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THE TROPICAL FOREST TRIBES

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THE AMANAYÉ

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LANGUAGE, TERRITORY, AND HISTORY

The names Amanajó, Manajó, and Manaxó were used in Maranhão, in Piauí, and on the lower Tocantins; Amoragé in Pará. Mananyé is the name given by the Turiwara; Manazewa by the Tembê. The self-denomination, Manayé or Amanayé, has uncertain meaning, but may be Guaraní, amândayé, an “association of people,” or amanajé, “alcoviteiro” (Platzmann, 1896). In order to conceal their identity, some groups assumed the name of Ararandewd (Ararandewdra, Ararandeuara), “those of the Ararandeua [River],” and Turiwá (Turiwara), the name of a neighbor tribe.

On the Amanayé language there have been published only two small vocabularies, both in 1914: Lange’s and Nimuendajú’s. It is the most distinctive of the Tupí dialects of the He- group. As far as can be ascertained from the vocabularies, there is no difference in the grammar.

The Amanayé (map 1, No. 1; see Volume 1, map 7) always occupied the upper Pindaré, the Gurupi, and the Capim Rivers, the middle Moju River, and the central part of the right bank of the lower Tocantins below the mouth of the Araguaya, and were found only rarely away from this region (lat. 4° S., long. 48° W.). They are first mentioned in 1755 when they made an agreement with the Jesuit P. Daniel Fay (Tray? Tay?), of Acamá (Monção), a Guajajara village of the Pindaré River. They had evidently had previous contact with civilized people, for they avoided all Whites except the Jesuits.

According to Ribeiro de Sampaio (1812, p. 9), in 1760, a large band of Amanayé moved peacefully southeast to the Alpercatas River, and settled near the village of Santa Antonio. By 1815 there were only 20 of this group, and they were mixed with Negro blood. The last mention of this village was in 1820 (Francisco de N.S. dos Prazeres, 1891, p. 132). A part of this band evidently continued its migration in 1763 across the Parnahyba River into Piauí (Alencastre, 1857, p. 6), but its subsequent fate is not known.

In 1775, the “Amanajos” are listed among the tribes of the lower right Tocantins (Ribeiro de Sampaio, 1812, pp. 8, 9), and, in 1798, they were seen to the east of the Surubijú River (Mendes de Almeida, n.d., p. 104). In 1845, the “Amanantii” were mentioned as inhabitants of part of the Moju River by Saint-Adolphe. In 1854, they had a village on the Pindaré above the Guajajara village of Sapucaia (Marques,
1864), but by 1872 the village had been moved to the Tucumandiuia, a western tributary of the Gurupi River (Dodt, 1873, p. 132). In 1862, the Amanayé had two villages with 60 people on the Ararandéua River, western tributary of the Capim River, which has subsequently been their center.

In 1872, Fr. Candido de Heremence began to convert the Amanayé, Tembé and Turiwara of the Capim River. With 200 Amanayé, he founded the Anauera Mission (São Fidelis) on the left bank of the Capim River, below the confluence of the Ararandéua and the Surubijú Rivers. The Turiwara and Tembé, being hostile to the Amanayé, were established together farther downstream. The next year, the Amanayé killed Fr. Candido and a Belgian engineer, Blochhausen, because during a trip the latter dealt severely with the Amanayé crew and injured the chief's son. (Souza Franco, 1842, p. 22; Cruz, 1874, p. 47; Moreira Pinto, 1894; Nimuendajú, unpublished notes.) Reprisals against the Amanayé for these murders drove them to take refuge in the region of the Ararandéua River. Today some of them still avoid contact with the civilized people. Others appeared later under the name of "Ararandewára" or "Turiwara" to conceal their identity.

In 1889, the surviving Anambé and Amanajó, almost wiped out by epidemics on the Arapi, lived by the last rapids of the Tocantins River (Ehrenreich, 1892, p. 149).

In 1911, Inspector L. B. Horta Barboza, of the Serviço de Protecção aos Indios, found four Amanayé villages with more than 300 inhabitants on the left bank of the Ararandéua River. In 1913, another, more primitive part of the tribe, calling itself Ararandewára, was visited by Algot Lange on the upper Moju River, at approximately lat. 4° S. He has published the only description of the Amanayé (Lange, 1914).

