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The Tapajó

Curt Nimuendajú

Translated and edited by John Howland Rowe

Introduction. The first white men to sail the Amazon River reported dense agricultural populations on both banks, elaborate villages, and here and there class societies. Unfortunately, the early travellers did not linger to study them in detail, and in the seventeenth century Portuguese slave raiders completely destroyed most of the river cultures. The few survivors fled to the forests or were settled in mixed missions where their descendants ultimately lost their identity. Into the resulting vacuum came some Neo-Brazilian settlers and many displaced Indians turned river pirates, like the Mura; long stretches of the river remained entirely uninhabited. When more or less systematic research on South American Indians began in the nineteenth century, there was not much ethnography left to record and many students anachronistically judged aboriginal Amazonian culture by the wandering Mura, or assumed, because of the prevalence of the Tupí language (which had been introduced in the sixteenth century) that the pre-contact population of the area was much like that of the Brazilian east coast.

The task of recovering the lost ethnography of this area is a difficult one because the sources are so scanty. For a few groups like the Maué, upstream neighbors of the Tapajó of whom there are some 2,000 survivors reported, field ethnographic studies are badly needed. For the rest we will have to depend on a few early missionary reports and the evidence of archaeology. However difficult the task it must be attempted, for this is a key area for any general view of South American cultures.

The first step is obviously to review the published information on the area. The late Curt Nimuendajú (1883-1945) did this for some of the tribes in articles published in the Handbook of South American Indians (vol. 3, 1948), but there are some serious gaps in the Handbook coverage. One of the most obvious gaps is the lack of an article on the Tapajó, perhaps the most numerous and artistic of all the lower Amazon tribes at the beginning of the seventeenth century. Nimuendajú did write on the Tapajó, however, and his paper was eventually published in Portuguese in the Boletim do Museu Paraense Emílio Goeldi (Nimuendajú, 1949). Since the place and language of publication make the article somewhat inaccessible to most North American anthropologists, a translation seems justified.

Nimuendajú was peculiarly qualified to write on the Tapajó, for he was in effect the discoverer of their archaeological remains. The occasional older references to Tapajó sites and specimens are brief and uninformative and attracted little archaeological attention.
Nimuendajú told the story of his discovery to Frederico Barata in 1945. A German priest had mentioned to him that the children in Santarém played with pieces of ancient pottery which they called "carretas" and which were found in the city itself. He was interested, and on the occasion of a visit to Santarém in 1922 he investigated the story and discovered the great site of Santarém-Aldeia (Barata, 1950, p. 18). Thereafter, between 1923 and 1928, he explored the whole Tapajó territory for the Göteborg Museum. Limné and Montell (1925), Linne (1928a, 1928b), Nordenckiöld (1930), and Wassén (1934) based their accounts of Tapajó antiquities on the collections and manuscripts which Nimuendajú furnished to the Museum as a result of this work. Palmatary combined some of Nimuendajú's information with her own observations on the University of Pennsylvania collection, in her well-known monograph on Tapajó ceramics (ms. and 1939).

In connection with his archaeological work, Nimuendajú searched the published historical sources for information on the Tapajó of the colonial period and he wrote an account of his results under the title Die Tapajó. This German paper was the first draft of the present article and a source for the very brief cultural summaries published by Nordenckiöld and Palmatary. According to Linne (1925, p. 191) there is a copy of it in the Göteborg Museum. I have not seen the German draft and consequently do not know how much Nimuendajú changed it in preparing the present text in 1939.

The published Portuguese text is accompanied by photographs of three Tapajó vases in the Museu Goeldi and by a short and incomplete bibliography of Tapajó archaeology. There is no bibliographical information on the historical sources mentioned in the text, and these are cited only by author's last name and page. Most of the missing titles are listed in the Handbook of South American Indians but the references in that work are so incomplete as to make consultation difficult. I have therefore added full references at the end of the translation, together with some additional titles on Tapajó archaeology. The items appearing in the bibliography to the Portuguese original are marked with an asterisk.

Editorial comments in the text are enclosed in square brackets and added footnotes are distinguished by the translator's initials. All of Nimuendajú's references have been checked against the original texts, and amended where necessary, except that to Moréira Pinto, 1894-1899, a work not available in Berkeley. - J.H.R.

The Tapajó

History. When Orellana, descending the Amazon in 1542, reached the vicinity of the mouth of the Tapajó River, his boat was fiercely attacked by two flotillas of Indian canoes which "sallied from a branch of the river". The Spaniards repelled the attack, but one of Orellana's companions died within twenty four hours from a wound inflicted by a
poisoned arrow. Orellana learned that these lands on the right bank belonged to the cacique Chipayó (*Tapajo?). There was still a second attack in which the cacique was killed; nevertheless, Orellana felt that it was better to continue his journey, sticking close to the left bank because it was less populated.

It was not until 1626 that the first Portuguese expedition reached the Tapajós River. It was commanded by Capt. Pedro Teixeira, who met the Indians at a place which perhaps corresponds to the modern Alter do Chão. The fact that this tribe had less barbarous customs was due, according to this officer, to the contacts it had had with the Spanish Indies, whence the Tapajó had originally come (Berredo, 1905, pp. 225-226).

