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## Jesuit Maps and Political Discourse: The Amazon River of Father Samuel Fritz

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—❧ RESEARCH NOTE ❧—

JESUIT MAPS AND POLITICAL DISCOURSE:  
*The Amazon River of Father Samuel Fritz*

Long associated with the context of territorial disputes on the definition of the Amazon frontiers of the Iberian empires in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries, the map of the Amazon River designed by Jesuit Samuel Fritz is as famous as it is misunderstood. The map is, in fact, quite poorly understood, in both the field of cartographic history, where it would certainly occupy a place of importance, and the nascent field of Amazon social history, where it often serves as a supporting illustration. In fact, even the context in which this map was produced raises disputes that require further study, distinct from those undertaken by nationalist historiographies of the countries that share borders in Amazonia.<sup>1</sup> For example, few studies have been carried out regarding the means of territorial occupation and their inherent conflicts during the first centuries of European colonization of this region. It is precisely for such analysis that the map of Samuel Fritz stands as an important document for historians: more than simply rendering the course of the Amazon River it transmits a political discourse, as does any map, intrinsic to the context in which it was produced.

This study was undertaken to explore the uses of Fritz's map as a source of the sociopolitical history of the territory it depicts. Treating the map as a text, my objective here is to identify some elements of Samuel Fritz's political discourse as they relate to the conflicts in which he was involved.<sup>2</sup> In adopting the map as

I would like to thank Pierre Ragon, Antonella Romano, Carla Lois, Carlos Zeron, Pierre-Antoine Fabre, Jean-Frédéric Schaub, John Monteiro, and the editorial team of *The Americas*, as well as its anonymous readers, for the discussions on which the construction of this text is based. This research note is part of a doctoral project financed by the French Ministry of Education. Special thanks also go to William Pickett and Cooper Pickett for their translation of this essay from the original Portuguese.

1. On the Brazilian side, the most notable work is that by Jaime Cortesão, *História do Brasil nos velhos mapas*, 9 vols. (Rio de Janeiro: Ministério das Relações Exteriores/Instituto Rio Branco, 1965-1971).

2. Here I reaffirm the association between map and text suggested by Brian Harley, "Texts and Contexts in the Interpretation of Early Maps," *The New Nature of Maps: Essays in the History of Cartography*, Paul Laxton, ed. (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001).

a document, it becomes imperative to follow the recent historiographical renewal in the field of cartographic studies, especially as it pertains to the issue of defining the best way to read and interpret a cartographic source. Within this movement, the methodologies employed in the analysis of Fritz's mapmaking reveal a range of relations between that process and the various aspects of the occupation of this territory. These include social mechanisms, the inclusion of the territory in imperial geopolitics, local missionary practices, and even the institutional policies of the Society of Jesus.

Maps have been perceived as complex cultural artifacts,<sup>3</sup> following an interpretive logic that analyzes the relationship between the material object and what it signifies, with the intent of reconstituting its processes of commodification. Although they propose this analysis both in terms of the production and the circulation of the maps, adherents of this historiographic trend opt to emphasize the latter, that is, circulation. From this perspective, Samuel Fritz's map has been examined by the Portuguese historian André de Almeida, who studied the manner in which the map circulated and was received by the larger public in Europe in the eighteenth century.<sup>4</sup>

Almeida's analysis is very suggestive in reviewing the production of the map, bringing out interesting hypotheses about the conditions and time of work of the missionary cartographer—information that is hard to recover. Yet, by limiting his analysis of Fritz's discourse to the moment in which his map became known to the European public, what Almeida presents as one representation is, in fact two; that is, two different printings of the same matrix, published under different circumstances and for different audiences.

In this study, we compare the two versions. The first is the image as it was engraved in Quito in 1707, while Samuel Fritz worked there as the superior of missions. With the title *El gran río Marañón, o Amazonas con la misión de la Compañía de Jesús*, the engraving was supported by the colonial authorities of that province and was dedicated to Philip V. The second version was published

3. Diogo Ramada Curto, "Introduction," in *La cartografía europea tra primo rinascimento e fine dell'Illuminismo: atti del Convegno Internazionale The Making of European Cartography*, eds. Diogo Ramada Curto, Angelo Cattaneo and André Ferrand Almeida (Firenze: Leo Olschki Editore, 2003), XI.

4. André Ferrand Almeida, "Samuel Fritz Revisited: the Maps of the Amazon and their Circulation in Europe," in *La cartografía europea tra primo Rinascimento e fine dell'Illuminismo*, Diogo Ramada Curto, Angelo Cattaneo, and André Ferrand Almeida, eds. (Florence: Leo S. Olschki, 2003), pp. 133–153. Studies on this map are rare; aside from the one by Almeida whose work focused on Fritz's cartographic production, we have found only occasional mentions of the map by this Jesuit in works covering a wider range of topics, although the comments on his mission diary are quite numerous. See also Neil Safier, *Measuring the New World: Enlightenment Science and South America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008); Artur Barcelos, "O Mergulho no Seculum: exploração, conquista e organização espacial jesuítica na América espanhola colonial" (Ph.D. diss., Pontifícia Universidade Católica do Rio Grande do Sul, Brazil, 2006).

in Paris with some modifications under the title *Cours du fleuve Maragnon autrement dit des Amazones par le P. Samuel Fritz missionnaire de la Compagnie de Jésus* precisely 10 years later (1717), in the 34-volume *Lettres édifiantes et curieuses*, described below, which brought the missionary work of the Society of Jesus to the general public. Comparing the versions highlights the structuring elements of Fritz's political discourse in relation to the context in which the map was originally engraved in 1707, in other words to the dispute over the demarcation of the borders between the Iberian empires in Amazonian territory. But we can also attest that the differences between the two versions imply divergent discourses, even to the point of contradiction. In the end, what did Samuel Fritz himself want his map of the Amazon River to communicate? And for what other type of discourse, or discourses, did the reproducibility of his map later serve? These are the questions I aim to address in this study.

