Rivers and Shores: 'Fluviality' and the Occupation of Colonial Amazonia

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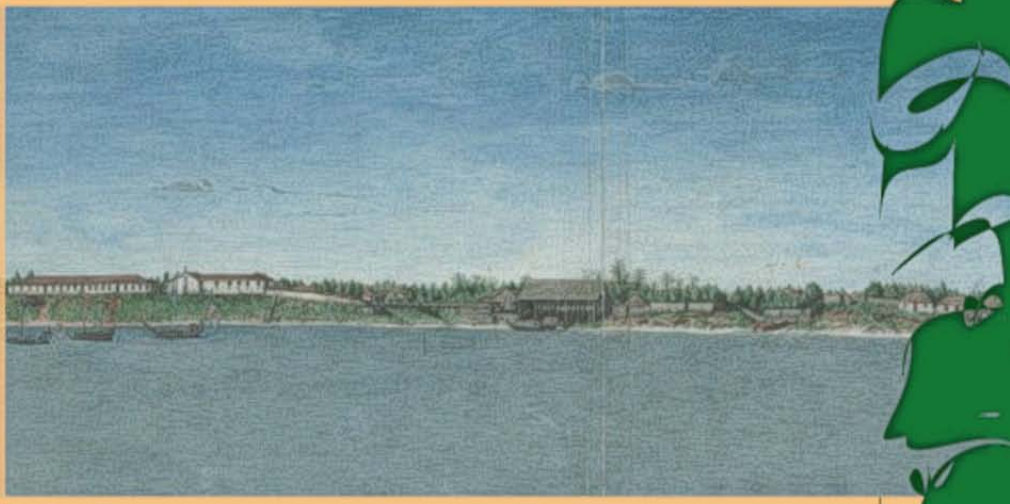

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The Portuguese Conquest of the Amazon: Native Networks and Riverine Frontiers (Early Seventeenth Century)[1]

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Introduction

Before the arrival of the Spanish and the Portuguese to the New World, native societies were involved in varied regional networks permitting the circulation of products and technologies across long distances. The region currently known as Amazonia was not, during that era, an isolated or peripheral space, but rather part of broader continental interactions. The European conquest, however, affected such native patterns. War, slavery and sicknesses led to a reconfiguration of the human landscape, especially so in the regions that became colonial frontiers.

This phenomenon manifested itself in the *ceja de selva* or *montaña* regions, on the eastern slopes of the Andean range. Such transitional zones were historically occupied by native societies who for centuries had acted as mediators between the highlands and the lowlands. The expansion of Andean state formations, however, affected the mediating communities and transformed Andean perceptions of the lowlands prior to the Spanish conquest. "The negative aspects of these ambivalent perceptions deepened in post-Columbian times with the breaking of the exchange networks that connected the Andean and Amazon regions in pre-Columbian times."[2] Throughout the recent decades, historians, anthropologists and archaeologists have analyzed the historical relations between the Andes and the lowlands,[3] and similar issues have also been studied in other regions, such as Brazil and

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[2]Fernando Santos-Granero, "Boundaries are Made to be Crossed: The Magic and Politics of the Long-lasting Amazon / Andes Divide," *Identities: Global Studies in Culture and Power*, 9 (2002): 545-569, 547.

Guayana, two spaces that are both separated and connected by the Amazon River.[4]

It is along these lines that the present article explores the ethnic landscape of the Lower Amazon and the estuary region in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. The main point is that the Amazon River was, during the late pre-Columbian era, a transitional zone inhabited by societies who mediated between the two shores of the river. The arrival of the Tupinamba and other Tupi-speaking groups to this region, from Brazil, altered this social landscape in the years (and maybe centuries) before the European conquest. The new groups remained for the most part in the Amazon valley and did not occupy on a permanent basis the northern regions of Guayana.[5] When

[3]Thierry Saignes, *Los Andes Orientales: Historia de un olvido* (Cochabamba: IFEA and CERES, 1985); Thierry Saignes, France Marie Renard-Casevitz & Anne Christine Taylor, *Al este de los Andes. Relaciones entre las sociedades amazónicas y andinas entre los siglos XV y XVII* (Quito: Abya-Yala, 1988); Fernando Santos-Granero, *Etnohistoria de la alta Amazonía: siglos XV-XVII* (Quito: Abya-Yala, 1992); Anne Christine Taylor, "The Western Margins of Amazonia from the Early Sixteenth to the Early Nineteenth Century," in Frank Salomon & Stuart Schwartz, eds., *The Cambridge History of the Native People of the Americas*, vol. 3, part 2 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 188-256; Stefano Varese, "Relations between the Andes and the Upper Amazon", in *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Latin American History* (2016).

[4]Following Whitehead, we shall use here the Spanish form 'Guayana' to refer to the physical space comprised between the Orinoco and the Amazon Rivers, "to indicate its epistemological priority over the colonial and national political territories of the Guayana (Guyana, Surinam, Guyane)". Neil L. Whitehead, "The Sign of Kanaimà. The Space of Guayana and the Demonology of Development," *Cahiers de l'Amérique Latine*, Dossier 'La Guyane, une Île en Amazonie' 43 (2003): 67-86. See also Neil L. Whitehead, "Ethnic Transformation and Historical Discontinuity in Native Amazonia and Guayana, 1500-1900," *L'Homme* 33 (126-128) (1993): 285-305. Whitehead connected his own ideas concerning Guayana and ethnological boundary making with studies about the relations between Western Amazonia and the Andes (including the already mentioned work of Santos-Granero) in Neil L. Whitehead, "Imperial Realms: Anthropology, Colonialism and the Construction of Ethnological Space in South America" (text prepared for a meeting on Andean and Amazonian studies held at University of Saint Andrews, 2006; not published yet). The works of Neil Whitehead have been a main influence for my understanding of the Amazon frontiers.

[5]For an overview of the historic ethno-linguistic distribution of the Amazon populations see for example Love Eriksen, *Nature and Culture in Prehistoric Amazonia. Using G.I.S. to Reconstruct Ancient Ethnogenetic Processes from Archaeology, Linguistics, Geography, and Ethnohistory* (Lund: Lund University, 2011); Curt Nimuendaju, *Mapa Etno-Histórico do Brasil e Regiões Adjacentes* (Brasília: IPHAN, IBGE, 2017) http://portal.iphan.gov.br/uploads/publicacao/ mapaetnohistorico2ed2017.pdf (accessed on 15/03/19).

in 1616 the Portuguese began their exploration of the river and its banks, previous native dynamics played a role in their choices. This factor may contribute to our understanding why Guayana remained a poorly explored region for the Portuguese, at least in the context of the seventeenth century.[6]

The study's objective is to emphasize the historical depth of the Amazon and to re-think the processes of Portuguese conquest and colonization as part of a longer history of human activity. It also intends to reconstruct Amerindian territories and the existence of native frontier zones. In order to achieve this, it will be necessary to establish a dialogue between the colonial written records and the literature produced by disciplines such as archaeology and anthropology. The results presented below are still tentative and will certainly be affected by the appearance of new sources and studies in the years to come. The paper should therefore be perceived as an effort to establish a dialogue between historiographical issues and the ongoing debate about overall human occupation and early colonization in the Amazon region.

Pre-colonial Amerindian dynamics

Sixteenth-century European sailors were obviously not the first humans to explore the Amazon River. Millions of people before them explored, occupied and constructed the landscape of the region that is currently known as Amazonia. The margins of the Amazon River had in fact been inhabited since the late Pleistocene,[7] even if transformations occurred very slowly over the subsequent millennia. Human activity only accelerated significantly around 3,000 years ago, when a series of technological improvements facilitated rapid demographic growth in disparate areas of the lowlands.[8]

These transformations occurred both in Brazil and in Guayana, in spite of the geographical challenge posed by the Amazon, one of the biggest rivers

[6]Pablo Ibáñez-Bonillo, "La conquista portuguesa del Estuario Amazónico. Identidad, Guerra y Frontera (1612-1654)," PhD Thesis (Universidad Pablo de Olavide and University of Saint Andrews, 2016).

[7]Site of Pedra Pintada, near the current city of Monte Alegre. Anna Roosevelt *et al.*, "Paleoindian Cave Dwellers in the Amazon: The Peopling of the Americas," *Science* 272 (5260) (1996): 373-386.

[8]Eduardo Góes Neves, *Arqueologia da Amazônia* (Rio de Janeiro: Jorge Zahar Editor, 2006); Eduardo Góes Neves, "El Formativo que nunca terminó: la larga historia de estabilidad en las ocupaciones humanas de la Amazonía central," *Boletín de Arqueología PUCP* (2007): 117-142.

in the world. Artistic styles, languages, technologies and seeds crossed the wide valley of the river at different times and in different directions. Rather than an impenetrable barrier, the Amazon was thus more of a gathering point for peoples and ideas, its strategic importance being defined by communication, trade, fishery and agricultural potentialities of the *várzea*. As a consequence, the Amazon valley became inhabited by complex societies who explored these opportunities, developing types of political and military centralization, productive and ritual specialization, and the capacity to create and maintain large settlements.[9]

The first European sailors to navigate the Amazon in the sixteenth century found evidence of such complex societies and they described this evidence in their chronicles. Traditionally, however, such reports have been dismissed, given the supposed scarcity of fertile lands in the region and given the lack of correspondence between early descriptions and later reality.[10] Neither written records since the seventeenth century nor archaeological evidence seemed to support the long-standing existence of large and complex societies in the region. However, these assumptions have been challenged in the recent decades by new archaeological findings and anthropological insights. As a result, the early chronicles of the Amazon have attracted renewed attention, regaining credibility as descriptions of the social landscape.[11]

The nature of these complex societies has been the subject of an ongoing scholarly debate. Echoing the framework of evolutionary models, some authors have suggested that classic Amazonian 'tribes' may now be classified as 'chiefdoms'.[12] However, such proposals have been criticized for their use of

[9]See, for example: Michael Heckenberger & Eduardo Góes Neves, "Amazonian Archaeology", *Annual Review of Anthropology* 8 (2009): 251-266.