The attempt made by a great English ship to establish a tobacco plantation on the lower Tapajós was a failure. The Indians fell without warning on the foreigners who happened to be on land, massacring them and forcing the ship to depart immediately (Acuña, 1891, pp. 186-187; Bettendorff, 1910, p. 59). This event must have taken place shortly before 1631, the year in which the English were obliged to abandon the Amazon for good.

In 1637 there came down river two Franciscan lay brothers with another companion, survivors of the unsuccessful expedition of Juan de Falacias to the Amazon. When they reached the "Tapajózes" they were completely plundered by these Indians, according to Laureano de la Cruz (1900, p. 278; 1942, p. 19), while it appears from Rojas' report (1840) that they were well received (Rojas, 1889, p. 86).

Two years later (1639) the Tapajó were subjugated by the son of the governor of Pará, Bento Maciel Parente. Acuña reports with regard to this event that the Portuguese were afraid of the poisoned arrows and tried fruitlessly for some time to obtain the submission of the Tapajó by peaceful means. The conquest, however, was never complete because the invaders wanted to move the Indians out of their territory. The Tapajó nevertheless maintained a clearly friendly attitude toward the Portuguese. They furnished foodstuffs to Teixeira's expedition when he returned from Quito in 1639 and they invited the Portuguese to establish themselves among them. Meanwhile, Bento Maciel collected all the available forces in Desterro, near the mouth of the Pará River. In spite of his promise to P. Acuña to postpone action until the arrival of new orders from the governor, Maciel attacked the Tapajó on the pretext that they were plotting a rebellion; his real motive was to extort slaves from them. Confronted with the alternatives of extermination or unconditional submission, the Tapajó chose the latter, surrendering to the Portuguese their fearsome poisoned arrows. Maciel then ordered the disarmed warriors placed in an enclosure under guard while his Indian allies sacked the village, violating the wives and daughters of the prisoners before their eyes. Finally, the unfortunate Tapajó, to regain their freedom, promised to deliver to the Portuguese the thousand (?) slaves which the latter demanded. Their own slaves
had escaped during the Portuguese attack, however, and they could collect only 200, so they were forced to hand over their own children as slaves to satisfy their tormentors (Ameña, 1891, p. 185).

Later on the Portuguese continued this policy, as appears from the report of the Franciscan fathers Laureano de la Cruz and Juan de Quincoces of the year 1650. Either to avoid the outrages inflicted on them by the Portuguese, who demanded slaves, or hoping for some payment, the Tapajó named any hostile tribe of the neighborhood as their fugitive slaves, helping the Portuguese to attack and capture it (Laureano de la Cruz, 1900, p. 396; 1942, p. 58). Thus the Tapajó, to avoid slavery for themselves, turned slavers.

After some short visits to the Tapajó village made by the Jesuit fathers Tomás Ribeiro and Gaspar Misch, P. António Vieira assigned P. João Filippe Bettendorff (Johann Philipp Bettendorff) to convert them in 1661. With the ready assistance of the Indians, P. Bettendorff built a church, the beginning of the present city of Santarém, and translated the catechism into the language of the Tapajó and the Uruuco, leaving us in his Chronica much interesting information about the Tapajó, unfortunately without the above mentioned linguistic data.

We owe another brief description of the tribe to Judge Mauricio de Heriarte, who made a journey on the Amazon a year after the foundation of the mission. The Tapajó village was then the most populous one known in the area.

During the great revolt of the Caboquenas and Guanevanes many Indians abandoned the place for fear of the rebels. They were brought back, however, by Pedro da Costa Favela when, in 1664, he undertook his ill-starred expedition against the Indians of the Urubú River (Berredo, 1905, vol. 2, p. 191).

In 1686 a party of Tapajó and "Aruryuenses" led by the war chief Orucurá joined the forces of Captain Major Hilario de Souza in the war against the Aroaquizes and Carapitenas.

When, thirty years after its foundation, P. Bettendorff again visited the mission, the settlement, formerly so populous, was completely ruined. On the hill, to the foot of which the village had been moved, Manuel da Mota Falcão had built a fort. The Indians had been made to serve as bearers and to work in other places. The church had disappeared and only some five or six huts, scattered and in disrepair, remained standing. Bettendorff had a thatched chapel built in which to say mass.

In 1698 the mission recovered somewhat again, thanks to the efforts of the Jesuit P. Manuel Rebolo, who transferred to it fresh Indians brought from their own lands. But he was no more successful than his predecessor in protecting the Indians from the violence of the Portuguese garrison. Consequently he founded, further up the
river on the left bank of the Tapajós, a mission of Arapiun (Arapiyã) Indians named Cumarú, now Vila Franca, and transferred to it the remains of the Tapajó tribe along with Comandyas, Goanacuas, Marxagoaras, Apuatiás, Arapucús, Andiragoaris (*Mauê of the Andira?) and others (Moreira Pinto, 1894-99, vol. 1). With this transfer it appears that the Tapajó and Uruuçu ceased to exist as tribes. (1)

When P. Bettendorff finished his Chronica at the end of the 17th century (1698), the populous village at the mouth of the Tapajós and the numerous villages of the interior had been completely destroyed, to the great profit of the white settlers. The tribal names Tapajós and Uruuçu appear for the last time in the list of native tribes of the Tapajós River given by Ricardo Franco de Almeida Serra in 1779 (Almeida Serra, 1869, p. 5). Martius found that the Tapajocôs were completely extinct in 1820 (Martius, 1867, vol. 1, p. 382).