## THE AMAZON RIVER: INTERESTS AND CONFLICTS

From the beginning of the seventeenth century, the Amazon River had been the target of commercial investments by the Spanish, Portuguese, English, Dutch, and French, all of whom perceived it as an important route to the interior of the American continent.<sup>5</sup> By the end of the century, the interests of some of them had converged in the interior, where the river met its largest northern tributary, the Rio Negro.<sup>6</sup> Due to its geographical and human conditions, this region seemed particularly favorable to European interests. As it was possible to reach all sides of the continent by water, this area was not only especially important for its demographic density, but also for being a crossroads of traditional indigenous trade routes.<sup>7</sup> By the turn of the eighteenth

5. Europeans arrived at the river by occupying, at the beginning of the seventeenth century, several points on the coast of Guiana, at the time known as the "Wild Coast." In 1655, a French author compiled some information that was being circulated about the river, offering Cardinal Mazzarino a discourse in which he defended the interest in occupying that territory. Blaise François (comte de) Pagan, *Relation historique et géographique de la grande rivière des Amazones dans l'Amérique, par le comte de Pagan, extraite de divers auteurs et réduite en meilleure forme, avec la carte d'icelle rivière et de ses provinces* (Paris: Cardin Besongue, 1655).

6. The current location of Manaus, the capital of the Brazilian state of Amazonas. With nearly two million inhabitants, the city has become a regional economic and financial center.

7. Maurício de Heriarte, *ouvidor-geral* (liaison to the king) of the state of Maranhão, who had been on the expedition with the Portuguese Pedro Teixeira from Belém to Quito (1637), wrote a report in 1667, in which he stressed the strategic importance of the river: "From the northern edge of this river run the Indies of Castile, and the main ports are Trindade, Orinoco, Ponta de Arajá, Cumaná, Cumagoto, and Margarita and Caracas. . . . Heading upriver one arrives at the new kingdom of Granada, which is the first province of Peru, and to the province of Pastos. . . . Populating this river with Portuguese people it is possible to make an Empire, and be the master of all the Amazon and more rivers. One can do a great deal of business by sea and by land, as well as with the Indies of Castile, Peru and all of Europe." Maurício de Heriarte, "Descrição do Estado do Maranhão, Pará, Corupá e rio das Amazonas 1662-1667" in Francisco Adolfo de Varnhagen,

century, the region at the mouth of the Rio Negro was at once the border between the Iberian empires and the end point of an indigenous prisoner-trafficking route superimposed by the Dutch upon traditional indigenous commercial routes.<sup>8</sup>

Although they had already spent some time in the territory, it was only at the turn of the century that the Portuguese and Spanish set their sights on its effective domination. On one hand, Portugal undertook the reformulation of its colonial policy, with the aim of guaranteeing the expansion of its territorial holdings and the supply of indigenous labor to Portuguese settlers. Its first measures, in 1686, concerned the regulation of the missionary system, which marked the beginning of investment in the formation of a network of *aldeamentos* (mission villages).<sup>9</sup> Next came a law in 1688 that legitimized the practice of enslaving Indians captured in “just wars and ransoms [*resgates*].”<sup>10</sup> Some official expeditions, and many more private ones, aimed to trade tools and other European products with the native tribes in exchange for their prisoners of war, who afterward were sold as slaves to the Portuguese of Pará. From Belém, the Portuguese had in fact already reached the Rio Negro, 1600 kilometers from where the Amazon flows into the Atlantic. At the same time, the Spanish were moving to expand the mission of Maynas toward the mouth of the same Rio Negro.<sup>11</sup> Their intention was precisely to contain the advance of the Portuguese expeditionary forces, and it was in this context, in the year 1686, that the Bohemian Jesuit Samuel Fritz was sent to the region.

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*História Geral do Brasil, antes da sua separação e independência de Portugal*, 5 vols. (1854–1857; São Paulo: Melhoramentos, 1975), vol. 3, pp. 171–190. Father Cristóbal Acuña, a Spanish Jesuit who undertook the return voyage from Quito to Belém with Francisco Teixeira in 1639, believed it was at the mouth of this river where most surely “one should place all defenses, so that the passage of the enemy to all this New World be blocked.” Cristóbal de Acuña, *Nuevo descubrimiento del Gran Río de las Amazonas*, Ignacio Arellano, José María Díez Borque, and Gonzalo Santonja, eds. (1641, Madrid; Frankfurt: Iberoamericana/Vervuert, 2009), p. 142.

8. Regarding pre-Columbian commercial routes, see David Lathrap, “The Antiquity and Importance of Long-Distance Trade Relationships in the Moist Tropics of Pre-Columbian South America,” *World Archeology* 5:2 (1973), pp. 170–186; Thomas Perkins Myers, “Redes de intercambio tempranas en la hoya amazónica,” *Amazonia Peruana* 4:8 (1983), pp. 61–75. Regarding Caribbean-Dutch slave trafficking, see Nádia Farage, *As muralhas dos sertões: os povos indígenas no Rio Branco e a colonização* (Rio de Janeiro: Paz e Terra, 1991).