[10]Betty Meggers, "Environmental Limitations on the Development of Culture," *American Anthropologist*, New Series 56 (5) (1954): 801-824; Betty Meggers & Clifford Evans, *Archeological Investigations at the Mouth of the Amazon* (Washington DC: Bureau of American Ethnology, 1957); Betty Meggers, *Amazonia. Man and Culture in a Counterfeit Paradise* (Chicago: Aldine, 1971).

[11]António Porro, *As Crônicas do Rio Amazonas. Notas etno-históricas sobre as antigas populações indígenas de Amazônia* (Petrópolis: Vozes, 1993); António Porro, *O Povo das Águas. Ensaios de Etno-História Amazônica* (Petrópolis: Vozes – EDUSP, 1996); Charles C. Mann, *1491. Una nueva historia de las Américas antes de Colón* (Madrid: Editorial Taurus, 2006).

[12]Robert L. Carneiro, "A base ecológica dos cacicados amazónicos," *Revista de Arqueologia* 20 (2007): 117-154; Anna Roosevelt, "Chiefdoms in the Amazon and Orinoco," in R. Drennan & C. Uribe, *Chiefdoms in the Americas* (Lanham: University Press of America,

pre-existing models to describe social complexity in Amazonia. Rather than using the category of 'chiefdoms', new models have been developed through which to understand social interaction in the lowlands, where some features of 'chiefdoms' were not clearly discernible. Therefore, a more varied and regionally integrated social landscape has been proposed,[13] which emphasizes the existence of 'macro-systems', 'systems', 'networks' or 'spheres of interaction.'[14]

In this article I follow the latter line of interpretation, under the assumption that human communities described in the colonial sources were neither isolated nodes nor were they remnants of former chiefdoms or kingdoms, but rather part of regional networks of interaction. These networks were neither closed systems nor did they have fixed boundaries, permitting the (maybe cyclical) development (and eventual fall) of stronger polities with a high degree of regional political influence.[15] Two of these pre-European poli-

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1987), 153-185; Anna Roosevelt, "The Rise and Fall of the Amazon Chiefdoms," *L'Homme* 33: 126-128 (1993): 255-283; Denise Schaan, "The Camutins Chiefdom: Rise and Development of Complex Societies on Marajó Island, Brazilian Amazon," PhD Thesis (University of Pittsburgh, 2004); Denise Schaan, "Sobre os cacicados Amazônicos: sua vida breve e sua morte anunciada," *Jangwa Pana* 9 (1) (2010): 45-64.

[13]Eduardo Góes Neves, "Changing Perspectives in Amazonian Archaeology," in Gustavo G. Politis & Benjamin Alberti, *Archaeology in Latin America* (London: Routledge, 2005), 219-249; Denise Maria Cavalcante Gomes, "The Diversity of Social Forms in Pre-colonial Amazonia," *Revista de Arqueología Americana* 25 (2007): 189-225.

[14]Vidal and Zucchi employed the first term to describe multiethnic Amazonian polities. Silvia Vidal & Alberta Zucchi, "Efectos de las expansiones coloniales en las poblaciones indígenas del Noroeste Amazónico (1798-1830)," *Colonial Latin American Review* 8 (1): 113-132. 'Systems' and 'networks' have been used in the study of the Pre-Columbian and colonial societies of the Orinoco and Amazon basins. See H. Dieter Heinen & Álvaro García-Castro, "The Multiethnic Network of the Lower Orinoco in Early Colonial Times," *Ethnohistory* 47 (2000): 561-579; Horacio Biord Castillo, "Sistemas Interétnicos Regionales: el Orinoco y la costa noreste de la actual Venezuela en los siglos XVI, XVII y XVIII," *Diálogos Culturales* (2006): 85-120; Francisco Tiapa, "Las relaciones interétnicas entre los Warao de la frontera noroccidental del delta del Orinoco durante la época colonial," *Trocadero* 19 (2007): 215-228; Rafael A. Gassón, "Blind Men and an Elephant: Exchange Systems and Sociopolitical Organizations in the Orinoco Basin and Neighboring Areas in Pre-Hispanic Times", in C. Gnecco & C. Langebaek, eds., *Against Typological Tyranny in Archaeology. A South American Perspective* (New York: Springer, 2014): 25-42. The formulation 'spheres of interaction' was used by Arie Boomert and later by Helena Lima in her study of the Central Amazon. See Helena Pinto Lima, "História das Caretas: A tradição Borda Incisa na Amazônia Central," PhD Thesis (Universidade de São Paulo, 2008).

[15]Eduardo Góes Neves, "Ecology, Ceramic Chronology and Distribution, Long-term History, and Political Change in the Amazonian Floodplain," in Helaine Silverman & Wil-

ties, exhibiting varying degrees of socio-political centralization, were located in the region that is the focus of this article.

One of them lay at the mouth of the Tapajós River, a tributary of the right bank of the Amazon (the Tapajó culture),[16] and the other one in the island of Marajó (the Marajoara culture).[17] Studies conducted since the second half of the twentieth century have shown the social complexity of the groups who occupied these two regions in the centuries before the arrival of the Portuguese. Indeed, the two spaces are currently well known for the richly ornamented pottery of their former inhabitants.

The ethnic identity and socio-political organization of these societies are far from clear. However, it seems that the groups of the Tapajós and Marajó areas exercised a strong cultural influence over their neighbors before the seventeenth century. The Tapajó people reached their organizational peak shortly before the arrival of the Europeans while the Marajoara splendor may have occurred earlier, sometime between the fifth and fourteenth centuries. Chroniclers failed to register the language of these groups (or if they did, the sources have not been found yet), but it seems plausible to argue for a preeminence of Arawak languages in the Amazon valley in pre-Columbian times. It has indeed been suggested that Arawak languages were used as a 'lingua franca' throughout an extensive trade network in the Amazon during the first millennia of our era.[18]

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liam Isbell, eds., *Handbook of South American Archaeology* (New York: Springer, 2008): 359-379, 371-372.

[16]Anna Roosevelt, "The Development of Prehistoric Complex Societies: Amazonia, a Tropical Forest," in A. A. Bacus & L. J. Lucero, *Complex Polities in the Ancient Tropical World, Archaeological Papers of the American Anthropological Association* 9 (1999): 13-33; Denise Maria Cavalcante Gomes, *Cerâmica Arqueológica da Amazônia: Vasilhas da Coleção Tapajônica* (São Paulo: FAPESP, EDUSP, Imprensa Oficial SP, 2002); Denise Schaan, *Sacred Geographies of Ancient Amazonia: Historical Ecology of Social Complexity* (Walnut Creek: Left Coast Press, 2013).

[17]Meggers & Evans, *Archeological Investigations at the Mouth of the Amazon;* Anna Roosevelt, *Moundbuilders of the Amazon: Geophysical Archaeology on Marajó Island, Brazil* (San Diego: Academic Press, 1991); Denise Schaan, "Evidências para a permanência da cultura Marajoara à época do contato europeu," *Revista de Arqueologia* 12-13 (1999-2000): 23-42; Denise Schaan & Wagner Fernand de Veiga e Silva, "O povo das águas e sua expansão territorial: uma abordagem regional de sociedades pré-coloniais na ilha de Marajó," *Revista de Arqueologia* 17 (2004): 13-32; Denise Schaan, "The Camutins Chiefdom"; Cristiana Barreto, "Meios místicos de reprodução social: Arte e Estilo na cerâmica funerária da Amazônia antiga", PhD Thesis (Universidade de São Paulo, 2008).

Regardless of their original language, what seems clear is that the societies who occupied the Amazon valley during the first millennia, including the Tapajó and Marajoara, were affected by the arrival of foreign groups[19] and by the late expansion of two powerful language stocks in the centuries that preceded the European conquest. From Guayana, Carib languages expanded to the Caribbean Sea and to the Amazon River, while a similar current involved Tupi-speakers from Brazil. The spread of these languages was linked with the expansion of certain practices and beliefs, in what has been called 'ethno-linguistic matrices'.[20] Both Carib and Tupi matrices (whether through migration, trade or imitation) penetrated into the Amazon valley in a process that was important for the later European conquest.

The expansion of Tupi-speaking societies and the Portuguese conquest of Brazil

The Portuguese only reached the estuary of the Amazon in 1616, and they did so by following in the footsteps of the earlier expansion of Tupi languages. Linguists are still debating the geographical origin of the Tupi stock, the Brazilian state of Rondônia being the most plausible location for Proto-Tupi,

[18]Jonathan Hill & Fernando Santos-Granero, eds., *Comparative Arawakan Histories: Rethinking Language Family and Culture Area in Amazonia* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1992); Alf Hornborg, "Ethnogenesis, Regional Integration, and Ecology in Prehistoric Amazonia. Toward a System Perspective," *Current Anthropology* 46 (2005): 589-610; Love Eriksen, *Nature and Culture in Prehistoric Amazonia*; Alf Hornborg & Jonathan Hill, "Introduction: Ethnicity in Ancient Amazonia," in Alf Hornborg & Jonathan Hill, eds., *Ethnicity in Ancient Amazonia: Reconstructing Past Identities from Archaeology, Linguistics and Ethnohistory* (Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 2011), 1-30; Jonathan Hill, "Etnicidade na Amazônia Antiga: reconstruindo identidades do passado por meio da arqueologia, da linguística e da etno-história," *ILHA* 15 (1) (2013): 35-69.

[19]Denise Schaan, for example, suggested the possibility that the arrival of the Aruã had contributed to the collapse of the Marajoara regional organization. Denise Schaan, "The Camutins Chiefdom," 102. Mark Harris also suggested that the decline of the Tapajó could have been related to the Tupi-Guarani expansion. Mark Harris, "Sistemas regionais, relações interétnicas e movimentos territoriais: os Tapajó e além na história ameríndia," *Revista de Antropologia* 58 (1) (2015): 33-68, 39.

[20]Relations between language and culture are problematic, yet authors such as Fernando Santos-Granero have argued for the existence of cultural matrices linked with the principal language stocks of Amazonia. These matrices or 'ethos' would not be a set of rules, strategies or ideological constructs, but are rather to be seen as unconscious dispositions, inclinations and practices that are the basis for strategies and ideologies (and which are also influenced by them). Fernando Santos-Granero, "The Arawakan Matrix: Ethos, Language and History in Native South America," in Jonathan Hill & Fernando Santos-Granero, eds., *Comparative Arawakan Histories*, 25-50.