Name. It is possible that the name of the "cacique" Chipayo mentioned by P. Carbejal is identical with that of our tribe. The oldest maps have the form Topaio. Later there appear forms like Topayós (P. Samuel Fritz), Tapayosos, Trapayosos (P. Laureano), Estrapayosos [Rojas], Tapayotes and Tapayocôs. Hartt (1885, p. 14) writes Tupáio because this is the pronunciation of the local inhabitants. Martius explains the name Tapayocôs as "divers, those who bring things up from the depths" (1867, vol. 1, p. 382), an explanation which does not seem acceptable to me. The name has no meaning in the Lingua Geral and belongs, like so many other geographical names along the Amazon and on the north coast of Brazil which end in -jô and -yu, to a now extinct language which was evidently dominant in these regions before the expansion of the Tupi language.

Habitat. There is historical documentation for the Tapajó only at the mouth of the river named for them and at Borary, now Alter do Chão, where the Jesuits also founded a mission, in what year I do not know for certain. (2) P. Bettendorff, indeed, speaks of many additional villages in the interior (Bettendorff, 1910, p. 35). The old sources mention another tribe together with the Tapajó, the Uruucuzes of Bettendorff, Aruyucuzes of Rojas, and Oruruucozes of Heriarte. The latter mentions them not only on the Tapajó but on the Amazon as well, between the Tapajó and the Tupinambaranas (Heriarte, 1874, p. 39). Perhaps the Tapajó were located on the east bank and the Uruucú on the west bank of the mouth of the Tapajó.

Numbers. The tribe seems to have been very numerous. Orellana was obliged by the density of the hostile population on the right bank of the Amazon to continue his voyage near the opposite side. Acuña speaks of a village of more than 500 families (Acuña, 1891, p. 182), a figure which corresponds to a total population of 2,500 souls, more or less. Heriarte (1874, p. 35) calls it the largest known village and says it could put 60,000 bowmen in the field. This last figure, however, represents either a misprint or an enormous exaggeration, for it would imply a population of some 240,000.
The remains of the ancient settlement indicate an exceptionally numerous population.

Language. Neither of the two tribes at the mouth of the Tapajós spoke Tupí. P. Bettendorff, when he visited them for the first time in 1661, talked with them by means of an interpreter. As he was the author of several books in the Lingua Geral, he would surely have had no need for an interpreter if the Indians spoke Tupí. Later, he translated the catechism into the various languages of the new mission; "all from the Lingua Geral text; one was in the language of the Tapajós; and another in that of the Urucuís, which is generally understood, and with this the teaching and baptizing is proceeding" (Bettendorff, 1910, p. 168). Heriarte emphasizes that, in contrast to the Lingua Geral speaking Tupinambas, the Orucuçes and Condurizes (the latter on the opposite side, the left bank of the Amazon) spoke different languages. Of the Tapajó language we know only three proper names, that of the tribe, that of the chief, Orucurá, and that of "the devil", Aura (Heriarte, 1874, p. 36). None of these can be interpreted in Tupí. The last suggests the "awirá" (post-palatal i) with which the Apará designate the yellow headed buzzard (Cathartes aura, Linn.), and it is noteworthy that the Apará name of the black headed buzzard (Coragyps atratus, Bechst), "kurumú", is found in this area as the name of a range of hills near the mouth of the Trombetas. According to de Goeje, these two names designate mythological beings among the Wayána Indians. It is true that the great majority of the native place names of the region are from the Lingua Geral, which is still not entirely extinct in Alter do Chão. Others, however, doubtless belong to non-Tupí languages, and among these are some which have interpretations in Carib languages. (3)

Character. The Tapajó were a very warlike tribe, respected by their neighbors and in the beginning also by the Portuguese. They made a fierce attack on the first whites who invaded their domain under the command of Orellana. Acuña calls them "people of spirit." They showed themselves friendly and trusting to the Portuguese (Acuña, 1891, pp. 181-182).

Social organization. According to Heriarte (1874, p. 36), the Tapajó were divided into "rancho" of 20 to 30 families. Each rancho had a chief, and there was a common chief over all whose authority was obeyed. Bettendorff speaks of the five chiefs of the various tribes who received him in 1661. Unfortunately, the term "rancho" is not sufficiently precise to explain the social organization, for it may refer either to single communal houses or to local groups [but see appendix-J.H.R.]. Rojas speaks of a very large house of carved wood in which the Tapajó received the two Franciscans in 1637.