9. Regiment of the Missions, from December 21, 1686. Reproduced in Serafim Leite, *História da Companhia de Jesus no Brasil*, (Lisbon/Rio de Janeiro: Civilização Brasileira, 1941), vol. IV, pp. 369–375.

10. *Alvará*, an edict issued by the Secretary of State that supersedes all other laws that had been passed about the Indians of Maranhão, April 28, 1688, *Anais da Biblioteca Nacional do Rio de Janeiro*, vol. 66, pp. 97–101.

11. Under the jurisdiction of the Province of Quito, the Maynas mission was begun in 1636 in the Andean foothills. Between 1640 and 1680, it was expanded in the direction of the Cocamilla, Muniche, Mayoruna, Aguano, Roamayna, and Coronado Indians. By the 1680s, it had probably reached the Omagua Indians, and their neighbors the Yurimagua, Aisuare, and Ibanoma, who lived along the Solimões River up to the mouth of the Rio Negro.

Born in Trutnov in 1654, Samuel Fritz entered the Society of Jesus in 1673, where he probably studied cartography.<sup>12</sup> In 1683, he asked the superior of the order to be sent to the New World. His request granted, Fritz followed in the footsteps of his colleague and fellow countryman, Enrique Richter, who had undertaken the same voyage some weeks earlier. From Prague, via the ports of Genoa and Seville, Fritz arrived in Cartagena de Indias, from whence he soon departed by land for Quito. After two months of rest in Quito, he undertook another long journey across the Andes to Amazonia, reaching the town of Laguna, seat of the province of Maynas, on the south bank of the Huallaga River. In 1686, he began his career as a missionary and was assigned the task by his superior, Father Lorenzo Lucero, of incorporating the territory between the Napo River and the Rio Negro into the Maynas mission. Meanwhile, his colleague, Richter, was put in charge of the Ucayali River region, inhabited by the Conibo and Piro tribes.

The territory that Fritz was sent to occupy spanned about 700 kilometers along the river and was inhabited by the Omagua nation, described by Europeans of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries as the largest and most important of the various nations that inhabited the banks of the Amazon River. In addition to their high population density, the Omagua were noteworthy for their advanced level of sociopolitical organization. They were a sedentary, civic-minded people who wore clothing and had an identifiable political authority; they also were involved in military conflicts with tribes from the interior, whose prisoners of war were incorporated into Omagua society as domestic servants.<sup>13</sup> These were, in fact, the very prisoners whom the Portuguese on one side and the Dutch on the other had begun to buy in exchange for tools, weapons, and trinkets.

To advance his work, Fritz decided to reside in the *aldeia* of San Joaquim, at the mouth of the Napo River. There, he toured one by one the river's many islands, instructing and baptizing their inhabitants.<sup>14</sup> According to what he

12. David Buisseret, "Early European Cartography of the New World," in *La cartografía europea*, p. 101. According to the author, many Jesuits who studied in the schools of central Europe were sent to the American possessions of the Hapsburgs, frequently to remote missions, where they could put their skills to good use. Samuel Fritz (1654–1724) and Eusebio Kino (1645–ca. 1711) are merely two of the best known cartographers from a large group of Jesuit mapmakers.

13. The Omagua are unanimously considered by chroniclers as the nation best prepared to receive the Gospel, since they were the most civic-minded; besides wearing clothing, the members of this nation obeyed an authority that was recognizable to the Europeans. According to calculations by Antonio Porro, based on the literature, the Omagua occupied the islands of the Amazon River and perhaps the banks over a stretch of nearly 700 kilometers, between the Napo River and the mouth of the Mamorí River; they may have constituted a population of around 18,000 inhabitants, in an area of a little more than 19,000 square kilometers. Antonio Porro, *O povo das águas. Ensaios de etno-história amazônica* (Rio de Janeiro: Vozes, 1995).

14. The source par excellence for the history of Samuel Fritz is the book entitled *Notícias autênticas del famoso río Marañón*. Written between 1730 and 1748 and summarily interrupted, this text is more a

claims in his reports, after three years of work Fritz had the entire Omagua nation under his tutelage and had already begun the same work among the neighboring Yurimagua, Ibanoma, and Aisuare tribes, when he fell ill. At that time, he was in the main Yurimagua aldea of Nuestra Señora de las Nieves and thus decided to seek assistance from some Portuguese from Pará that he had heard were close by. There is much historiographical controversy surrounding this episode, as the procurement of medicine seems an unlikely reason for his descent into Portuguese territory. Some historians believe that the incident was merely a diplomatic misunderstanding, while others, considering Fritz's own diary, have concluded that a trip to the Spanish settlements would have been more efficacious.<sup>15</sup> The fact is that the Portuguese were suspicious and retained the priest at the Jesuit residence in Belém for a year and a half, until they received royal instructions to accompany him back to his missions in 1692.

