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U.S.

SMITHSONIAN INSTITUTION  
BUREAU OF AMERICAN ETHNOLOGY  
BULLETIN 143

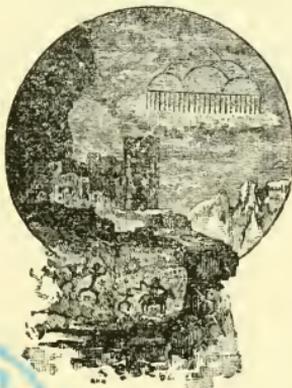
HANDBOOK  
OF  
SOUTH AMERICAN INDIANS

JULIAN H. STEWARD, *Editor*

Volume 1  
THE MARGINAL TRIBES

Prepared in Cooperation With the United States Department of State as a Project of  
the Interdepartmental Committee on Cultural and Scientific Cooperation

Extraído do vol. 1 do Handbook of South American  
Indians, digitalizado pelo Internet Archive.  
Disponível em <http://www.etnolingua.org/hsai>



UNITED STATES  
GOVERNMENT PRINTING OFFICE  
WASHINGTON : 1946

## THE GUAITACÁ

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By ALFRED MÉTRAUX

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The *Guaitacá* (*Goaptaca*, *Gyataca*, *Goyaka*, *Goytakaz*, *Waitacazes*, *Oueitaca*), who are so often mentioned in the early literature,<sup>1</sup> disappeared before a single word of their language had been recorded, so that it is impossible to classify them. Without any valid reason they have been identified with the modern *Purí* and *Coroado*. They probably formed part of the numerous "*Tapuya*" tribes whose presence on the coast long antedated the *Tupí-Guaraní* invasions.

**History and tribal divisions.**—In the 16th century, they were scattered along the coast from the São Matheus River (Cricaré River) to Cape São Thome (lat. 20° S., long. 40° W.) (pl. 107). Léry (1880, 1: 78–80 and 2: 130) places them along the seashore between the Parahyba River and Macahé, where they were in direct contact with the *Tupinamba* (*Tamoyo*) of Rio de Janeiro. Though their northern border cannot be ascertained exactly, all our sources agree that they were the undisputed masters of the fertile Campos dos Goaitacazes that extend from the vicinity of Lagoa Feia to the mouth of the Parahyba River (map 1, No. 14; map 7).

The *Guaitacá* were divided into three subgroups. The *Guaitacá-mopi* and the *Guaitacá-yakorito* lived in the Campos dos Goaitacazes. The *Guaitacá-quasu*, who were hostile to the others, roamed inland. Thevet mentions a fourth group, the *Guaitacá-miri*.

In the 15th or 16th century, the *Guaitacá* conquered and occupied the territory of the *Papana*, a *Tapuya* tribe. In 1553, the Portuguese settled in the country of the *Guaitacá* but, after a 5-year war, were driven out. Later the *Guaitacá* raided several times the Captaincy of Espírito Santo and, in one of their numerous battles against Portuguese troops, killed Fernão de Sa, the son of the Governor General of Brazil. They not only fought the White invaders but also the *Tupinamba*, who had allied themselves to the Portuguese to exterminate their traditional enemies. In 1630, the Portuguese again undertook, and this time achieved the conquest of the *Guaitacá*. The Indians who escaped slaughter were gathered into aldeas where they were Christianized. In the first half of the 19th century, a few Indians remained near Campos and Cabo Frio. They were regarded as the descendants of the ancient *Guaitacá*. Wied-Neuwied (1820–21, 1: 37) saw in the village of São Lourenço, near Rio de Janeiro, the remainder of the *Guaitacá* who had been settled in the Jesuit missions as well as others in the village of São Pedro dos Índios. Today the *Guaitacá* have been entirely absorbed by the Neo-Brazilian population.

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<sup>1</sup> The scattered data on the *Guaitacá* have been assembled and summarized by Métraux (1929 c).

## CULTURE

Ethnographic data in the early literature are few. The *Guaitacá* were mainly collectors and hunters, but also practiced some agriculture. Their crops were maize and some tubers; like several "*Tapuya*" tribes, they did not cultivate manioc. When hunting, they tracked down game until it was exhausted and fell an easy prey. Sharks were attacked close to the shore by groups of Indians armed with short spears. Their arrows were tipped with shark teeth.

According to Vasconcellos (1865, bk. 4, ch. 11, p. 142), the small, low *Guaitacá* houses were built "on a pile" (i. e., on piles?). This statement has been interpreted by some historians as a reference to tree dwellings, but in either case it must be accepted with reserve. They lacked hammocks and slept on the ground.

The *Guaitacá* wore their hair long, though some men shaved their foreheads. Body hair was removed.

All our sources stress the warlike character of these Indians. The *Guaitacá* also are said to have been cannibals, but the evidence is not altogether conclusive. The "*Tapuya*" as a rule, were not cannibals, though they might have adopted the practice, which was popular with their *Tupí* neighbors.

Despite their ordinarily hostile relationship, they carried on a kind of "silent trade" with their *Tupí* neighbors. Keeping at a distance from their trade partners, each group displayed the commodities which they wished to exchange. Generally European articles were offered by the *Tupinamba* and feathers and green stones for labrets by the *Guaitacá*. When the exchange had been agreed upon, each party hastily deposited the goods at a certain place and departed. Hostilities were then resumed (Léry, 1880, 1:78-80).

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

Léry, 1880; Métraux, 1929 c; Vasconcellos, 1865; Wied-Neuwied, 1820-21.