"the putative ancestor language."[21] From there, the Tupi languages disseminated in different directions, giving birth to several linguistic branches. One of them was the Tupi-Guarani, which expanded to the Atlantic coast before the arrival of the Europeans to the Americas. The Tupinamba and the Guarani, groups in wide contact with the Iberians since the sixteenth century, belonged to this branch.

Tupi languages and their speakers reached the Amazon River along different routes, which are still poorly understood.[22] Some of them seem to have crossed the continent, following the southern tributaries of the Amazon such as the Madeira, Tapajós and Xingu, whether by navigating or along inter-fluvial routes. Others, like the Tupinamba, seem to have reached the coast of Brazil and from there they followed the Atlantic coast until they arrived at the mouth of the Amazon. These coastal groups were still on the move during the colonial period, and their collective movements were recorded in colonial sources. While some cases can be directly interpreted as a retreat to avoid the Portuguese conquest, the deeper reason behind such journeys is not always clear.[23]

What is remarkable is that most of these movements of Tupi-speaking populations found their approximate endpoint at the Amazon River. There are few records of Tupi-speaking societies in Guayana during the colonial period and seventeenth-century written sources suggest the presence of Tupi speakers mainly on the southern bank of the Amazon and in the valley itself, as

[21]Aryon Rodrigues, "Tupí," in Robin Dixon & Alexandra Aikhenvald, eds., *The Amazonian Languages* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 107-124.

[22]Concerning this debate see José Brochado, "A expansão dos Tupi e da cerâmica da Tradição Policrômica Amazônica," *Dédalo* 27 (1989): 65-82; Greg Urban, "On the Geographical Origins and Dispersion of Tupian Languages," *Revista de Antropologia* 39 (2) (1996): 61-104; Francisco Silva Noelli, "The Tupi: Explaining Origin and Expansions in Terms of Archaeology and of Historical Linguistics," *Antiquity* (1998): 648-663; Michael Heckenberger, Eduardo Góes Neves & James B. Petersen, "De onde surgem os modelos? As origens e expansões Tupi na Amazônia Central," *Revista de Antropologia* 41 (1) (1998): 69-96; Love Eriksen & Ana Vilacy Galucio, "The Tupian Expansion," in L. O'Connor & P. Muysken, eds., *The Native Languages of South America: Origins, Development, Typology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014), 177–199.

[23]There are different hypotheses concerning the migrations and travels of the Tupi-Guarani societies during historical times. See for example Alfred Métraux, "Migrations historiques des Tupi-Guarani, » *Journal de la Sociéte des Américanistes* 19 (1927): 1-45; Renato Sztutman, "Religião Nômade ou germe do Estado? Pierre e Hélène Clastres a vertigem tupi," *Novos Estudos* 83 (2009): 129-157; Cristina Pompa, "O Profetismo Tupi-Guarani: A construção de um objeto antropológico," *Revista de Indias* 64 (230) (2004): 141-174.

was the case with the Apantos who spoke the *Lingua Geral* of Brazil.[24] Colonial records also inform us of the existence of Tupi-speaking groups on the eastern shores of Guayana and Cabo do Norte, but data concerning such groups are scarce for the early period.

Already in the eighteenth century, a French missionary dealt with the challenge of converting speakers of different languages (including Tupi groups) at the Oyapock river, near the French colony of Cayenne;[25] and in 1733 a French Jesuit wrote a letter to a Portuguese colleague in Belém asking for a dictionary and a grammar of 'brasílica', under the suspicion that the languages of certain groups at the French missions were similar to the *Lingua Geral* of Brazil.[26] It is possible that these and others Tupi-speaking groups arrived there by following northern tributaries of the Amazon and other coastal and terrestrial routes before and, maybe with greater intensity, after the Portuguese conquest.[27]

Obviously, the absence of more abundant references in colonial sources does not necessarily imply a non-existence of other Tupi-speaking groups in Guayana, but in general terms we can assume some degree of linguistic discontinuity in the Amazon valley. More specifically, the Lower Amazon and the river estuary seem to have functioned as an ethno-linguistic *frontier* or *boundary* for the Tupi-speaking societies, even before the arrival of the Portuguese in 1616.[28] The Portuguese entered the Amazon, that year, by following

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[24]Cristóbal Acuña, *Nuevo Descubrimiento del Gran Río de las Amazonas* (Madrid: Imprenta del Reino, 1641), 37 (https://archive.org/details/bub_gb_R28BAAAAQAAJ [accessed on 14/04/2018]).

[25]Jean-Marcel Hurault, *Français et Indiens en Guyane, 1604-1972* (Paris: Union Générale d'Éditions, 1972), 127-128.

[26]Karl Heinz Arenz & Pablo Ibáñez-Bonillo, "Uma correspondência transfronteiriça na Amazônia colonial: a carta do jesuíta Louis de Villette de Caiena a seu confrade José Lopes em Belém (1733)," *História Unisinos* 23 (1) (2019): 117-123.

[27]One of these groups should have been the Wajãpi. Pierre Grenand, *Ainsi parlaient nos ancêtres. Essai d'éthnohistoire Wayapi* (Paris: ORSTOM, 1982); Dominique T. Gallois, *Migração, Guerra e Comércio: os Waiapi na Guiana* (São Paulo: FFLCH-USP, 1986).

[28]"In the sixteenth century, at any rate, Tupí-speaking societies controlled the southern bank of the central and lower Amazon. Although the evidence is inconclusive, Arawak-speakers may at one point have dominated the opposite, northern bank, suggesting that the main Amazon here served as an ethnic boundary." Alf Hornborg, "Ethnogenesis, Regional Integration," 598. "At the time of contact, the middle and lower course of the Amazon River seems to have functioned as a barrier, separating the Carib and Arawak lan-

the guides and translators they procured at São Luís do Maranhão, where they had destroyed a French colony installed in 1612.[29]

Early colonial sources suggest a strong continuity between the Tupinamba of Maranhão and the inhabitants of Pará, where the Portuguese founded their first settlement in the Amazon (the current city of Belém do Pará, Brazil), perhaps near a native village.[30] A Portuguese missionary wrote that the 80 leagues separating Maranhão and Pará were inhabited by Tupinamba similar to those in Bahia, which certainly helped the Portuguese in their travels. The Jesuit Manoel Gomes also stressed that the inhabitants of the Pará River had contacts with the native of Maranhão. "All those Indians have the same qualities as those of São Luís of Maranhão," concluded Mauricio de Heriarte a few years later.[31] Their interconnections were corroborated by the existence of terrestrial and coastal routes that were also used by the Portuguese, similar to patterns witnessed earlier on in Brazil.[32]

Relations between the Portuguese and the Tupinamba (and other such groups) can indeed be traced to the beginning of the sixteenth century on the coast of Brazil, as these groups had been the main mediators between the colonizers and the Brazilian landscape ever since the days of Pedro Álvares Cabral.[33] It was through the Tupinamba that the Portuguese learned the

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guages on the northern shore from mainly Tupi- and possibly some Macro-Ge-speaking groups on the southern side of the river." Love Eriksen, *Nature and Culture in Prehistoric Amazonia*, 110.

[29]José de Morais, *História da Companhia de Jesús na extincta Provincia do Maranhão e Pará* [1759] (Rio de Janeiro, 1860), 185-187.

[30]Rui Gomes Coelho & Fernando Marques, "Processo de contato e primórdios da colonização na Baixa Bacia do Amazonas. Séculos XVI-XVII", *Arqueologia Moderna* (2011): 67-76.

[31]Serafim Leite, *História da Companhia de Jesus no Brasil*, vol. 3 (Rio de Janeiro: Imprensa Nacional, 1943), 426. The letter of Manoel Gomes was included in José de Morais, *História da Companhia de Jesús na extincta Provincia do Maranhão e Pará* [1759] (Rio de Janeiro, 1860), 78-83. Simão Estácio da Silveira, "Relação Summaria das Cousas do Maranhão", *Revista Trimensal do Instituto do Ceará* (1905): 137. Maurício Heriarte, *Descripção do Maranhão, Pará, Corupá e Rio das Amazonas* (Viena, 1874), 25.

[32]For the Tupinamba connection between São Luís do Maranhão and Pará see Pablo Ibáñez-Bonillo, "La Conquista Portuguesa," 212-228.

[33]Sérgio Buarque de Holanda, *Raízes do Brasil* (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 1995); Carlos Fausto, "Fragmentos de história e cultura tupinambá: da etnologia como instrumento crítico de conhecimento etno-histórico," in Manuela Carneiro da Cunha, ed., *História dos Índios no Brasil* (São Paulo: Fapesp & SMC & Companhia das Letras, 1992), 381-396;

routes, languages, riches and social configurations of the New World; and it was through them that the Portuguese discovered an access point to the Amazon River. The Portuguese also inherited from the Tupinamba their perception of otherness and their ethnic prejudices. Tupinamba mediation was thus of critical importance for the conquest and colonial control of the region.[34]

Language seems to have been an important issue for Tupi speakers and for their construction of valid ritual alterities. Certain terms used during colonial times to designate (at least theoretically) non-Tupi groups (like *tapuya* or *nheengaíba*, for example) had a Tupi origin and were maybe already used by natives before the Portuguese conquest.[35] Positive valuation of linguistic proximity can possibly explain the seeming popularity of Tupi languages in the Amazon valley during the years preceding the Portuguese conquest. Whatever the motives, Tupi languages rapidly spread along the Amazon River and they were widely used throughout the valley shortly after the establishment of the Portuguese in the region.[36]

John Monteiro, "The Crisis and Transformation of Invaded Societies: Coastal Brazil in the Sixteenth Century," in Frank Solomon & Stuart Schwartz, eds., *The Cambridge History of the Native Peoples of the Americas*, vol. 3, part 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 973-1023; Glória Kok, "Vestígios indígenas na cartografia do sertão da América portuguesa," *Anais do Museu Paulista* 17 (2) (2009): 91-109.