Slavery probably existed before the Portuguese forced the Tapajó to become slave hunters.
An interesting feature is the existence of a noble class, documented by certain passages in Bettendorff. "Maria Moacara," he says (1910, p. 172), "was hereditary princess of all the Tapajós, and the name Moacara means very noble lady, because the Indians, in addition to their princes, are accustomed to choose a woman of the highest nobility whom they consult on every occasion as an oracle and they guide their actions by her opinion." The mother of this Maria Moacara was forced to remain a widow, "because there was no other man available who was her equal in nobility," a fact which nevertheless did not prevent her from having a lover. Bettendorff gives these nobles the title of "cavaleiros," expressly distinguishing them from the chiefs (1910, p. 261). In Guarani, moacará means "respected."

Marriage. According to P. Bettendorff, the Tapajós practiced polygamy (1910, p. 171), and punished adultery on the part of the woman by drowning the guilty woman in the river.

Disposal of the dead. The dead were placed in their hammocks with all their possessions at their feet. "On [the dead man's] head they place an image of the Devil made after their fashion, wrought with a needle like a sock, and thus they put him in some houses which they have made only for the dead, where he remains until his flesh dries up and rots away; the bones are ground and thrown into the wine, and his relatives and other people drink it" (Heriarte, 1874, p. 37). The Tapajós evidently knew some process of mummification like the ancient Maués, their neighbors ([see below. On the Maués, see] Martius, 1867, vol. 1, p. 404).

Religion. Great was the indignation of the Jesuit missionaries when they observed that the mummified bodies of the chiefs were the object of a special cult. Bettendorff tells of a dried out body which they venerated for many years as their Monhangarypy (original creator; Bettendorff translates it "first father"), honoring it with dances and offerings. It was placed in a chest under the peak of the roof of a house. The missionary P. Antonio Pereira, who reached the Tapajós in 1682, had fire set to this house one night, destroying the sanctuary of the tribe. The Indians, although deeply incensed, remained quiet for fear of the Christians who approved the missionary's action (Bettendorff, 1910, pp. 353-354).

P. João Deniel relates (1858, pp. 480-481), without citing the year or the name of the missionary, that there were seven mummies of ancestors kept in a secret house in the depths of the forest and known only to the elders. "On a certain day in the year the old people gather with great secrecy and go together to make a pilgrimage to it and dress them aflush with Brittany or some other cloth, which each one has." In the same house were found five "stones" which were likewise objects of veneration. "All the stones had their dedication and name, with some representation which indicated what they were good for. One was the one which presided over weddings..., another was prayed to for successful childbirth, and in this way the greater
number had specialties over which they presided and special cults in
the worship of these idolaters.... The missionary, discouraged at
their little religion and much idolatry, ordered these idols, or seven
dried up bodies of theirs, to be burned openly and in the public
square, and the ashes, along with the stones, to be cast into the
middle of the river...." Heriarte (1874, p. 36) speaks of the painted
idoles of the tribes of the Tapajós River to which offerings of maize
and beer were made. On the night of the fifth day (?) [the question
mark is Nimaendajú's - J.H.R.] they made drinks out of these offerings;
then they sounded mournful and lugubrious trumpets and drums in the
plaza behind the village until an earthquake took place, threatening
to bring down trees and hills. Then the Devil appeared and entered an
enclosure built for him. The celebration ended with songs and general
dancing. Bettendorff also mentions this "Devil's plaza." It was in
the forest and was kept very clean. The women carried drinks there
for the dances. Afterwards they bent over, covering their eyes with
their hands so as not to see, (4) "then some of their wizards spoke with
a thick, hoarse voice and persuaded them that this was the speech of
the Devil who put into their heads what he wanted to say." The mis-
sionary forbade the Indians to hold these meetings, and when, in spite
of this, they again prepared the plaza, he had a Portuguese break the
vases of drinks. There was in addition another plaza in the town
itself which the whites called "Mohammed's plaza" and which the
missionary banned in the same way (Bettendorff, 1910, pp. 170-171).

Dress. To judge by the representations in pottery, both sexes
went completely nude. They wore their hair cut and parted in the
middle and bound with a band on the forehead, the ends of the band
being crossed behind. We also find representations of men and women
who have their hair in two braids hanging down the back. Diadems and
more elaborate head dresses are also found. In the ear lobes they
wore plugs of medium size, perhaps an inch in diameter more or less.
Anklets are common; bracelets and chest ornaments rarer.