This episode triggered a race to occupy those lands. During the period in which Fritz was retained in Belém, the Portuguese founded an aldea and a Jesuit residence close to the Rio Negro fort. Upon his return to his missions, Father Fritz went directly to the Royal Audiencia of Lima, where he stayed between July 1692 and May 1693, to solicit military and financial support for his project to establish missions in the region. He took several documents to the viceroy, the count of Monclova, who promised to present them to the king of Spain, Charles II. Among the documents was a report of his missionary work, together with a census of the population, some notes on the demarcation of the territory, and a hand-drawn map of the Amazon River—most probably created during the year and a half he spent among his Portuguese colleagues in Belém.<sup>16</sup>

Meanwhile, in March 1693, the king of Portugal, Dom Pedro II, decreed that the banks of the Amazon River be divided among all religious orders present, rescinding the exclusivity of the Society of Jesus. The Jesuits preserved 28 of

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compilation of documents, including the *Diary* by Father Samuel Fritz, than a narrative of the goings-on in the missions. It was published for the first time by Jiménez de la Espada (*Boletín de la Sociedad Geográfica de Madrid* 26-32 (1889-1892), who attributed the authorship to the Jesuit Paolo Maroni. In 1892, the complete text of *Noticias* was published by the Real Academia de la Historia de Madrid, in whose archive it has been preserved. Recently, Jean Pierre Chaumeil coordinated a new edition, which uses the same text published by Jiménez de la Espada. Paolo Maroni, *Noticias auténticas del famoso río Marañón*, Jean Pierre Chaumeil, ed. (1738; Iquitos: Instituto de Investigación de la Amazonía Peruana-Centro de Estudios Teológicos de la Amazonía, 1988).

15. See an analysis of several positions in Rodolfo Garcia, "Introdução," *Revista do Instituto Histórico e Geográfico Brasileiro* 81:135 (1918), pp. 355-374.

16. This is André de Almeida's hypothesis. "Samuel Fritz Revisited: The Maps of the Amazon and Their Circulation in Europe," in *La cartografía europea*, 133-153. Both the report and the *Apuntes acerca de la línea de demarcación entre las conquistas de España y Portugal en el río Marañón* were published by Paolo Maroni, *Noticias auténticas del famoso río Marañón*, pp. 332-335.

their missions and ceded another 27. The entire right bank of the river, that is, all of the territory to the south, without interior boundaries, remained the responsibility of the Society of Jesus. The left bank, however—those lands that bordered the French, Dutch, and Spanish settlements—was redistributed among the other orders: Franciscans, Mercederians, and Carmelites. The Rio Negro missions were brought under the care of the Carmelites, an essentially urban order that had only just begun its missionary work in the Amazon region.<sup>17</sup> The Carmelite monks were then given the task of congregating, befriending, and subduing the native Rio Negro populations, as well as convincing Samuel Fritz to abandon his expansionist intentions. When Manoel Esperança, provincial of the Carmelites, arrived to take possession of the missions that had been bestowed upon him, Samuel Fritz had already returned from Lima and was soon found among the Aisuare—the tribe closest to Portuguese settlements on the Rio Negro.<sup>18</sup>

All these events led to the production of documents that bear witness as much to the discourse as to the missionary practice of territorial occupation and dominion. Jesuits on one side, Carmelites on the other, these religious men debated their respective rights over these lands, basically with three main issues in dispute: the privileges of each crown as defined in papal treaties and apostolic bulls (judicial law),<sup>19</sup> the validity of Pedro Teixeira's 1639 marker (recognition of territorial holdings),<sup>20</sup> and above all, the primacy of contact with indigenous peoples—not so much who had been in the region first, but rather who had first indoctrinated the Indians.

This final point was certainly the most relevant and is a testament to the importance of the effective occupation of the territory, as highlighted in the

17. *Carta regia* (royal letter) to the governor of the state, Antonio de Albuquerque Coelho, March 19, 1693, in *Anais da Biblioteca Nacional do Rio de Janeiro* 66 (1944), pp. 142–144. Regarding the history of the Carmelite presence in the Amazon, see André Prat, *Notas históricas sobre as missões carmelitas no extremo norte do Brasil, séculos XVII-XVIII* (Recife: n.p., 1941); Manuel Maria Wermers, “O estabelecimento das missões carmelitanas no rio Negro e Solimões (1695–1711),” *Atas do V Colóquio Internacional de Estudos Luso-Brasileiros*, vol. 2 (Coimbra: n.p., 1965).

18. Manoel Esperança was the first Carmelite to go to the region, in 1696, to take possession of the territories. He went with the governor and several others interested in setting up bases in that region: Manoel Esperança, “Relação da Jornada que fez Fr. Manuel da Esperança, Vigário Geral, ao Sertão do Pará . . .” Esperança, vicar general, went to the *sertão* of Pará to visit the Rio Negro mission, accompanied by the governor and captain of the state Antonio de Albuquerque Coelho de Carvalho, Hilário de Sousa de Azevedo, Mateus Dias da Costa, Francisco Teixeira de Morais, Antonio Carvalho de Albuquerque da Costa Rayol, and others, 1696. Biblioteca da Ajuda, Cód. 51-VII-27 fol. 120–126.

19. Tordesillas Treaty (1494) and Lisbon Treaty (1681).

20. According to the Portuguese, Pedro Teixeira placed a possession marker at the upper Japurá River in 1639, during a journey from Belém to Quito. For Fritz, this act of possession was invalid because it had not been confirmed by Philip IV before Portugal declared itself independent, in 1640.



debates between Fritz and the Carmelites. As much as the continuous religious presence and claiming of the natives as vassals of the crown were fundamental to doctrines shared by both sides of the dispute, the effective domain was dependent, above all, on human activity in the territory. Thus, the best strategy for both sides consisted in physical occupation of those lands, restricting the presence of the competitor. Following on this strategy, the submission of the natives was indispensable to territorial control, thus the work of the missionaries was indispensable to the territorial claims.

Hence, when friar Esperança perceived Fritz's intention to settle alongside the tribes closest to the Rio Negro, such as the Aisuare, he acted first, and began doing what he had done in all the other villages: raising the cross, giving presents, saying Mass, and officially registering possession of the land. This, in his opinion, was sufficient to prove that he had more rights than the Jesuit, who, although he had passed through those lands eight years before, had not instructed the natives. In this way, both the debate and the actions taken imply that the real object of dispute between the Fathers was the natives' friendship.