[34]M. Kittiya Lee, "Language and Conquest: Tupi-Guarani Expansion in the European Colonization of Brazil and Amazonia," in Salikoko Mufwene, ed., *Iberian Imperialism and Language Evolution in Latin America* (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago, 2014), 143-167; Almir Diniz de Carvalho Júnior, *Índios cristãos: poder, magia e religião na Amazônia colonial* (Curitiba: Editora CRV, 2017); Pablo Ibáñez-Bonillo, "La Conquista Portuguesa."

[35]For the Tupi-Tapuya pair see, for example, John Monteiro, *Negros da Terra. Índios e bandeirantes nas origens de São Paulo* (São Paulo: Companhia das Letras, 1994). The term *Nheengaíba* was a word used to define those who spoke a 'bad' language on Marajó Island. João Daniel, *Tesouro Descoberto no Máximo Rio Amazonas* I (Rio de Janeiro: Contraponto Editora, 2004), 370.

[36]"The Indians that are pacified, in the lands possessed by the Portuguese, and the ones who are friendly and can, once converted, receive the Catholic faith, sum more than a million. They speak different languages and they all understand a general one that runs all along the coast of Brazil; and this language is also understood by many other nations of Indians on the Amazon River, upstream along the river for more than 400 leagues" (translated by the author). "Descubrimiento del río de las Amazonas con sus dilatadas provincias," in Marcos Jiménez de la Espada, *Viaje del capitán Pedro Teixeira aguas arriba del río de las Amazonas (1638-1639)* (Madrid: Imprenta de Fontanet, 1889), 81.

The Xingu-Tapajós region

The Portuguese conquest of the Amazon was in fact a broader Iberian enterprise, as both Crowns had been reunited since 1580.[37] Alerted by the establishment of a series of Dutch, Irish and English factories in the Amazon and a French colony in Maranhão, the Spanish (and Portuguese) king authorized the dispatch of a small army to the region. Troops were recruited in the northern captaincies of Brazil and, from 1616 onward, Portuguese soldiers and their native allies fought a series of skirmishes against European rivals in the Amazon.[38] This European violence affected the native peoples but did not imply their disappearance, as during the middle of the seventeenth century the estuary of the Amazon was still a mosaic of ethnic networks.

By then, Tupi-speaking societies were reported in the surroundings of the city of Belém and along nearby rivers. Some of these groups were Tupinamba-like and they shared languages and practices with other groups who lived further west toward the Tocantins, Iguapé, Guanapús and Pacajá rivers, all of them flowing from south to north to discharge their waters to the south of the island of Marajó. These Tupi-speaking groups extended to the west at least as far as the Xingu River, known at the time by its Tupi name of Paranaíba.[39] It was in that direction that the first exploration and military campaigns were launched from Belém.

After consolidating their position in Belém, the Portuguese set out to occupy the Lower Amazon. The Dutch had established a colony near the mouth of the Paru River, two forts on the banks of the Xingu (Orange and

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[37]Alírio Cardoso, *Amazônia na Monarquia Hispânica: Maranhão e Grão-Pará nos tempos da União Ibérica (1580-1655)* (São Paulo: Alameda, 2017).

[38]Joyce Lorimer, *English and Irish Settlement on the River Amazon, 1550-1646* (London: Hakluyt Society, 1989).

[39]For the existence of Tupi societies in the Tocantins-Xingu region see for example Eduardo Viveiros de Castro, *Araweté. Os Deuses Canibais* (Rio de Janeiro: ANPOCS & Jorge Zahar Editor, 1986); Ana Vilacy Galucio, "A relação entre Linguística, Etnografia e Arqueologia: um estudo de caso aplicado a um sítio com ocupação tupiguarani no sul do estado do Pará," in Edithe Pereira & Vera Guapindaia, eds., *Arqueologia Amazônica* 2 (Belém: Museu Paraense Emílio Goeldi, 2010), 795-824; Fernando Ozorio Almeida, "O Complexo Tupi da Amazônia Oriental," MA Thesis (Universidade de São Paulo, 2008); Fernando Ozorio Almeida, "A Tradição Polícroma no Alto Rio Madeira," PhD Thesis (Universidade de São Paulo, 2013); Lorena Gomes Garcia, "Arqueologia na região dos interflúvios Xingu-Tocantins. A ocupação Tupi no Cateté," MA Thesis (Universidade de São Paulo, 2012).

Nassau) and a post at the current location of the city of Gurupá (near the mouth of the Xingu). From there they traded with the natives until 1623, when they were finally expelled by Iberian troops led by the captains Luis Aranha de Vasconcelos and Bento Maciel Parente.[40] Unfortunately, current knowledge of these ventures does not reveal the ethnic or linguistic background of the native partners. Ethnonyms and place names in the region do not shed light on such issues either, although there is evidence suggesting a Tupi regional influence. Later ethnohistorical information confirms the existence of Tupi groups in the Lower Xingu area, including the Taconhapé, who gave name to that region in early colonial times,[41] the Juruna (current Judjá), the Xipaya, the Tapirapé and the Araweté.

These groups inhabited both banks of the Lower Xingu, but it is not clear whether they also occupied its confluence with the Amazon. In fact, the banks of the Amazon River between the Xingu and the Tapajós seem to have been sparsely inhabited at the time of European conquest, by groups that have not been described in detail in the available written sources. The existence of 'buffer zones' between regional polities has also been detected along other parts of the river, but the meaning of these empty spaces is not yet entirely clear.[42] European sailors did not have an explanation either for such a patchy pattern of occupation. Their knowledge was clearly constrained by their Amazon River experiences.

In this sense, European observers were barely able to guess at the existence of native spaces in the interior, beyond the banks of the Amazon. Captain Pedro Teixeira, for example, wrote that

> passing beyond that river [Xingu] one goes traveling overland until the Tapajós, which is eighty leagues from Curupá, and all this way is depopulated along the river … but two or three leagues into the interior the Indians who are there are countless.[43]

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[40]George Edmundson, *The Dutch on the Amazon and Negro in the Seventeenth Century* (London, 1908); Guida Marques, "L'invention du Brésil entre deux monarchies. Gouvernement et pratiques politiques de l'Amérique portugaise dans l'union ibérique (1580-1640)," PhD Thesis (École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, 2009), 316-343.

[41]Rafael Chambouleyron, "O Sertão dos Taconhapé. Cravo, índios e guerras no Xingu Seiscentista," in Alírio Cardoso & César Martins de Souza, *Histórias do Xingu. Fronteiras, espaços e territorialidades (séculos XVII-XXI)* (Belém: Editora Universitária UFPA, 2008): 51-74.

[42]Warren R. DeBoer, "Buffer Zones in the Cultural Ecology of Aboriginal Amazonia: An Ethnohistorical Approach," *American Antiquity* 46 (2) (1981): 364-377.

With the same limitations, other colonial sources mentioned the existence of terrestrial routes used by the natives to travel from the Xingu to the Tapajós valley.[44]

Pedro Teixeira's narrative offered some details regarding the inhabitants of the region between the Xingu and Tapajós rivers. He wrote that some of them used poisoned arrows and were cannibals.[45] Other colonial sources confirmed his observations, referring also to other traditions such as preservation of the heads of enemies[46] or facial and body decoration with black vegetable dye (*genipa*).[47] Some of these practices resembled those of the Tupinamba and, by extension, of the Tupi ethno-linguistic matrix.[48] Obviously, such coincidence does not necessarily suggest ethnic or socio-political links

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[43]Pedro Teixeira, "Relação do Rio das Amazonas," translated in António Porro, *As Crônicas do Rio Amazonas*, 120-126, 121.

[44]The missionary Gorzoni mentioned a terrestrial route between the Xingu and the Tapajós River: "Last year I wrote to your Paternity, thanking you for restoring me to the mission in Xinguens (…) But it is very difficult to secure a route out of these forests to the Xinguens river, either by water or by land. For that reason, the route to the Topajo river is easy – fifteen full days through the forests and hills. Even so, it is not without its difficulty and other vexations." Letter of João Maria Gorzoni, Pará (22/07/1698), Archivum Romanum Societatis Iesum (ARSI), Roma, Bras. 26, fols. 184-185 (transcribed by Mark Harris, translated from Latin by Peter Maxwell-Stuart).

[45]António Porro, *As Crônicas do Rio Amazonas*, 121.

[46]The ritual use of enemies' heads seems to have been frequent in the Amazon. The first mention of this practice can be found in the chronicle of Gaspar de Carvajal, who baptized a region as the Province of the 'Picotas' (pillories), as they found many of them "y en las picotas clavadas muchas cabezas de muertos". Gaspar Carvajal, *Descubrimiento del río de las Amazonas* (Sevilla: Imprenta de E. Rasco, 1844), 54. This province was located somewhere between the Madeira and Tapajós rivers. Bettendorf wrote about the Nhunhuns: "Porém, eles possuíam cabeças mumificadas dos inimigos que parecem ainda vivas. Olhando para elas, eles se deleitam sobremaneira." ARSI, cod. Bras 9, fols. 259^{r}-267^{v}, 260^{r} (translated by Karl Heinz Arenz).

[47]The Juruna and the Jacipoya (Xipaya) also used the black dye, given that the term 'juruna' means 'black mouth' in Tupi. José de Morais, *História da Companhia de Jesús*, 504-505. Pedro Teixeira, "Relação do Rio das Amazonas," translated in António Porro, *As Crônicas do Rio Amazonas*, 120-126, 121. Other groups, like the Mawé, Munduruku or Araweté, used black dyes in different contexts.

[48]Métraux considered that the Yuruna, Chipaya and Curuaya could be seen as the current representatives of Tupinamba material culture, at least in some practices such as architecture or feather decoration. However, he also stated that there were many differences between these groups and the historical Tupinamba. Alfred Métraux, *La civilisation matérielle des tribus Tupi-Guarani* (Paris: Librairie Orientaliste Paul Geuthner, 1928), 308.

between the Tupinamba and the Xingu groups, but rather a cultural proximity with multiple possible explanations.