Food. When Pedro Teixeira's expedition visited the Tapajó in
1639, the Indians furnished him chickens, ducks, fish, flour, and
fruit (Aouña, 1891, p. 182). According to Rojas (1889, p. 86), they
offered fish and cazabe [manioc] to the Franciscans in 1637. P.
Bettendorff complains at times of the poor quality of the farina of
the Tapajó. We have already mentioned their alcoholic beverages.(5)

Handicrafts. The Tapajó slept in hammocks and traded them
(Bettendorff, 1910, p. 172; Heriarte, 1874, p. 37; Aouña, 1891,
p. 182). According to Heriarte (1874, p. 39), the tribes of the
Tapajós River made fine pottery for sale. As other articles of
commerce he cites (p. 37) woods, urucu [dye from Bixa orellana], and
"buraqitas" (muiskitás [nephrite amulets]), "and it is commonly
said that these stones are made, on this river of the Tapajós, of a
green clay which is formed under water, and they make long, round
beads, drinking cups, seats, birds, frogs, and other shapes, working
under water; when it is brought out into the air this clay hardens
to such an extent that it is converted into very hard green stone; it is the best trading material the Indians have and they value it highly. The hammocks, according to Rojas, were made "of palmito, worked with different colors." The same author mentions that the carved beams of the reception house were "hung with cotton mantles interwoven with threads of different colors" (1889, p. 86). P. Samuel Fritz mentions the Tapajó as skillful weavers of small flat baskets of palm leaves, dyed in several colors (Fritz, 1922, p. 71; cf. Berredo, 1905, vol. 1, p. 226).

Weapons. The Tapajó were famous and feared for their poisoned arrows. If the blood ran, the wounded man was irremediably lost (Acuña, 1891, p. 181; Héstarde, 1874, p. 35). Gaspar de Soria, of Orellana's party, died of an arrow wound within 48 hours. Consequently, the poison could not have been curare.

The fishing arrows of the present day "civilized" descendants of the Tapajó are distinguished by radial feathering, well made and handsome. The feathers are short and trimmed; the binding of cotton thread on the side of the arrow but gives the impression of being an ornament. The bow is flat on the side toward the string and prominently convex on the outer side. It may be inferred from several passages in Bettendorff (1910, pp. 173, 342) that the ancient Tapajó knew how to administer poison in food in order to rid themselves of undesirable persons.

The skulls of dead enemies were kept as trophies, according to Rojas (1889, p. 86).

Ancient settlements. In 1870-1871, Prof. C. F. Hartt studied the geology of the Tapajós River. Both he and his companion, H. H. Smith, who returned to the Tapajós in 1874, recognized the "black earths" of the rim of the plateau south of Santarém as ancient Indian settlements. It is very curious that neither the one nor the other found out about the biggest concentration of black earth in the whole region, that of Santarém-Aldeia; for Smith expressly says: "A few antiquities have been found near Santarém, but there is no black land there, and no evidence of an extensive village!" (Smith, 1879, p. 170). From Hartt's time dates the "Rhoome Collection" now in the National Museum. This material is not sufficient for an accurate study of the Tapajó culture.

Between 1923 and 1926 I located 65 ancient Indian settlements in Santarém, south of the city, in the region of Alter do Chão and Semiheuma, on the Arapixuma, on the south shore of the Lago Grande de Vilá Franca, and on the right bank of the Amazon, between the mouth of the lake and that of the Arapixumas, all belonging to the Tapajó culture. Nevertheless, I believe that this number does not represent even half of the sites of this culture to be found in the region.
Lago Grande de Villafranca

After the route survey made by Curt Nimuendaju 1924

(Actual scale: 1:225,000)

[See endnote 6 for legend]

- Ancient Indian village sites (Black earths).
- Fishing stations in marshland.
- Ne> Brazilian cemeteries.
- Route followed.
With the exception of the fishing places on the north shore of Lago Grande and on the Island of Tapereba, still covered with flood waters when I visited them, all these ancient settlements are found on high ground, safe from inundation, and the majority of them are even on hill tops or on the plateau.

There are no black earth deposits or other traces of Indian occupation in the strip a league wide which extends between the bank of the Amazon and the foot of the bluff, south of Santarém. It is an arid region, sandy and covered with brush. However, as soon as one reaches the plateau the black earth deposits begin along the rim. I checked this observation in five different places.

On the south shore of Lago Grande there is scarcely a single spur of hills which extends to the edge of the lake that does not have a deposit of black earth on it. There are many other deposits, which I did not visit for lack of time, on the shores of the deep bays which are a feature of this lake.

The black earth deposits of the plateau are found far from any running water. The Indians repaired this defect by digging wells which, with few improvements, furnish water to this day to the Neo-Brazilian population. At the well of Marajó, located at the bottom of a hollow at the foot of the deposit of black earth, the ancient cylindrical excavation of the Indians can clearly be seen. It is 2 meters in diameter and about equally deep. Above it can be seen the square excavation of the present inhabitants. At the black earth deposit of O Açuazal, the Indians, in digging their well, struck the top of a sloping bed of extremely hard white clay, which they were probably unable to penetrate with the tools available to them. They therefore dug to one side, following down the slope of the hard bed, until they secured the necessary depth. I saw five of these Indian wells myself, but their number is much greater.

Another characteristic of the black earth deposits of the plateau is the ancient Indian roads which run almost in a straight line from one black earth deposit to another. They are from a meter to a meter and a half in width and about 30 cm. deep. Great and venerable trees now grow in the middle of them; nevertheless they are still so noticeable that they strike the investigator's attention. Sometimes they branch part way along the route, and near the black earth deposits they disappear.