It was precisely in this political context that Samuel Fritz created his cartographic works. His intention was to obtain military and financial support from the colonial and royal authorities for the development of his missions among the tribes of the frontier. Ignored by the authorities in Quito, about whom he complained for not having furnished him with subsidies, his voyage to Lima won him little more than the pity of the viceroy and some alms, so that the missionary had to continue on the front lines against the Portuguese practically on his own. However, in 1704, Fritz was named superior of the missions of the Province of Quito and was installed at the Colegio Máximo in 1707. In that same year, he had the opportunity to engrave his map of the Amazon River. The engraving was done by the Jesuit, Juan de Narváez (whose initials appear on the title), with the support of the colonial authorities of Quito, as can be seen in the map's elaborate cartouche. Faithful to his hand-drawn version of 1691,<sup>21</sup> the engraving shows the course of the Amazon from its headwaters near Quito to its mouth in the Atlantic, above the city of Belém.<sup>22</sup> The print was sent to Philip V, notably during the War of the Spanish Succession, a period that coincided with the intensification of the local dispute about the occupation of the mouth of the Rio Negro (1701–1714).

21. Samuel Fritz, *Mapa Geographica del Río Marañón o Amazonas*, 1691, Bibliothèque nationale de France, Paris, Cartes et plans, Rés. Ge C 5037, Manuscript (ink on paper), 55 × 130 cm;

22. Samuel Fritz, "El Gran Río Marañón, o Amazonas con la Misión de la Compañía de Jesús," 1707, BNF, Ge D 7855. Engraving in metal by Juan de Narváez, 32 × 42 cm.

## REPRESENTATION OF SPACE AND TIME: MAPS AS INSTRUMENTS OF ACTION

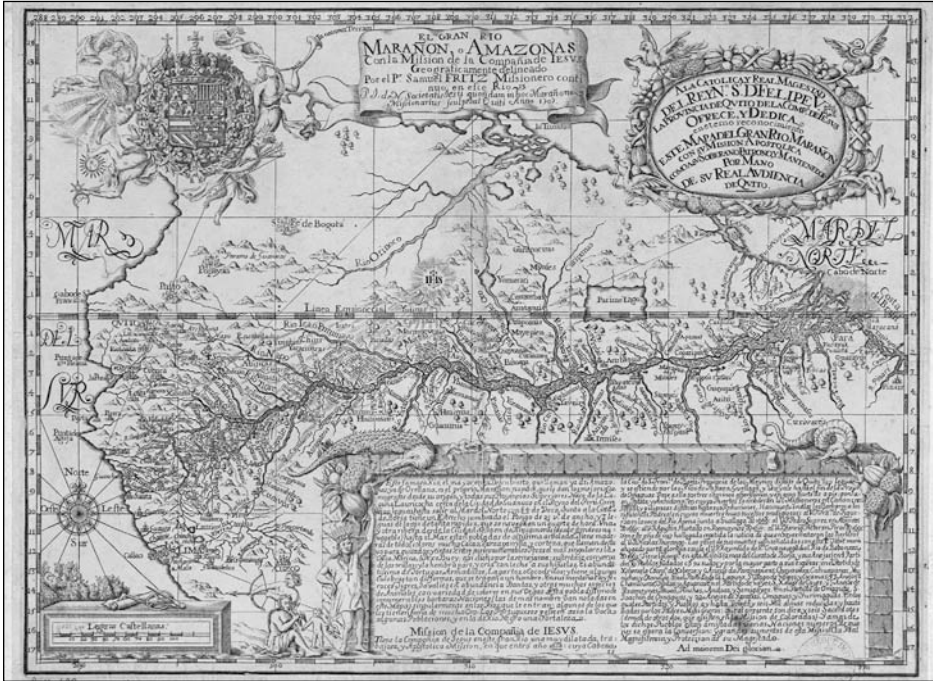
This map, which at first glance is noteworthy for its relatively precise delineation of the contours and proportions of the South American continent, was the first to be drawn from firsthand experience, by one who had navigated the Amazon River from one end to the other. Other Europeans had traced the course of the river, but their maps were drawn from secondhand accounts, such as the map by Guillaume Sanson, which was based on the accounts of Father Cristóbal Acuña.<sup>23</sup> Samuel Fritz, however, had accumulated 12 years of missionary experience in the region before he drew his map,<sup>24</sup> an aspect emphasized by the title, *The Great River Marañón or of the Amazonas with the Mission of the Society of Jesus, geographically described by Samuel Fritz, settled missionary on said river*. Furthermore, markings of longitude and latitude, the compass rose, and the scale in leagues are elements intended to assist in reading the map and at the same time confer upon it a scientific authority. The representations of cartographic instruments reinforce the scientific rhetoric of the image, despite their primary function being fundamentally decorative. Fritz was interested in highlighting this aspect: his knowledge of the represented territory, drawn from his voyages and missionary experience, as well as his cartographic abilities, should serve to support the arguments of the political discourse underlying his drawing (Figure 1).<sup>25</sup> These characteristics together would be capable of rendering a representation of that territory in such a way as to allow the intervention the author of the map hoped for—in this case, the expansion of the missions.

23. Guillaume Sanson, *Le cours de la rivière des Amazones dressé sur la Relation du R.P.*, Christophe d'Acuña par le Sr. Sanson d'Abbeville, géographe ord. du Roi, 1680, gravé par Liebaux.