These cultural continuities did not stop at the Xingu but extended west to the Tapajós River. Early cartography identified in this section of the valley several places names derived from the term *Curupa* or *Gurupá*,[49] a term also used to designate a wandering and cannibal group on the banks of the Tapajós river.[50] The use of this term permits us to visualize a space where different indigenous groups (maybe Tupi, Carib and also Arawak) coexisted under the influence of the Tapajós culture, as can be observed in the distribution and styles of pottery remains.[51]

Northern tributaries of the Amazon (Maicuru, Paru)

The peoples inhabiting the opposite bank of the Amazon were also included in this blurred network of interactions, in what some authors have called the Province of Tapuyussus or Tapuiuços, starting in Curupap.[52] According

[49]The place name Curupa appears in the sources dating to the first half of the seventeenth century, between the mouths of the Xingu and Tapajós rivers. Colonial administrators maintained the name when creating the captaincy of Gurupá, centered on the village of the same name. In front of the city one can find the Ilha Grande de Gurupá, known in early colonial cartography as Corpokery. On the northern bank of the Amazon, some 200 kilometers from Gurupá, one could find the river (current Maicuru River) and village of Curupatuba (current Monte Alegre), *–tuba* being a term attested in Tupi languages. Curt Nimuendaju proposed that the term was related to the *Lingua Geral*, translating it as "the place where the Corupá [=trees] are". Curt Nimuendaju, *Pursuit of a Past Amazon. Archaeological Researches in the Brazilian Guyana and in the Amazon Region*, Per Stenborg, ed. (Göteborg: Etnologiska Studiera, 2004), 145. The origin of the term Gurupá is uncertain. It was maybe related with the Corupa or Curupa, a plant widely distributed in the continent (under this or other names). Groups such as the Omagua used the *corupa* in their rituals, as stated by observers like Juan Magnin or Charles Marie de La Condamine.

[50]João Daniel, *Tesouro descoberto no máximo Rio Amazonas*, 364.

[51]The *ribeirinho* communities of the Xingu region keep collections of zoomorphic and anthropomorphic pieces which formed portions of vessels in the past. These pieces show a strong influence of the pottery from the Santarém area (Tapajós), although this influence diminishes to the east, where *koriabo* influences can be detected. Curt Nimuendaju already noted that some pottery remains, rich in plastic adornment, from the lower Xingu and lower Iriri rivers, recall "somewhat the pottery of the Monte Alegre region or even of the Tapajó." Curt Nimuendaju, "Tribes of the Lower and Middle Xingu River," in *Handbook of South American Indians,* Vol. 3 (Washington D.C: Smithsonian Instituion, 1948), 216.

[52]Antonio Vázquez de Espinosa, *Compendio y descripción de las Indias Occidentales* (Washington: The Smithsonian Institution, 1948), 73. The Jesuit Conrad Pfeil also mentioned the Tapuiuço group, headed by Cuiy'ba, whose lands ran from the Tucuju province to

to written sources, the mouth of rivers such as the Trombetas, Nhamundá, Maicuru and Paru were occupied by a medley of groups, allegedly speakers of Tupi, Carib and Arawak languages. These groups were linked to the Amazon River, as they were exposed to the Tapajó culture and had entertained contacts with European boats since the sixteenth century. However, they also seemed to have maintained relations with the interior of Guayana, even though it is difficult to reconstruct the background of these native worlds through written colonial records.[53]

As has already been stated, European observers were usually confined to the Amazon valley. Knowledge of the interior regions was accessible only via Amerindian mediators. From such mediators, the Europeans garnered marvelous stories of the hills situated some miles into the interior of Guayana.[54] These stories mentioned the circulation of metals, golden cities, and other details that may have been referencing powerful groups that posed a challenge of otherness to the native informants. According to later ethnohistorical and ethnographic accounts, we can assume that these interior regions were populated by, at least, several Carib-speaking groups.

The reports of the first Europeans to sail the Amazon described overland trails that linked the northern Amazon shore to the interior regions, al-

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the Trombetas. Mark Harris, "The Making of Regional Systems: The Tapajós/Madeira and Trombetas/Nhamundá Regions in the Lower Brazilian Amazon, Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries," *Ethnohistory* 65 (4) (2018): 621-645, 626.

[53]For a detailed study of the regional ensembles around the Tapajós and Trombetas area see Mark Harris, "Sistemas regionais, relações interétnicas"; Mark Harris, "The Making of Regional Systems."

[54]Walter Raleigh, for example, wrote that "Undoubtedly those that trade Amazones returne much gold, which (as is aforesaid) commeth by trade from Guayana, by some branch of a river that falleth from the country into Amazones, and either it is by the river which passeth by the nations called Tisnados, or by Carepuna." Sir Walter Raleigh, *The Discoverie of the Large, Rich and Bewtiful Empyre of Guayana* (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1997), 145. Some decades later, the Jesuit Cristóbal de Acuña wrote that a certain river on the northern bank of the Amazon ("Curupatuba", maybe the Maicuru) was poor in water, but not in treasures. According to the natives, the river was called Yriquiriqui and traveling upriver for six days one could find gold in the slopes of a hill called Yaguaracuru. There was also news of another nearby hill called Picuru, from where white metal (maybe silver) could be gained. The Jesuit added that similar treasures could be expected for the Ginipape River (current Paru). Cristóbal Acuña, *Nuevo Descubrimiento*, 39-40. Similar information about the existence of metals between Yaguaracuru and Genipapo can be found in the account of Pedro Teixeira, in António Porro, *As Crônicas do Rio Amazonas*, 121.

though the Europeans did not fully explore the latter.[55] The interior of Guayana remained thus associated for a long time with myths such as the Parime Lake or the Amazon warriors. Aside from their colonial background, such fabulous stories carried information about native praxis and may have also been a product of native knowledge.[56] Most of them were passed from Tupi informers to the Iberians, the story of the female Amazon warriors being a clear example of the transmission of knowledge from natives to Europeans.

According to the chief Aparia, whose lands were located somewhere in the middle to upper Amazon, the marvelous females were called *Coniupuyara*, which translates as 'big ladies' ("grandes señoras"). Their queen was called Coñori, a term that seems to derive from the Tupi word for 'woman'. The narratives consistently placed the Coniupuyara on the northern shore of the Amazon, somewhere between the Nhamundá and Trombetas rivers.[57] All of this information was gathered by the native inhabitants of the Amazon valley. However, even the Tupinamba from the French colony of São Luís do Maranhão knew about such matriarchies in Guayana, suggesting that they possessed a broader knowledge of the northern banks of the Amazon.[58]

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[55]Antonio Vázquez de Espinosa, *Compendio y Descripción*, 385-386; Gaspar Carvajal, *Descubrimiento del río de las Amazonas*, 45-46, 54.

[56]Neil Whitehead, "El Dorado, Cannibalism and the Amazons. European Myth and Amerindian Praxis in the Conquest of South America," in W. Pansters & J. Weerdenberg, eds., *Beeld en Verbeelding van Amerika* (Utrecht: University of Utrecht Press, 1992), 53-70; Pablo Ibáñez-Bonillo, "Historia de dos islas. Los mitos coloniales de la Isla Brasil y la Isla Guayana," *Memorias: Revista Digital de Historia y Arqueología desde el Caribe* 26 (2015): 278-321.

[57]Gaspar Carvajal, *Descubrimiento del río de las Amazonas*, 22. The Amazons ruled over several regional chiefs, such as Couynco or Quenyuc. Gaspar Carvajal, *Descubrimiento del río de las Amazonas*, 66-67. Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo added that this queen had several vassal 'princes', among them Topayo (perhaps Tapajós) and Chipayo (perhaps Xipaya): Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo, *Historia General y Natural de las Indias, Islas y Tierra-Firme del Mar Océano,* III (IV) (Madrid: Imprenta de la Real Academia de la Historia, 1855), 389.

[58]The Tupinamba of Maranhão thought that the Amazons lived on a big island and that they had previously been daughters and wives of the Tupinamba. Ives d'Evreux, *Viagem ao Norte do Brasil* (São Luís do Maranhão: Typ. do Frias, 1874), 23. Moreover, one of the local chiefs presented a few Indian captives from the Amazon river to the French; these captives allegedly used to spend some time every year with the Amazon warriors. Claude Abbeville, *Histoire de la Mission des Pères Capucins en l'isle de Maragnan et terres circonvoisines* (Paris: Imprimerie de François Huby, 1614), 159 (http://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k57399d [accessed on 15/04/2018]). Roque Chávez Osorio also asserted the existence of the Amazons among

In any case, the existence of powerful chiefdoms in the interior of Guayana seems to have been a constant feature of the information gathered from natives. Their speculations were also reinforced by rare first-hand testimonies. The Dominican friar Gaspar de Carvajal, for example, reported encounters with the inhabitants of the Province of the *Tiznados* or Black People, a region situated somewhere between the rivers Trombetas and Paru (the latter was known as Genipapo at the time). According to Carvajal, these people were "taller than bigger men" and they were all painted in black. They fought against the Spaniards, who abandoned the idea of attacking the villages that held "too many people."

> The captain asked the above mentioned Indian which land was that one and to whom it was subjected, and he said that that land and villages alike, with many others that were not in sight, belonged to a very big lord named Arripuna, who controlled much land, (and) that upriver there were eighty journeys until a lake situated to the north, which was thickly populated, and which was ruled by another lord named Tinamostón; but he says that this one is a very big warrior and that they eat human flesh, which is not eaten in all the land that we have traveled until here.[59]

In Carvajal's narrative we find again populous societies, powerful lords and a mythical lake. Yet we also find some cultural practices that seem familiar to the groups of the already mentioned network, such as the use of black dye to paint bodies, cannibalism, or the use of poisoned arrows,[60] reinforcing the idea of cultural continuities and interactions among the regions. Pottery remains also support the idea of a certain integration between both banks of the Amazon: the Konduri style of the Trombetas region shows clear affinity with the pottery of Santarém in the Tapajós area,[61] while Koriabo pi-

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the Tupinamba (Antonio Vázquez de Espinosa, *Compendio y Descripción,* 75-76).

[59]Gaspar Carvajal, *Descubrimiento del río de las Amazonas*, 70 (translated by the author).

[60]For example, Carvajal signaled the existence of the poisoned weapons that killed the Spaniard Antonio de Carranza in 24 hours, as being used in an area not far (two days of travel) from the Arripuna lands. Gaspar Carvajal, *Descubrimiento del río de las Amazonas*, 70-71.

