

discovered in places where there exist lines of fortification, and the walls of towns constructed by some unknown nation, now entirely extinct. The paintings on these fragments have a great similitude to those which are executed in our days on earthenware by the natives of Louisiana and Florida. Thus too, the Indians of Maypures often painted before our eyes the same ornaments as those we had observed in the cavern of Atarupe, on the vases containing human bones. They were *grecques*, meanders, and figures of crocodiles, of monkeys, and of a large quadruped which I could not recognize, though it had always the same squat form. I might hazard the hypothesis that it belongs to another country, and that the type had been brought thither in the great migration of the American nations from the north-west to the south and south-east; but I am rather inclined to believe that the figure is intended to represent a tapir, and that the deformed image of a native animal has become by degrees one of the types that has been preserved.

The Maypures execute with the greatest skill *grecques*, or ornaments formed by straight lines variously combined, similar to those that we find on the vases of Magna Grecia, on the Mexican edifices at Mitla, and in the works of so many nations who, without communication with each other, find alike a sensible pleasure in the symmetric repetition of the same forms. Arabesques, meanders, and *grecques*, please our eyes, because the elements of which their series is composed, follow in rhythmic order. The eye finds in this order, in the periodical return of the same forms, what the ear distinguishes in the cadenced succession of sounds and concords. Can we then admit a doubt that the feeling of rhythm manifests itself in man at the first dawn of civilization, and in the rudest essays of poetry and song?

Among the natives of Maypures, the making of pottery is an occupation principally confined to the women. They purify the clay by repeated washings, form it into cylinders, and mould the largest vases with their hands. The American Indian is unacquainted with the potter's wheel, which was familiar to the nations of the east in the remotest antiquity. We may be surprised that the missionaries have not introduced this simple and useful machine among the natives of the Orinoco, yet we must recollect that three centuries