24. Although he had not preached in nor visited all the sites represented on the map, Fritz was able to gather the information from Indians and from other missionaries with whom the Jesuit had contact, and possibly from material kept at the library of the Jesuit colégio of Santo Alexandre, in Belém. Despite the fact that we have not yet found any Portuguese maps from the period, there are several references to the use of maps in support of missionary work. Father João Felipe Bettendorf comments in his chronicle that he himself began his missionary activities, together with Antônio Vieira, hunched over a map of the Amazon River. "Crônica da Missão dos padres da Companhia de Jesus do Estado do Maranhão," *Revista do Instituto Histórico e Geográfico Brasileiro*, 72 (1909), p.158. In letters sent to the general of the society, in Rome, and in the Bettendorf chronicle, there are also references to maps of the Amazon River, of the mission in Maranhão and of the captaincy of Cabo do Norte, produced by the Jesuit Aloísio Conrado Pfeil between 1684 and 1700. See Serafim Leite, *História da Companhia de Jesus no Brasil*, vol. 3, p. 255.

25. Antonella Romano identifies the emergence of a Jesuit science not only at the schools, but also in mission activities. According to the historian, the relationship of the missionary endeavor with knowledge and domination of space mobilizes, particularly in the New World, techniques and methods different from those created for urban centers. Antonella Romano, "Actividad científica y Nuevo Mundo: el papel de los jesuitas en el desarrollo de la modernidad en Iberoamérica," in *Los jesuitas y la modernidad en Iberoamérica (1549-1773)*, Manuel Marzal and Luis Bacigalupo, eds. (Lima: Fondo Editorial de la Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú/Universidad del Pacífico/Instituto Francés de Estudios Andinos, 2007), pp. 56-70.

FIGURE 1  
*Samuel Fritz, El gran río Marañón, o Amazonas, 1707*



Source: *El Gran Río Marañón, o Amazonas con la Misión de la Compañía de Jesús geográficamente delineado por el P. Samuel Fritz misionero continuo en este Río*. Quito, 1707 (BnF, *Cartes et Plans*, Ge D 7855). Metal engraving by Juan de Narváez (32 × 42 cm).

To comprehend the political content of the map engraved in 1707, we base the first part of our analysis on a descriptive cataloguing of the internal elements of the cartographic image. From observations of its geometry and organization of information, cartouches and legends, and decorative emblems, the elements of a discourse emerge, and are then confirmed in subsequent sections by means of an intertextual analysis that involves comparisons with other versions of the same map and with contemporary documents of other types.

First, we can clearly see that the equator divides the frame exactly in the middle. Passing just above the Amazon River, it separates two planes of the representation, manifesting a difference in the level of detail between the upper and lower sections. This seems to indicate that the principal focus is the lower part of the map.<sup>26</sup>

26. The vast blank spaces in the upper part of the representation may be a testament to either the cartographer's ignorance of the geography of that region or simply the fact that the objective of the representation

The meridian that separates the left from the right side of the map also plays a role in organizing the data. A clear difference is apparent in the level of detail of the toponymic and ethnonymic information provided for the eastern (Portuguese) side and the western (Spanish) side. The map is divided at the exact middle, and the significantly greater detail in the Spanish half clearly suggests that the map represents the extent of Spanish dominion. It is worth noting that the Portuguese settlements are represented in the lower Amazon, but without any type of identification. Therefore, the Society of Jesus is depicted on this map only for the space occupied by the Spanish missions. Indeed, the rays emanating from the symbol of the Society of Jesus extend to cover only the Spanish side of the image.

Fritz also highlighted his own area of missionary work. The letter ‘O’, the first of the ethnonym ‘Omagua’, sits precisely at the mouth of the Napo River, where he began his missionary work, and the last letter, the vowel ‘a’, is located near the mouth of the Japurá River. The Spanish dominions, which Fritz had been charged with expanding, did in fact, stretch at that time to where he situated his missions among the Omagua, on the Japurá River (Figure 2).

However, Fritz’s work as a missionary, as we recall, was precisely to incorporate into the Maynas mission all the territory between the Napo River and the Rio Negro. The course of the Amazon River between the Japurá and the Negro is not encompassed in this map by the rays emanating from the Jesuit symbol. Thus, this stretch remained to be brought into the fold.<sup>27</sup> From that perspective, it is possible to suggest that the grid itself plays an important role in organizing the information. The central square of the image justly highlights the region that at that time was located between the end of Fritz’s mission on the Japurá River and the first Portuguese settlement on the Rio Negro (Figure 3).

Given the historical context, we can easily identify the dynamics of the situation represented on this map: the central square, framing the course of the river between the mouths of the Rio Negro and the Japurá, delineates specifically the area in dispute with the Portuguese, at least from the time of Fritz’s voyage to the neighboring territories. Thus, the center of the image is the disputed area,