[61]Vera Guapindaia, "Além da margem do rio – a ocupação Konduri e Pocó na região de Porto Trombetas, PA," PhD Thesis (Universidade de São Paulo, 2008). Per Stenborg, "Points of Convergence – Routes of Divergence: Some Considerations Based on Curt Nimuendajú's Archaeological Work in the Santarém – Trombetas Area and at Amapá", in Neil L. Whitehead & Stephanie W. Alemán, eds., *Anthropologies of Guayana. Cultural Spaces in Northeastern Amazonia* (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 2009): 55-73. Denise

eces are found both on the southern bank (mainly in the Xingu mouth area) and on the northern bank of the Amazon.[62] In addition to all of this, reports about the circulation of stone idols and *muiraquitãs* also suggest regional connections between the two shores of the river.[63]

The etymology of the term *Arripuna* also contributes to this debate. In later sources, this term shifts to *Caripuna* or *Carepuna*, a term in use since then to define the whole province and its inhabitants. However, it does not seem that *Caripuna* was an ethnonym linked to a specific group. As Nadia Farage has shown in her studies of the Rio Branco region, *Caripuna* rather seems to have functioned as a relational exonym along ethnic or linguistic frontiers.[64] In that sense, the term is neither exclusively related with the northern shore of the Amazon nor with a specific language family.

It has also been proposed that *Caripuna* might derive from a Tupi language, being perhaps linked with the practice of black body-painting (*–una*, for

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Maria Cavalcante Gomes, "Cronologia e conexões culturais na Amazônia: as sociedades formativas da região de Santarém – PA," *Revista de Antropologia* 54 (1) (2011): 269-314.

[62]The geographical origin of the Koriabo phase has been located in the interior of Guayana. Stéphen Rostain, "The Archaeology of the Guianas: An Overview," in Helaine Silverman & William H. Isbell, eds., *Handbook of South American Archaeology* (New York: Springer, 2008): 279-302, 299. Mariana Cabral, "Juntando cacos: Uma reflexão sobre a classificação da fase Koriabo no Amapá," *Amazônica* 3 (1) (2011): 88-106; Anna T. Browne Ribeiro, Helena P. Lima, Fernando Marques, Morgan J. Schmidt & Kevin S. McDaniel, "Results from Pilot Archaeological Fieldwork at the Carrazedo site, Lower Xingu River, Amazonia," *Latin American Antiquity* 27(3) (2016): 318–339.

[63]The mouths of the Nhamundá, Trombetas and Tapajós were some of the central areas for the production of these green amulets. Arie Boomert, "Gifts of the Amazon. 'Green Stone' Pendants and Beads as Items of Ceremonial Exchange in Amazonia and the Caribbean," *Antropológica* 67 (1987): 33-54. Marcondes Lima da Costa, Anna Cristina Resque Lopes da Silva & Rómulo Simões Angélica, "Muyrakytá ou Muiraquitã, um talismã arqueológico em jade procedente da Amazônia: Uma revisão histórica e considerações antropogeológicas", *Acta Amazonica* 32 (3) (2002): 467-490.

[64]Farage deems that Caripuna, as the term Carib, does not refer to a specific ethnic group, but to a relational concept that defines an enemy and cannibal otherness. Additionally, the term Caripuna possibly carries geographical information, *–puna* or *–pona* being an adverb of place in several Carib languages. Nádia Farage, *As muralhas dos sertões. Os povos indígenas no rio Branco e a colonização* (Rio de Janeiro: Editora Paz e Terra – ANPOCS, 1991), 101-109; Antonella Maria Imperatriz Tassinari, "Karipunas e Brasileiros. A trajetória de dois termos. Uma contribuição à história indígena da região do baixo Rio Oiapoque," XXI Encontro Anual da ANPOCS (1998); Antonella Maria Imperatriz Tassinari, *No bom da festa: O proceso de construção cultural das famílias Karipuna do Amapá* (São Paulo: EDUSP, 2013).

'black' in Tupi).[65] That would explain the recurrence of the term in other regions with a Tupi presence, for example in the state of Rondônia (Brazil)[66] or in the Uaçá-Oyapock region.[67] However, similar terms were also employed in other regions to the north of the Amazon associated with Carib-speaking societies,[68] and even in contexts of Carib-Arawak relations including the Lesser Antilles.[69] Tupi, Carib and Arawak perspectives should therefore be taken into account in any attempt to understand the identity of the Caripunas mentioned in written sources, who appear to us as an intermediary group located between the Amazon valley and the highlands of Guayana.

Estuary of the Amazon and Cabo do Norte

The cultural traits outlined in the previous pages, for the Lower Amazon, are less evident to the east of the Paru River, where the Amazon flows into the ocean through a maze of islands and narrow channels (including the Canal do Norte). In colonial times the mainland region to the east of the Paru River was known to the Portuguese as *Sertão dos Tucujús* and it was included in the broader region of the Cabo do Norte (North Cape), which approximately matches the current Brazilian state of Amapá. We do not know with certainty who these Tucujús were, neither do we know what language they spoke (maybe Arawak or Carib), but they occupied a frontier zone between Marajó and the already mentioned Province of Tapuiuços. They were not alone there, as other groups inhabited the Cabo do Norte and the mouth of the Amazon in early colonial times.

[65]António Porro, *As Crônicas do Rio Amazonas*, 72.

[66]The Karipuna of Rondônia speak a Tupi-Guarani language. They were referred in the early sources as 'Black Mouths', due to their tradition of painting their mouths black (pib.socioambiental.org/pt/povo/karipuna-de-rondonia [accessed on 17/04/2018]).

[67]Lux Vidal, *Os povos indígenas do Uaçá: Karipuna, Palikur e Galibi-Marworno. Uma abordagem cosmológica: o mito da Cobra-Grande em contexto* (Relatório Fapesp, Mimeo, 1997); Antonella Maria Imperatriz Tassinari, *No bom da festa*.

[68]The Wayana seem to have used the term 'karipono' to refer to forms of alterity. Antontella Maria Imperatriz Tassinari, "Karipunas e Brasileiros," 3.

[69]Neil Whitehead, "Ethnic Plurality and Cultural Continuity in the Native Caribbean. Remarks and Uncertainties as to Data and Theory," in Neil Whitehad, ed., *Wolves from the Sea* (Leiden: KITLV Press, 1995), 91-111; Simone Dreyfus, "Les réseux politiques indigènes en Guyane occidentale et leurs transformations aux XVII^{e} et XVIIIe siècles," *L'Homme* 32 (122-124) (1992): 75-98, 92.

The groups of this region seem to have enjoyed political autonomy, but they also shared some cultural traits, such as the use of anthropomorphic and zoomorphic funerary urns for their mortuary rituals. Even if funerary urns were in fact common all along the Amazon River (and Amazonia), we find here a series of diversified but connected archaeological cultures organized around rivers such as the Maracá and Mazagão, stretching to Macapá and the Marajó archipelago.[70] We do not know with certainty the language or ethnic identity of the societies who lived in this sector of the Amazon. What we know, though, is that their use of funerary urns connected them in some way with the older Marajoara urns and with the inhabitants of the coastal sections of Amapá, where urns have also been found (Aristé, for example).[71] Some of these regional urns possibly relate to European presence since the sixteenth century.[72]

Another important trait, for the Canal do Norte and the rest of the mouth of the Amazon in the colonial records, is the apparently weak influence of Tupi languages. It is true that we find place names that might be correlated with a Tupi origin, especially in late colonial sources. However, information gathered during the early colonial period does not offer clear evidence for the presence of Tupi speaking groups in this area, which might

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[70]Betty Meggers & Clifford Evans, *Archeological Investigation;* Vera Guapindaia, "Encountering the Ancestors. The Maracá Urns," in Colin McEwan, Cristiana Barreto & Eduardo Góes Neves, *Unknown Amazon* (London: British Museum, 2001): 156-173.

[71]For an overview of the archeology of the region see Stéphen Rostain, "¿Qué hay de nuevo al norte? Apuntes sobre el Aristé," *Revista de Arqueologia* 24 (21) (2011): 10-31; Stéphen Rostain, "Where the Amazon River meets the Orinoco River. Archaeology of the Guayana," *Amazônica, Revista de Antropologia* 4 (1) (2012): 10-28.

[72]As Martijn van den Bel has noted, the Aristé phase can be attributed to the proto or early historic period, since European objects have been found at Aristé burial sites. Martijn van den Bel, "The Journal of Lourens Lourenszoon and his 1618-1625 Stay among the Arocouros on the Lower Cassiporé River, Northern Amapá State, Brazil," *Boletim do Museu Paraense Emílio Goeldi* 4 (2) (2009): 303-317, 305. Coronel Lima Guedes also found "*missanga*" in an urn at the Ilha de Terra Preta, in the Maracá region, that led him to posit a historical periodization for that cemetery. Aureliano Pinto de Lima Guedes, "Relatório sobre uma missão ethnographica e archeologica aos rios Maracá e Anauerá-Pucú (Guyana Brazileira)," *Boletim do Museu Paraense de Historia Natural e Ethnographia* 2 (1-4) (1897-1898): 42-63, 53 (https://www.biodiversitylibrary.org/bibliography/64575#/summary [accessed 18/03/2019]). Nimuendaju also found several European objects at sites on the Caviana island. Curt Nimuendaju, *In Pursuit of a Past Amazon*, 61-95, 101-102. For further information about Caviana Island see Juliana Salles Machado, "Ilha Caviana: sobre as suas paisagens, tempos e transformações," *Amazônica, Revista de Antropologia* 6 (2) (2014): 283-313.

rather be associated with Carib and Arawak speakers who used to trade with the European ships that visited the region since the closing years of the sixteenth century.