The surface of the black earth deposits is usually not flat but composed of a number of mounds, each several meters in diameter, and each probably representing a house site.

I know of only two black earth deposits which begin immediately at the high water mark on the river bank: the one at Alter do Chão and that of Santarém-Aldeia. This latter is incomparably the most important of the sites and it has yielded more archaeological material
than all the rest put together. In some places it is almost a meter and a half thick. On it is built a good part of the modern city of Santarém, especially the district called Aldeia, that is, the Rua da Alegria and the streets which cross it. Especially in these cross streets, which drop off steeply on the side toward the Tapajós, the torrents of run-off water frequently open deep gullies in which remains of old pottery are found throughout. Considering that, for more than 200 years, pedestrians, animals, and vehicles have crushed the surface daily, it is remarkable that objects are still found in such good condition. The richest site on the plateau is the black earth deposit of Lavras, where potsherds are so abundant that they interfere with farming. The great majority of sherds, however, are plain pieces, and the decorated ones, as everywhere else, occur in much smaller quantities. The black earth deposits of Lago Grande are generally very shallow and hence yield scarcely anything but minute fragments rarely worth collecting. Archaeological remains are also remarkably scarce at Alter do Chão, an ancient Tapajós center. There appears to be a fairly rich site, however, at Aramamay, a little above Semahuma.

Comparisons. No other pottery style from Brazilian territory has so many traits in common with the styles of southern Central America (Chiriquí, Darién) as that of the Tapajós. Among these traits are caryatids seated on a ring base, tripod vessels, seated figurines, eyes shaped O and Θ, the "hands to face" motif, frogs climbing the outside wall of the vase, etc. The route by which this collection of traits reached the mouth of the Tapajós cannot yet be determined because of the notable lack of archaeological collections from the intervening area. However, it seems unlikely to have been along the coast and up the Amazon because the region around the mouth of this river lacks the majority of the traits listed.

As generally occurs in the Amazonian styles, there are certain traits in Tapajós art which link it to the Mounds of the lower Mississippi and its affluents. According to H. C. Falmatory (personal letter), these traits number from 12 to 20, of which the most important are also found in the uppermost cultural level of the three which have been defined in northern Venezuela.

Belém do Pará

April 12, 1939
1. Leite, who had access to unpublished mission records, gives some further information on the fate of the Tapajó and the history of the mission towns. P. Rebelo founded the mission of Nossa Senhora da Conceição dos Arapiuns in 1723; it had 1069 Indians in 1730. Aldeia Nova de Cumará was a separate foundation with 166 Indians. These two settlements coalesced somewhat later under the name of Cumará (renamed Vila Franca in 1758) (Leite, 1938-50, vol. 3, pp. 364-365).

The mission at what is now Santarém was originally named "Aldeia dos Tapajós"; there were still Tapajó Indians settled there in 1719 along with Arapiuns and Corarienses. In 1730, 793 Indians were reported for this mission, but the report apparently does not give their tribal affiliations. The place was renamed Santarém in 1758 (Leite, 1938-50, vol. 3, pp. 361-362). - J.H.R.

2. According to Leite, the mission of Borari (Iburari, Iburarib or Morari) was originally located near Aldeia dos Tapajós. It reported 235 Indians in 1730. In 1738 it was moved to the site of the present Alter do Chão; the modern name dates from 1757 (Leite, 1938-50, vol. 3, p. 363). - J.H.R.

3. Frederico Barata points out, in a note which was published as a review (1960b), that this section is not an adequate discussion of the evidence on the linguistic situation among the Tapajó. Bet-tendorff lists seven different native words which he implies were current among the Tapajó, all of them good Tupí. These seven include the words "moacara" and "monhangarypy" noted by Nimuendajú. Barata agrees that the Tapajó probably spoke a non-Tupí language to begin with, but he emphasizes that, by 1661, they were using the Lingua Geral in their dealings with the Portuguese and other Indians. The later currency of the Lingua Geral in the Santarém area bears out Barata's view.

"Lingua Geral" and "Tupí" are used as synonyms throughout this paper. - J.H.R.

4. Note the position of the caryatid figures on some of the sacred vases! - C.N.

5. Palmatary emphasizes as a distinguishing cultural trait of the Tapajó that they "did not use manioc but employed maize in the making of their beer and farina" (Palmatary, 1939, p. 5). She says that this statement is based on Nordenskiöld's description (1930,
pp. 11-12), which in turn is taken from Heriarte. Nordenskiöld says (my translation from the French): "These Indians had painted idols which represented a sort of fertility god 'Pota da Aur'; they offered him a tithe of their harvest of maize. In contrast to the customs of neighboring tribes, they did not prepare their farina with manioc but with maize. They also used this grain to brew the beer which they drank during festivals, served in large containers."