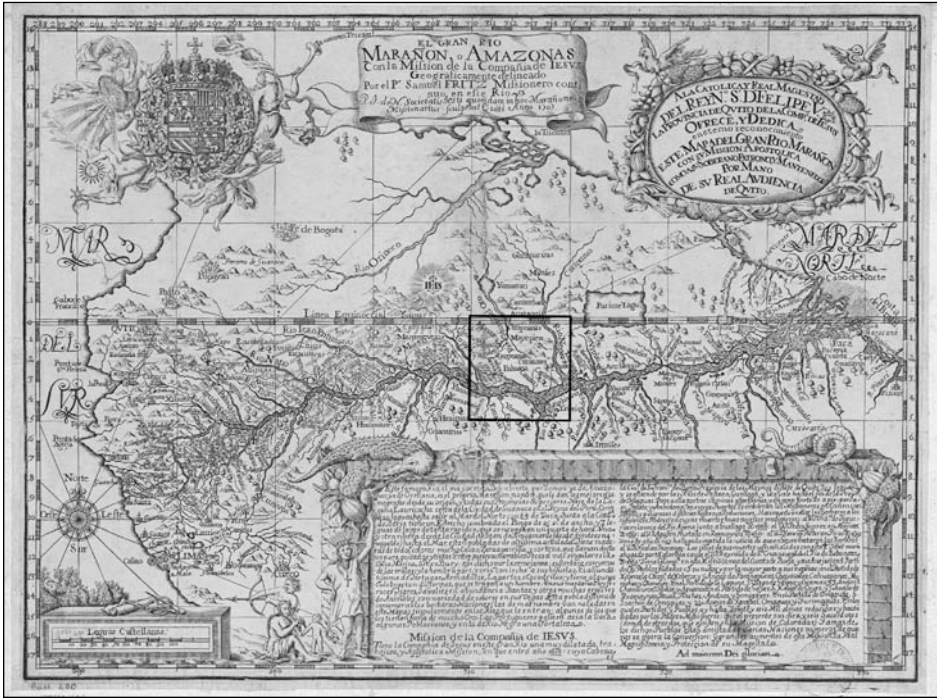
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is exclusively the course of the Amazon River, as the title states. In sum, it is an area which at that point in time had already been extensively mapped, especially by the Dutch. Additionally, the information that appears in that part is certainly borrowed from other sources, as evidenced by the inclusion of such places as the legendary Parime Lake, which appears in earlier Dutch maps, for example the one by Jan Jansson, *Guiana, siue, Amazonum Regio* (Amsterdam: 1600–1664).

27. A stretch that corresponds to a journey by river of nearly 900 kilometers.



FIGURE 3  
 Detail 2 of Samuel Fritz, *El gran río Marañón, o Amazonas*, 1707.



Source: *El Gran Río Marañón, o Amazonas*, Quito, 1707 (BnF, *Cartes et Plans*, Ge D 7855). Metal engraving by Juan de Narváez (32 × 42 cm).

along the Amazon, from the delta to the mouth of the Rio Negro, where a small fort was located.

The second part of the text is a description of the Society of Jesus’s missionary work, from the Province of Borja to the end of the Omagua territory, in other words, up to the Japurá River. In this description, Fritz does not fail to mention the suffering of the missionaries who traversed arduous and dangerous distances in canoes to arrive at their villages, and makes a point of locating and dating all of the martyrdoms. But all of this discourse leads, in the end, to an accounting of the extensive Jesuit work: with 16 missionaries, the fathers of the Society controlled 39 villages in the entire Quito mission, 23 of which were the charge of Samuel Fritz. This meant 26,000 souls already *reduzidas* (resettled in aldeias), in addition to various “friendly” nations, those who were amenable to receiving the Gospel and were waiting only for new priests to convert them.

FIGURE 4

*Detail 3 of Samuel Fritz, El gran río Marañón, o Amazonas, 1707*



Source: *El Gran Río Marañón, o Amazonas*, Quito, 1707 (BnF, *Cartes et Plans*, Ge D 7855). Metal engraving by Juan de Narváez (32 × 42 cm).

The cartouches and decorative emblems serve to reinforce the political discourse of the representation in several ways. For example, the king of Spain's coat of arms, seen on the left side of the map, is being carried by some human figures (Figure 4). One plays a trumpet announcing "In omnem terram" and another on the opposite side carries a shield with the symbol of the Society of Jesus, from which luminous rays emanate. The rays appear to be fighting a third element, containing the sun and the moon and symbolizing Amerindian paganism; the fourth element is an Indian holding the emblem. It does not seem absurd to conjecture, based on this representation, the position of each element within the framework of Fritz's discourse: the Indian is the element sustaining the Spanish empire, an empire that is expanding all over the Earth by means of the work of the Society of Jesus.

In Figure 5, human figures indicate the results of the missionary work. An indigenous family is depicted in two stages of the evangelization process. First comes an Indian hunting a bird (hidden in the bush above the scale of leagues), with a woman and child holding the fruits of the hunt. Standing, and depicted larger, another Indian is shown wearing a crown of feathers indicating his posi-

FIGURE 5  
*Detail 4 of Samuel Fritz, El gran río Marañón, o Amazonas, 1707*



Source: *El Gran Río Marañón, o Amazonas*, Quito, 1707 (BnF, *Cartes et Plans*, Ge D 7855). Metal engraving by Juan de Narváez (32 × 42 cm).

tion of authority, clothed and wearing a cross on his chest, suggesting that he had already been converted by missionaries.<sup>29</sup>

The whole of this discourse is not specific to Fritz's representation or to these cartouches or emblems; these elements were also present in other documents from the same period. From the documents delivered to the viceroy of Lima some years before, we can say in general that the hand-drawn map used as the basis of the first engraving delineated the course of the river and identified the indigenous settlements, while Fritz's account gave information on the status of the missions. In the 1707 map, the latter information is condensed on the legend.

