



# Envisioning Cahokia: A Landscape Perspective

*Rinita A. Dalan, William I. Woods, John A. Koepke, George R. Holley, Jr. Harold W. Watters*

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The massive earthen mounds of ancient Cahokia in southwestern Illinois form the largest and most complex archaeological site in the United States. Here, at the center of a vibrant Native American culture, a settlement of Mississippian Indians grew, prospered, and declined. Tracing perceptions of the Cahokian landscape from the times of Indians and explorers to the present, *Envisioning Cahokia* details the archaeology of North America's largest prehistoric urban center.

Illustrated with a variety of images, this unique book provides new insights into Cahokian lifeways, land use, and culture through a landscape approach that explores the interrelationship of environment and society. Using the latest data from remote sensing and archaeological field studies, the authors examine such structures as the immense Grand Plaza and the impressive mounds used for both community ceremonies and burials. These mounds and other features of Cahokia form a political and social map, revealing a rich and elaborate culture. The authors show how settlement and ceremonial patterns defined power structures and belief systems, and suggest ways Cahokians may have perceived their place in the physical and spiritual worlds.

Tracing the history of the Cahokians and their landscape, *Envisioning Cahokia* leads readers to a new awareness of a culture that will forever inspire wonder and respect.

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