Palmatary's statement is thus somewhat misleading. Nordenskiöld merely says that the Tapajó made a ceremonial beer out of maize and use maize instead of manioc for farina; he does not claim that the Tapajó used no manioc at all. On the other hand, Nordenskiöld's notes do not give an accurate picture of the sense of Heriarte's text, as the reader may judge by comparing the above passage with the English translation of Heriarte's chapter on the Tapajó in the appendix below. Heriarte says very plainly that maize was the staple crop of the Tapajó but that they also raised some manioc. Almost as interesting as the chain of misunderstanding that led to Palmatary's statement is the fact that Nimuendajú fails to cite Heriarte's testimony in his section on Tapajó food. There is no substitute for consulting the original documents in work of this kind.

6. The accompanying map is one which Nimuendajú made to illustrate his survey of Tapajó archaeological sites in the neighborhood of Villa Franca. It is reproduced from a copy which he sent to Helen C. Palmatary in 1935, along with a copy of the German draft of this article, and which she kindly made available for the present publication. The original was photographed at the University Museum in Philadelphia under the supervision of Alfred Kidder II.

Our plate is slightly reduced in scale. The original map was drawn on a scale of 1:200,000; with the reduction, the scale is 1:225,000. Symbols in black not explained on Nimuendajú's key represent Neo-Brazilian settlements. The following placenames appear on Nimuendajú's map:

1. Lg. Taxy.
2. Bocca do Taxy.
5. Guaria.
7. Lago Mayúa.
8. Lg. do Borges.
10. Lg. Jararaca.
11. Lg. Mongubal.
12. Ilha Grande.
13. Fabriciano.
15. Lg. Taperebá.
17. Cabezira do Lago.
18. Lg. Urupema.
21. E. S. Vicente.
27. E. Inanum.

14
30. P. Sapucaja.
32. E. Cururú.
33. P. Cururú.
34. Mt. Galucio.
35. P. Lirramant.
36. E. Urucuru.
37. P. Urucuru.
38. Contra dan sa.
40. P. Peré.
41. E. Peré.
42. P. Jamery.
43. E. Ajamory.
44. P. Aoá.
45. P. Tacumé.
46. P. Cajuei.
47. P. Acutiregá.
49. E. Jacaré.
50. P. Maracú.
51. P. Tacuminy.
52. E. Tacuminy.
53. Costello Branco.
54. L. Mutumquaara.
55. Aracy.
56. Cururú de baixo.
57. S. Anna.
58. Bom Jesus.
59. Patacho.
60. P. Itapeua.
61. Cuipiranga.
63. E. Urucureá.
64. L. Caixão.
65. P. Arimá.
66. P. Hurú.
67. P. Tuyaeú.
68. E. Cuipiranga.
69. P. Toroná.
70. L. de Praia.
71. L. Camucy.
72. E. Arimá.
73. P. Maçacos.
74. E. Axícará.
75. SERRA AXICARÁ.
76. P. Aratápy.
77. P. Miripixy.
78. Igarapé Assú.
79. P. Pedreira.
80. P. Taperobá.
81. E. Japihy.
82. E. Maruhy.
83. P. S. Marco.
84. Paraíso.
85. P. Caracaraha.
86. L. Cunhamena.
87. P. Grande.
88. Rapoza.
89. Campo.
90. L. Uana.
91. Ant. Charante.
92. Aitirú.
93. L. Ayauá.
94. P. Urucury.
95. P. Iouxy.

J.H.R.,
APPENDIX

The Province of the Tapajós, by Mauricio de Heriarte (Heriarte, 1874, chapter 85)

(Introductory note. Heriarte gives a more systematic and informative account of the Tapajó than any other 17th century writer. However, the published edition of his work is excessively rare, and relatively few modern scholars have been able to use it directly. Nimuendajú probably did not have a copy of it beside him when he wrote the article translated above, for he misquotes Heriarte on Tapajó social organization and omits important data on food and farming. What probably happened was that Nimuendajú had made some notes on Heriarte during a visit to Rio de Janeiro and was depending on them when he wrote up his article. To fill out Nimuendajú's information and to make this important account somewhat more accessible, I have translated Heriarte's chapter on the Tapajó in full. - J.H.R.)

[p. 35] From this river [the Corupatuba] to the province of the Tapajós it is a little more than 40 leagues' journey up the Amazon River.

These lands along the bank on the river are not inhabited by the Indians because they have retired from contact with the Portuguese; they have gone inland to avoid their great abuses.

This province of the Tapajós is very large, and the first settlement is situated at the mouth of a big river of abundant water which is commonly called the River of the Tapajós.

It is the largest settlement or town with which we are yet acquainted in this area. It furnishes 60 thousand bows when war is declared, and because the Tapajó Indians are so numerous they are feared by the rest of the Indian nations and thus they have made themselves lords of that area. They are corpulent people, big and strong. Their weapons are bows and arrows, like those of the rest of the Indians of these regions, but their arrows are poisoned with a venom for which no antidote is yet known. This is the reason why the other Indians are afraid of them, for a man who has been wounded by their arrows is doomed to die.

This river on which the Tapajó Indians are located is a river of abundant water, pleasant lands, and very clear streams. It does not have many fish. It comes down from the west and empties [p. 36] into the Amazon River. It is densely populated with Tapajó, Marautus, Caguanas, Oruruocos, and many other Indian nations of which we have no knowledge yet.