After these early encounters, Europeans started to establish permanent factories and plantations in the region. The Irish and English settled along the Cajarí and maybe Maracá Rivers, some distance inland of their confluence with the Amazon. Their choice may have been influenced by the position of pre-existing native settlements. As was the case in other parts of the Amazon valley, the banks of the main river appear in early written sources to have been sparsely inhabited. Here too European observers recorded the existence of overland paths leading into the interior, which surely contributed to the regional circulation of people, products and techniques.[73]

The existence of certain regional cultural traits was perhaps a consequence of such circulation. Besides the already mentioned distribution of anthropomorphic funerary urns, one can detect other continuities such as marginal reports of cannibalism[74] and the use of red dye (based on *urucú*) for body painting. The English sailor John Ley identified both of these traits among the Aruã, an Arawak-speaking group, at the onset of the seventeenth century.[75] Other authors have noted the evidence of red-painted bones in Caviana and the Oyapock estuary region.[76] At the same time, some of the funerary urns from the Maracá culture appear to have been painted red and

[73]"... fuimos caminando por la dicha parte algunas leguas por tierra mucho buena, excepto que á la lengua del agua no había poblado, que todo parecía la tierra adentro; no supimos qué era la cabsa. Así fuimos costeando: vimos lo poblado en parte donde no nos podíamos aprovechar dello, y más se parecía unas fortalezas sobre unos cerros y lo más peladas, que estarían del río dos ó tres leguas: no supimos qué señor señoreaba esta tierra, más de que el indios nos dijo que en aquellas fortalezas se hacían fuertes cuando les daban guerra, pero no supimos quién era el que se las daba" … "el Capitán mandó que se fuese a ver la tierra dentro en una legua por ver y saber qué tierra era: y así, fueron, y no caminaron una legua cuando los que iban dan la vuelta, dicen al Capitán como la tierra iba siempre mejorando porque era todo sábanas y los montes como dicho habemos, y parecía mucho rastro de gente que venía por allí a caza, y que no era cosa de pasar adelante" (Gaspar Carvajal, *Descubrimiento del río de las Amazonas*, 74-75). The open lands described by Carvajal could have been located near the mouth of the Jari River. See António Porro, *As Crônicas do Rio Amazonas*, 73.

[74]Although cannibalism was not noticed by most authors of the time, there is a report by a Dutch castaway who informs us about cannibal practices in the region. Martijn Van den Bel, "The Journal of Lourens Lourenszoon."

[75]Joyce Lorimer, *English and Irish Settlement on the River Amazon. 1550-1646* (London: Hakluyt Society, 1989): 136.

yellow. However, white and black pigments have also been found,[77] and all of these colors are also common in other areas of the Amazon region.

On the other hand, the hypothetical presence of such traits does not imply ethnic or linguistic homogeneity. In fact, the Cabo de Norte region (delimited by the Jari and the Oyapock rivers, the Atlantic Ocean and the Marajó Island) was also occupied by multiethnic and multilingual networks.[78] Arawak-speaking groups (like the Aruã, Maraon and the Arocouro, the possible ancestors of the current Palikur)[79] and Carib-speaking groups (like the Kalina)[80] participated in these networks since before the arrival of the Europeans. Other groups (like the Yao and Paragoto) arrived to the region from the Orinoco River and the Caribbean Sea only after the Spanish conquest, fleeing from the violence of the Europeans just like the Tupinamba, who had fled from Brazil.[81]

All of these groups operated in the Cabo do Norte and sometimes they occupied multi-ethnic settlements which served as trading ports. As we read in colonial sources, at least two of these strategic points in the Amazon estuary were known as Sapno, Sapanow or Sapanapoque. These places were meeting points where different ethnic groups (like the Arocouro, Maraon and Aruã) traded with Europeans.[82] The term seems to derive from the

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[76]Curt Nimuendaju, *In Pursuit of a Past Amazon,* 82-90; Stéphen Rostain, "Archéologie du littoral de Guyane. Une région charnière entre les influences culturelles de l'Orénoque et de l'Amazone," *Journal de la Société des Américanistes* 80 (1994): 9-46, 19.

[77]Vera Guapindaia, "Encountering the Ancestors," 165-166.

[78]Françoise & Pierre Grenand, "La côte d'Amapa, de la bouche de l'Amazone a la baie d'Oyapock, a travers la tradition orale Palikur," *Boletim do Museu Paraense Emilio Goeldi* 3 (1) (1987): 1-77; Simone Dreyfus, "Les Réseux politiques indigènes."

[79]Alan Passes, "Both Omphalos and Margin: On how the Pa'ikwené (Palikur) see Themselves to be at the Center and on the Edge at the Same Time," in Jonathan D. Hill & Fernando Santos-Granero, *Comparative Arawakan Histories: Rethinking Language Family and Culture Area in Amazonia* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2002), 171-195; Alan Passes, "The Gathering of the Clans: The Making of the Palikur Naoné," *Ethnohistory* 51 (2) (2004): 257-291; Martijn Van den Bel, "The Journal of Lourens Lourenszoon."

[80]Gérard Collomb & Félix Tiouka, *Na'na Kali'na. Une histoire des Kali'na en Guyane* (Cayenne: Ibis Rouge Éditions, 2000).

[81]"... & on estime que les Caribes sont les anciens habitans de ces regions, car les Yaos, Sappai, Arwacas & Paragoti, se sont retirés là de l'Isle de la Trinidad ou des Provinces de l'Oronoque, chassés par les Espagnols ou craignans leur cruauté..." (Joannes de Laet, *Histoire du Nouveau Monde ou Description des Indes Occidentales* (Leiden, 1640), 580).

Aruã word for 'food',[83] which perhaps evokes the exchange of food between natives and Europeans in such multi-ethnic 'markets'. The appearance of similar terms in neighboring regions, such as Sapanara in the Marajó bay or Supanes on the Paru River, may indicate broader regional interactions.[84]

In this sense, these groups may have also been connected with neighboring regions, such as the interior of Marajó Island, where the descendants of the once important Marajoara culture lived.[85] Although we can assume that these regions were historically connected, the nature of their interactions is still unclear. For the purposes of this article it is enough to underline the apparently non-Tupi nature of these people, who were known by names such as Sacaca and Nheengaíba ('those who speak a bad language') in Portuguese records. As far as we know, the Tupinamba did not occupy the island on a permanent basis and Marajó, the Cabo do Norte and the rest of Guayana were frontier regions for them when the Portuguese reached the Amazon. Obviously, this does not mean that the Tupinamba did not travel to Marajó or Cabo do Norte, but that these regions were certainly less familiar to them.

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[82]Hulsman wrote that Sapno might have been a trading point between Europeans and several native groups of the current Amapá territory. Lodewijk Hulsman, "Swaerooch: o comércio holandês com índios no Amapá (1600-1615)," *Revista de Estudos Amazônicos* 6 (1) (2011): 178-202. Further see Sarah Tyacke, "English Charting of the River Amazon c. 1595–c. 1630," *Imago Mundi* 32 (1980): 73-89; Jesse de Forest, "A Voyage to Guayana. Being the Journal of Jesse de Forest and his Colonists," in Robert W. de Forest, *A Wallon Family in America. Lockwood de Forest and his Forbears, 1500-1848,* 2 (Boston and New York: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1914): 171-279.

[83]Domingo Soares Ferreira Penna, "Algumas palavras da língua dos índios Aruans," *Archivos do Museu Nacional do Rio de Janeiro* 4 (1881): 15-25 (http://biblio.etnolinguistica.org/penna_1881_aruans (accessed: 27/03/2018)).

[84]A region to the south of Marajó Island was known to the Portuguese as 'punta de Saparará', but in Dutch records it appears in slightly different forms, such as Sappernoe. Décio de Alencar Guzmán & Lodewijk Hulsman, *Holandeses na Amazônia (1620-1650): documentos inéditos* (Belém: IOE, 2016), 81. In the chronicle of the pilot André Pereira edited by Marcos Jiménez de la Espada we find two version of this place-name: Sapanara and Saparara. Marcos Jiménez de la Espada, *Viaje del Capitán Pedro Teixeira,* 116. On the other hand, an English source mentioned the Supanes as native allies of the Dutch from the Paru. Lorimer remembers that John Hemming also noted a connection between the terms Supanes and Sapno, when suggesting that a European observer may had mistaken the name of the ethnic group due to the similarities of both terms (Joyce Lorimer, *English and Irish Settlement,* 163-165).

[85]Denise Schaan, "Evidências para a permanencia."

Final considerations

The preceding pages have shown that interaction and cultural continuities prevailed between the two shores of the Amazon River ever since pre-Columbian times and that these interactions and continuities were still sustained in the early seventeenth century. The groups who inhabited the banks of the Amazon permitted a circulation of information, technologies and products between Guayana and Brazil, despite these groups being neither necessarily related in language nor in ethnic identity. The pre-historical integration of these spaces allow us to historicize the frontier nature of the Amazon River since the early seventeenth century and the later fragmentation of the political and ethnological spaces of Brazil and Guayana.[86]

Secondly, we have shown that most groups in the region under study participated in regional networks (Tapuiuços, Gurupá-Xingu, Karipuna, Tucujús, Amazon mouth), usually arranged around the lower sections of the main Amazon tributaries. In turn, these networks were integrated into broader spaces of communication, where perhaps few cultural traits would have been shared. From the Tapajós to the Xingu and Paru rivers, speakers of different languages travelled, warred and traded in a network that ran also into the interior of Guayana. To the east of the Paru and Jari rivers, Arawak and Carib speakers (among others) engaged in trade and wars with societies related to the older Marajoara culture and the Atlantic coast of Guayana.

Third, it has been suggested that there was some sort of correspondence between such regional patterns of interaction and the spheres of influence of two cultural traditions (Tapajó and Marajoara) that held a remarkable regional sway over the Lower Amazon and the river estuary well before the arrival of the first Europeans. These traditions are documented in data analyzed by archaeologists, such as complex pottery, artificial mounds or anthropogenic dark earth (ADE), but they are also traceable in early colonial records that refer to the political control and human mobilization of the Tapajó. These societies lost most of their capacity to articulate regional polities before the arrival of the Europeans, but their cultural influence over their neighbors were still felt.[87]

Fourth, the existence of these different regional networks did not imply the isolation of each network or a lack of interaction among their respective

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[86]Neil L. Whitehead, "Imperial Realms."