During several decades at the end of the 19th century and the beginning of the 20th, the most important person among the Amanayé of the Ararandéua River was a mulatto woman named Damasia, wife of a member of the tribe. In 1926, Nimuendajú saw a small group of Amanayé, who called themselves Ararandewára, in Mundurucú at lat. 3°55' S. They had a plantation on the Moju River. In 1942, only 17 persons, mostly Mestizos, survived in the group headed by Damasia's son (Arquivos da Secretaria do Serviço de Protecção aos Indios, Para, 1942). These people stated that another group lived away from all contact with the civilized people, on the Igarapé do Garrafão, a left tributary of the Ararandéua River. In 1943, Nimuendajú found a small group of Amanayé, who had been living for several decades, in contact with Neo-Brazilians, on the upper Cairary, a tributary on the left bank of the lower Moju. They called themselves Turiwara.

**CULTURE**

**Subsistence.**—The Amanayé cultivated manioc, cotton, and tobacco in forest clearings. One clearing measured 1,000 by 1,300 yards. These Indians also hunted, especially turtles, which were abundant. Turtles not consumed at once were kept in small corrals.

Dogs and chickens were introduced by the White man.

Manioc was prepared in a special hut; the tubers were crushed in a trough made of the miriti palm trunk, pressed through a coarse-meshed fiber sifter, then kneaded into balls which were allowed to ferment on a platform. Subsequently, the paste was squeezed in the cylindrical tipiti, or manioc squeezer, after which the dry pulp was crushed and spread on
a hot clay pan with slightly upturned edges. Brazil nuts might be added to manioc flour to improve its taste.

Dwellings.—The Amanayé village that Lange visited had 26 houses “of a very low order, some not having a proper roof, built around a small area of bush cleared forest.” The only furniture was small cotton hammocks.

Clothing.—Amanayé men wore nothing but a short cotton string tied around the praeputium, while women wore only a narrow loincloth.

Men's ornaments included little wooden sticks in the lower lip and turkey feathers stuck in colored cotton bands around the head. Women wore “garter-like bush-cord bands below their knees and on their ankles; . . . some of the youngest maidens insert ornaments made of the ivory nut in their ear lobes” (Lange, 1914).

Boats.—Dugout canoes, 35 feet (10.6 m.) long, and 5 feet (1.5 m.) wide, were made of trees felled in the forest and dragged to the water on rollers by means of creepers.

Manufactures.—Manioc squeezers were plaited of strong miriti palm and tucum fibers. Cotton spindles had a rounded wooden disk. The loom was “a simple square frame made of four sticks about 2 feet [0.6 m.] long, tied together with fiber or ordinary bush-cord to form a square” (Lange, 1914). Cloth, like hammocks, was loosely twined with a double weft. Loincloths were stained red with urucú.

The only pottery mentioned is the clay manioc pan.

Weapons.—Bows were large—one being 8 feet (2.4 m.) long and 4 inches (10 cm.) in diameter—and notched at each end for a curauá fiber bowstring. Arrows were tipped either with a bamboo blade or with a sharp rod with a few barbs on each side. Occasionally, a small nut which produced a whistling sound was fastened near the tip. Arrow feathering was either of the eastern Brazilian arched or of the Xingú sewn type.

Stone axes, used until recently, had carefully ground, quadrangular heads of diorite with a notch running along the face near the butt. The head was inserted in the split end of a shaft of pao d’arco and lashed with heavy fibers, then covered with the black gum from the jutahy tree.

Fire making.—Fire was made with a fire drill. Two men working together could make a fire in 2 minutes.

Social and political organization.—Lange observed an Amanayé chief whose weak personality suggested that he must have inherited his position. Lange gives no other information on political or social organization.

Prior to marriage, young men proved their fortitude by plunging an arm into a braided fiber cylinder that was closed at both ends and filled with tocandeira ants.

Musical instruments.—The Amanayé had a drum that is unusual in this area: A long, hollow emba-uba tree trunk was suspended from a
horizontal branch by a thin, tough bush rope. While one man beat the drum with a stick, “another, probably a shaman, danced around it” (Lange, 1914).

**Tobacco.**—Tobacco was smoked in huge cigarettes, 1 foot (0.3 m.) long and \( \frac{3}{2} \) inch (1.2 cm.) thick, wrapped in tauari bark. These were passed around, each man taking a few draughts in turn.

**Drinks.**—The *Amanayé* drank a fermented beverage (probably of cassava) called cachiri.

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