They are extremely barbarous and perverse. They have painted
idols which they worship and to which they pay tithes of their cultivated fields in which they grow an abundance of maize; maize is their staple, for they do not use as much manioc for farina as the other nations.

When the crops are ripe, each gives a tithe, and when it is all collected they put it in a house in which they keep their idols, saying that it is a potaba [gift] for Aura, which is the name of the Devil in their language. Of this maize they make every week a quantity of wine, and on the fifth day of the week at night they take it in great jars to a threshing floor behind the town which they keep very neat and clean. There the whole nation gathers, and they begin to play trumpets and mournful and lugubrious drums for about an hour until there comes a great earthquake which seems about to cast down the trees and hills; with it comes the Devil who enters an enclosure which the Indians have made for him. Then, at the arrival of the Devil, all begin to dance and sing in their language and to drink the wine until it is gone; the Devil keeps them deceived with this ceremony.

When one of these Indians dies, they lay him out in a hammock and put at his feet [p. 37] all the goods he possessed in life. On his head they place an image of the Devil made after their fashion, wrought with a needle like a sock, and thus they put him in some houses which they have made only for the dead, where he remains until his flesh dries up and rots away; the bones are ground up and thrown into the wine, and his relatives and other people drink it.

From all this the Reverend Fathers of the Society of Jesus, who come from time to time to teach them the doctrine, have won them away in part.

Ships of deep draft come as far as this province, and they go four days' journey up the River of the Tapajós to trade for woods, hammocks, urucu and green stones which the Indians call burequitas and which are highly prized by the foreigners to the north. And it is commonly said that these stones are made, on this River of the Tapajós, of a green clay which is formed under water, and they make long, round beads, drinking cups, seats, birds, frogs and other shapes, working under water; when it is brought out into the air this clay hardens to such an extent that it is converted into very hard green stone; it is the best trading material the Indians have and they value it highly.

The climate of this province is hot, and it has very good and pleasing lands, suitable for raising many cattle, sheep, goats and pigs. There are many hills, and on their slopes [p. 38] and on some islands in this river and in the Amazon great sugar plantations could be made, for the river floods make all those lands fertile and the Indians use them for their clearings of maize, fruits and some manioc. These Indians are governed by chieftains, one in each rancho of twenty or thirty houses (cazaes), and all are governed by a high chieftain
over all who is given great obedience.

These Indians make war on the others of that region and are feared by them. They have many sieves and sell others to the Portuguese for tools to cultivate their farms and clear the land. It would be worthwhile to explore this river, for it would evidently be a very profitable conquest.

(From the end of chapter 36, p. 39):

These Indians [those of the Trombetas River] and the Tapajós have very fine clay from which they make much good pottery of all sorts, which is much esteemed by the Portuguese; they export it to other provinces for trade.
SUPPLEMENTARY NOTE

After the foregoing manuscript was completed, I sent copies of it to Miss Helen Palmatary and to Dr. Henry Wassén. Both of them were kind enough to furnish some additional information regarding Nimuendajú's manuscripts. Miss Palmatary has a copy of Nimuendajú's German draft, *Die Tapajó*, dated September 5, 1925 (7 pp., single spaced, typed and signed by the author). This draft lacks the section on dress which appears in the Portuguese version and it has a very different section on ancient settlements, but otherwise it is substantially identical with the present text. It has no accompanying bibliography at all.

Dr. Wassén reports that the copy of *Die Tapajó* at Göteborg is filed with papers relating to Nimuendajú's archaeological collection (Etnografiska Museet, No. 23.10) accessioned by the Museum in 1923. An English translation of it has been made by Dr. Stig Rydén as part of a project to publish Nimuendajú's reports on his archaeological work in Brazilian Guiana and on the lower Amazon. Rydén's translation includes a few passages omitted from the later text but otherwise parallels mine closely.

Dr. Wassén has called my attention to the fact that the expression Göteborg Museum in my notes is not sufficiently precise, since this term covers five separate museums. Nimuendajú's work, of course, was done for the Etnografiska Museet.

John Howland Rowe
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(Nimuendajú's original text references are to another of the numerous editions of this work. They have been altered here to conform to the 1891 edition, an accessible one which Nimuendajú himself cites in other articles.)

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Errata, KASP No. 6

Page iii, line 23: research not reasearch
Page 2, line 45: read twenty-four
Page 3, line 47: thousand (1) not thousand (;)
Page 8, line 38: mentioned not mentioned
Page 14, line 23: Vila Franca not Villa Franca
Page 38, line 34: me than the not me that the
Page 42, line 12: approached not approached
Page 44, line 2: read proceeded
Page 44, line 32: until not unitl
Page 45, line 45: noise not moise
Page 64, line 30: to assign not toassign
Page 65, line 15: soon not soom
Page 71, line 32: (1741 on the map) not (1745 on the map)
Page 74, line 20: read meil
Page 75, line 18: 1799, on the map, not 1799
Page 84, line 28: (first published in 1741) not (written in 1745)
Page 86, line 10: enero-marzo not enero-marga