[87]Love Eriksen, *Nature and Culture in Prehistoric Amazonia*, 119.

participants. On the contrary, the patterns of socialization suggested in this paper point to frequent interactions between local networks that resulted in a mediated integration of the Lower Amazon, Guayana, Marajó and the Brazilian coast. The present study suggests that the linguistic and ethnic frontiers under investigation possessed an alleged integrative and dynamic nature before the Portuguese conquest of the Amazon River as well as during the colonial period, as was the case with other interethnic and physical frontiers in the Amazon during colonial times.[88]

Reflecting these notions, it is proposed here that certain sections of the Amazon valley were sparsely populated, suggesting frontier 'gaps' among peoples inhabiting the surrounding lands. In some cases, these regions were occupied by groups that disappeared early after the Portuguese conquest. Perhaps their exposed position on the Amazon banks led to their early destruction. Besides these riverine groups, it seems that inland groups also visited such less populated sections of the valley, where they maintained permanent or temporary settlements for fishing and trade.[89] Therefore, such territories should not be seen as depopulated lands fragmenting the territory, but instead as regions actively managed by native participants within local and regional networks.

Fifth, the present study suggests that the expansion of Tupi and Carib ethno-linguistic matrices was affected by the existence of the pre-Colonial regional networks of the Amazon River. In particular, Tupi languages did not extend beyond the Amazon with the same irrepressible intensity that has been recorded for Brazil. Tupi-speaking societies seem to have been more common on the southern shore of the Amazon and in the valley itself, rather than in the archipelago of Marajó and the heartland of Guayana. The Tupinamba did probably arrive to the Amazon, in fact, only a few years before the Portuguese, and this constrained their knowledge of and influence in the region.

These observations allow us to rethink the deep history of the region and the unfolding of the Portuguese conquest from the seventeenth century

[88]See for example Carlos Gilberto Zárate Botía, "Movilidad y permanencia ticuna en la frontera amazónica colonial del siglo XVIII," *Journal de la Société des Américanistes*, 84 (1), (1998): 73-98.

[89]Carvajal wrote that some villages (*pueblos*) were in fact fishing outstations (*estancias de pescadores*) belonging to people from the interior provinces (*de la tierra dentro*) (Gaspar Carvajal, *Descubrimiento del río de las Amazonas*, 57).

onward. We know that Tupi-speakers penetrated the Amazon River valley and that they succeeded in establishing relations with other local groups. There are well known reports of some of these journeys by Brazilian Indians to the Amazon headwaters in Peru during the sixteenth century.[90] Some of them even tried to establish themselves as far as the intersection of the Madeira and the Amazon rivers (the Tupinambarana),[91] while other local societies (such as the Omagua) possibly adopted languages or at least a Tupi lexicon not long before European contact.[92]

As a result, Tupi languages were used in the valley well before the Portuguese conquest. This phenomenon certainly helped the Portuguese in their later explorations and in their intent to recruit translators and informants on the Amazon River banks. On the contrary, it seems that neither the Tupinamba nor the Portuguese had a clear image of the interior of Guayana or of the Marajó archipelago. As the present study notes, early references to Tupi-speaking groups in Cabo do Norte and Guayana are scarce. The Portuguese only received fragmented information about the routes, riches and societies of these regions, and this lack of knowledge presumably contributed to discouraging their expansion to the north of the Amazon River.

Historians have traditionally omitted these ethnic considerations from their explanations of the Portuguese conquest of the region, while explanatory tools relating to European diplomacy or economy were privileged. The consequences of the Treaty of Tordesillas (1494) or the union of the Iberian crowns (1580-1640), for example, have been widely studied in the context of the establishment of the Amazon colonial frontier.[93] Local agency, econo-

[90]Toribio de Ortiguera, "Jornada del río Marañón," Biblioteca Nacional de España, Mss. 3211; Francisco Vázquez, *Relación de todo lo que sucedió en la jornada de Omagua y Dorado hecha por el gobernador Pedro de Orsúa* (Madrid: Sociedad de Bibliófilos Españoles, 1881). Gonzalo Zúñiga, "Relación muy verdadera de todo lo sucedido en el río del Marañón," in Luis Torres, ed., *Colección de Documentos Inéditos relativos al Descubrimiento, Conquista y Organización de las antiguas posesiones españolas en América y Oceanía*, vol. 4 (Madrid, 1865), 216-282. Pero de Magalhães Gandavo, *História da província de Santa Cruz* (Lisbon, 1576).

[91]Pedro Teixeira, "Relação do Rio das Amazonas," in António Porro, *As Crônicas do Rio Amazonas*, 120-126; Mauricio Heriarte, *Descripção do Maranhão, Pará, Corupá e Rio das Amazonas* (Vienna, 1874); Cristóbal Acuña, *Nuevo Descubrimiento*, 35.

[92]Alf Hornborg & Love Eriksen, "An Attempt to Understand Panoan Ethnogenesis in Relation to Long-Term Patterns and Transformations of Regional Interaction in Western Amazonia", in Alf Hornborg & Jonathan Hill, *Ethnicity in Ancient Amazonia*, 129-151, 137.

[93]Guida Marques, "L'Invention du Brésil entre deux monarchies"; Alírio Cardoso, *Amazônia na Monarquia Hispânica.*

mic demand from Europe, and the regional slave trade, have also attracted attention as factors that can aid our understanding of the exploration routes.[94] Yet, important as they are, these issues do not shed sufficient light on the complex interaction between landscape, Amerindians and Europeans in the Amazon.

Pre-colonial and early colonial dynamics therefore need to be considered in order to enrich our understanding of the early colonial period and the construction of the colonial frontier. In this sense, written sources suggest that native agency was a critical factor for the success of the Portuguese conquest, not only due to the preexistence of the Tupi, but also because native societies withdrew their support from some of the European rivals of the Portuguese in the years between 1623 and 1632.[95] Such political strategies were successful in guaranteeing indigenous survival in the Cabo do Norte, a region that became a colonial frontier for the subsequent centuries. Groups like the Aruã, Tucujús and Maraon espoused then an ambiguous position, moving across the frontier and playing against each other the European actors in Pará and Guayana.[96]

The Portuguese therefore remained for the most part of the seventeenth century confined to the southern bank of the river, and proceeded to organize their colonial institutions around the Amazon valley. Captains and missionaries found the Amazon to be a convenient natural frontier along which to establish a security perimeter, not only vis-à-vis unconquered native groups but also vis-à-vis other European colonial powers, such as the Spanish, the French, and the Dutch who operated in Guayana. In order to con-

[94]Alírio Cardoso, "Insubordinados, mas sempre devotos: poder local, acordos e conflitos no antigo Estado do Maranhão (1607-1653)," MA Thesis (Universidade Estadual de Campinas, 2002); Rafael Chambouleyron, "Portuguese Colonization of the Amazon Region, 1640-1706","PhD Thesis (University of Cambridge, 2005); Rafael Chambouleyron, "Cacao, Bark-Clove and Agriculture in the Portuguese Amazon Region in the Seventeenth and Early Eighteenth Century," *Luso-Brazilian Review* 51 (1) (2014): 1-35; Camila Loureiro Dias, "L'Amazonie avant Pombal: politique, économie, territoire," PhD Thesis (École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales, 2014).

[95]Noronha, for example, commented that the natives were so frightened after the Portuguese attacks that they did not renew their trade with the other Europeans, nor did they provide them with supplies. Jacomé Raimundo de Noronha, "Relação de Jacome Raymondo de Noronha, sobre as cousas pertençentes á conservação, e augmento do estado do Maranhão," *Annaes da Bibliotheca Nacional do Rio de Janeiro* 26 (1904-1905): 435-441. See also: André da Silva Lima, "A guerra pelas almas: alianças, recrutamentos e escravidão indígena (do Maranhão ao Cabo do Norte, 1615-1647)," MA Thesis (Universidade Federal do Pará, 2006).

trol navigation along the Amazon River, a network of forts and mission villages was established, in the vicinity of previous native settlements on the riverbanks.

The mission villages (*aldeias*) functioned as surveillance posts but also as indoctrination centers for the natives who had been captured in the *sertão*. As the newcomers usually spoke disparate languages, missionaries tried to 'tupinize' them through teaching a standardized version of the Tupinamba language (*Língua Geral*).[97] Tupi cosmology was also used as a way to facilitate the conversion process, shaping the cultural profile of Colonial or *Christian Indians.*[98] Such efforts serve as another example of the Portuguese profound familiarity with and dependence on Tupi cultures.

[96]Rafael Ale Rocha, "Os aruã: políticas indígenas e políticas indigenistas na Amazônia portuguesa (século XVII)," *Revista Brasileira de História & Ciências Sociais* 10 (19) (2018), 72-93; Silvia Espelt-Bombín, "Makers and Keepers of Networks: Amerindian Spaces, Migrations, and Exchanges in the Brazilian Amazon and French Guayana, 1600–1730," *Ethnohistory* 65 (4) (2018): 597-620.

[97]M. Kittiya Lee, "Conversing in Colony: The Brasílica and the Vulgar in the Portuguese America, 1500-1759," PhD Thesis (The Johns Hopkins University, 2005).

[98]Almir Diniz de Carvalho Júnior, *Índios cristãos*.

Throughout the 17th and 18th centuries, the Portuguese settling of the Amazon region created a society defined both by its connections to other Portuguese territories, mainly across the Atlantic Ocean, and by the key role that rivers played in the occupation of this vast territory. Portuguese colonization followed the course of rivers just like numerous indigenous peoples had already done for centuries. Amazonia was a land of manifold frontiers, and rivers were the communication arteries connecting peoples of different origins, whether they were indigenous Americans, Creoles, Africans, Mestizos, or Europeans. Riverbanks and islands functioned as creative and fertile spaces for the development of agriculture, of varied cultures and societies, and social practices. The present volume explores discrete aspects of this colonial society and economy partly shaped by rivers and oceans. It seeks to understand colonial Amazonia as an evolving "encounter space" comprised between the Atlantic Ocean and the distant reaches of forested riverine back-country (the *sertão*). The studies presented here address the changing use of Amazonia's river network by different social groups in different historical contexts, the influence of native dynamics on patterns of the region's settlement, the role that rivers played in the evangelizing of indigenous Americans and in the shaping of colonial economy, and the influence of fluvial environments on social practices.

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