of them had Caddoan kinsmen.



European settlements in the Caddoan area, eighteenth century.

Tribal Lands after 1830



In the Indian Territory, the Caddo were placed on the Wichita reservation. They left the Wichita reservation during the Civil War from 1861 to 1867. In 1867, they returned to the Wichita reservation and in 1874, they were given their own Caddo reservation.

In 1893, the Dawes Commission was set up by the United States government to get the Indian tribes to give up their reservations and tribal governments. The Dawes Commission thought the best way to destroy the old Indian culture was to privatize Indian land. They wanted to divide up Indian land and give an allotment to each Indian family. Allotment means dividing something up and allotting (giving) the parts to individuals. An allotment is like a share. The Indians did not like this and argued against it. The land that was not allotted was to be sold to white settlers and there was a lot of it. White settlers wanted the Indian land.

In 1901, the United States government dissolved the Caddo reservation under the Dawes Act and divided the land up among the families. This division of the land was called allotment. Each family was given 160 acres of land that they owned. Before this, the tribe owned all the land as is common on Indian reservations. This is when tribal members were officially enrolled (listed) as members of the tribe. This was done by the United States government. You had to be an enrolled tribal member to get an allotment of land. Many Caddo who did not want land or who refused to participate in an American Government controlled program did not enroll. People still argue today about who is and who is not a Caddo because of the Caddo who did not enroll. All the land that was not allotted, and there was a lot of it, was taken by the United States government and sold to the railroads and to white settlers.

3. Population Past/Present

- Total tribal enrollment: From a population in the 10's of thousands, the Caddo has declined through disease and starvation to around 4909 enrolled members as of October 2010.
- Membership criteria: All living lineal descendants of allottee, of at least one-sixteenth degree Caddo Indian Blood, born after the date of the adoption of the Constitution (June 26, 1976).

4. Government; Chiefs vs Chairman; Elected or Paternal

US Government C3 Standard 3.4 "Summarize and explain the relationships and the responsibilities between national and state governments including tribal and local governments."

Oklahoma History C3 Standard “The student will analyze the formation and development of constitutional government in Oklahoma. 1) Compare and contrast the development of governments among the Native American tribes, the movement for the state of Sequoyah. 2) Describe and summarize attempts to create a state constitution joining Indian and Oklahoma Territories including the impact of the Progressive and Labor Movements resulting in statehood on November 16, 1907.”

- The Constitution states the Active Caddo Membership shall be the governing body of this organization “Nation”.
- An election will be held every 4 years to select a representative body composed of:
- Tribal Government leadership: The Caddo nation uses a 8 chair Tribal Council
 - Chairperson: Brenda Shemayme Edwards
 - Vice-Chairperson: Forfeited
 - Secretary: Wildena Guy Moffer
 - Treasurer: Forfeited
 - Anadarko Representative: Forfeited
 - Binger Representative: Forfeited
 - Fort Cobb Representative: Elouise Harjo
 - Oklahoma City Representative: Open

5. Language Group

Oklahoma History C3 Standard 4.1 “Compare and contrast the successes and failures of the United States policy of assimilation of the Native Americans in Oklahoma including the passage of the Indian Citizenship Act of 1924 and the effects of the Indian Boarding Schools (1880s-1940s) upon Native Americans’ identity, culture, traditions, and tribal government and sovereignty.”

Caddo is the only surviving Southern [Caddoan language](#) of the Caddo language family. It is spoken by the [Caddo Nation of Oklahoma](#). Today, only 25 elderly speakers are estimated to remain, none of whom are monolingual Caddo speakers, making Caddo a critically endangered language. There are several mutually intelligible dialects of Caddo; some of the more prominent dialects include Kadohadacho, Hasinai, Hainai, Natchitoches, and Yatasi. Today, the most commonly used dialects are Hasinai and Hainai.¹Caddo is linguistically related to the members of the Northern Caddoan language family; these include the Pawnee-Kitsai (Keechi) languages and Pawnee) and the Wichita language. Kitsai is now extinct, and Pawnee, Arikara, and Wichita each

have fewer surviving speakers than Caddo does.¹ Another language, Adai, is postulated to have been a Caddoan language while it was extant, but because of scarce resources and the language's extinct status, this connection is not conclusive, and Adai is generally considered a language isolate.

6. Cultural Identifiers - ie. Mound Builders; Plains

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The Caddo were one of the earliest to use the mounds to bury dead, celebrate lives, and honor offerings to spirits. Many of the mounds can be seen today in parks around Oklahoma, Texas, Louisiana and Mississippi.

Pottery has been an example of identification for the Caddo people; a unique design not only in the shape of the vessel, but also in exterior design and patterns.

Caddo culture is also known for their great quantity of social dances and songs. With each type of dance that is performed other tribes may have one or two songs, the Caddo people have dozens.

7. Fine arts

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The Caddo made very beautiful pottery. Some of the pottery has elaborate decorations. Some of the pottery is decorated with designs engraved into the surface of the pots. On the left is a Caddo pot made by Jereldine Redcorn. Jeri is a Caddo woman who is trying to recreate the old ways of making pottery.



Redcorn with a pot

Jereldine Redcorn

Holding a nice pot she made.



Here is another Redcorn pot. Notice how shiny it is. She polishes the surface with a very smooth pebble. The design is etched into the surface. White or red clay is then rubbed into the engraved lines to make them stand out.

8. Significant events (i.e. Massacres, Battles, Supreme Court cases...)

Oklahoma History C3 Standard 2.4C *“Summarize the impact of the Civil War and Reconstruction Treaties on Native American peoples, territories, and tribal sovereignty including the a) Required enrollment of the Freedmen, b) Second Indian Removal and the role of the Buffalo Soldiers, c) Significance of the Massacre at the Washita, d) Reasons for the reservation system, and e) Establishment of the western military posts of Fort Sill, Fort Supply, and Fort Reno.”*

Oklahoma Historical Society source to consider:

<http://www.okhistory.org/research/indianreccs>

9. Current Information on tribe

Tribal dispute 2013 - Caddo Nation Headquarters on shutdown

10. Other information (ie. Elder testimonials; Guest speakers; Literature; Famous Tribal members...)

Sho-e-tat (Little Boy) or George Washington (1816-1883), Louisiana Caddo leader



References:

www.texasindians.com/caddo.htm

<http://caddonation-nsn.gov/>

www.crt.state.la.us/archaeology/virtualbooks/CADDO/CADDO.HTM

Sources:

Oklahoma Historical Society

New Encyclopedia of the American West, ed. Howard Roberts Lamar (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998). Charles Kappler, [*Indian Affairs, Laws and Treaties, Vol. 3, Laws*](#) (Washington, D.C.: GPO, 1913) [Text of Burke Act]. Francis Paul Prucha, *The Great Father: The United States Government and the American Indians*, Vol. 2 (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1984).