In his 1692 report, Fritz mentioned the failure of secular players' efforts to conquer the territory, in contrast to the success of the Society of Jesus, which from 1637 on had undertaken the task. He asserted that his mission encompassed

29. It is noteworthy that this clothing corresponds to the missionary standard and is different from that traditionally worn by the Omagua Indians, which was decorated with characteristic figurative patterns, such as those described by the chroniclers and possibly represented in the prints from Alexandre Rodrigues Ferreira's voyage. Alexandre Rodrigues Ferreira. *Viagem filosófica pelas capitánias do Grão-Pará, Rio Negro, Mato Grosso e Cuiabá, 1783-1792. Iconografia, vol. I: Geografia-Antropologia* (Rio de Janeiro: Conselho Federal de Cultura, 1971).



approximately 500 leagues (nearly 2500 kilometers) along the Amazon River between the mouths of the Napo River and the Rio Negro, from which point on the Portuguese had taken dominion. He states the following:

And at present *I have subjugated* to the Gospel of Christ thirty-eight villages from the province of Omagua, the *reducción* of Nuestra Señora de las Nieves of the Yurimagua nation and two villages of the Aisuari (sic) nation. In the first eight Omagua *reducciones*, youngsters and adults were baptized; in the rest just the innocents. Which Your Excellency will have seen on the map and in the registry of the baptisms at my mission. *As friends* [emphasis added] the Peva, Guareicu, Caivisana and the Ibanoma, those from the Arabanate River, Cuchivaras, Taromas of the Rio Negro have manifested themselves; in such a way that the cacique principal of these Taromas reprimanded the Portuguese who accompanied me from Pará this last year of 1691 for the offenses they had suffered at their hands, and that they did not want the Portuguese, but me to be their Father. Furthermore, from twenty and thirty leagues came caciques and other Indians with their families to be indoctrinated and baptized, others also invited me to come to their towns and teach them Christian doctrine.<sup>30</sup>

Therefore, in what Fritz affirmed to be under the jurisdiction of his mission, there were peoples who were both indoctrinated and baptized, some who were only baptized, and lastly, others who had asked him to teach them Christian doctrine. In this passage, he draws a fundamental distinction between having the Indians as subjects and having them as friends. In describing his own missionary work, Fritz argued that he had under his control (“*tengo ya sujetas*”) close to 40 Omagua, Yurimagua, and Aisuare villages in the territory between the Napo River and Rio Negro. Additionally, he said that he could also count on the friendship of many other nations close to the Rio Negro (“*por amigos*”) who had invited him to teach doctrine among them.

It was just such a friendship with these tribes that Fritz contested with the Carmelite missionaries, and it was to subjugate these “friendly” Indians that the Jesuit needed financial and military support from the colonial authorities to set up missions among them and unite them under his authority. With the affirmation that the Indians of the Rio Negro were disposed to receive him, Fritz asserted that the possession of the region had been promised, but was not yet achieved; to do so would require investment in those missions. This is the discourse at the center of the 1707 engraving.

The Jesuit tells of many other Indians in more remote territories, describing them as barbarous cannibals of the hinterlands, who had yet to be contacted.

30. Apud Paolo Maroni, *Noticias auténticas*, p. 329.

To accomplish this and to “win the wills of these barbarians,” he needed tools and trinkets, which were the same currency of trade used by the Portuguese and Dutch to buy prisoners from the natives. He also needed soldiers who would assist him by protecting his life and allowing him “to practice more freely matters of the Catholic faith and to uproot barbarous customs.” This was essential, from his perspective, “for the propagation of the sacred faith and expansion of the empire of His Catholic Majesty.”

This report, therefore, represents a similar and complementary discourse to that suggested by the reading of the map. Fritz emphasizes the importance of friendship with the Indians in the effective occupation of the territory, and accordingly, of the missionary work toward that end. These were the same arguments the Carmelite missionaries made to the Portuguese authorities; the submission of the Indians would guarantee control of the territory, and in this case, the missions had an integral role to play and needed financial support from the responsible authorities. In fact, alliance with the natives appears as the *sine qua non* of territorial occupation in various other missionary writings, particularly those of the Jesuits. A recurring topic in the Americas in general, lay people since the early occupation of the Amazon arrived at the same idea, and it was taken up once again by the Pombaline government in the mid-eighteenth century, which then attempted to assume control of the government of the Indians.<sup>31</sup>

The 1707 engraving was to serve, therefore, as a tool of territorial expansion. More than a mediation or a purely ideological construction, it should be seen as a re-creation, in cartographic terms, of what for Samuel Fritz was the true “geographic reality.” It should be seen as an instrument of intervention, the basis and condition for the orientation of the intended transformations in that territory.<sup>32</sup>

The engraving was sent to Madrid, by order of the Royal Audiencia, in the care of the procurator from the Jesuit province. But the ship was intercepted by the English, who in 1712 published the map for the first time, with modifications and in a reduced scale.<sup>33</sup> In any case, it was too late. The verbal dispute between

31. Sebastião José de Carvalho e Melo, known as Marquês de Pombal (1669–1782), was secretary of state of the kingdom during the reign of Dom José I (1750–1777). He undertook a series of administrative, economic, and political reforms in the Portuguese empire, including the formulation of a new policy regarding its relationship with the American Indians. In 1755 he definitively prohibited their enslavement, and in 1757 he withdrew from the religious authorities the responsibility for the administration of indigenous settlements, transferring it to public servants in accordance with a new regime known as the Directorate of the Indians.

32. Regarding the concept of “geographic reality,” see the text by Emanuela Casti, “Elementi per una teoria dell’interpretazione cartografica,” *La cartografia europea*, p. 309.

33. Edward Cooke. *A Voyage to the South Sea, and Round the World* (London, 1712). See also Dionisio de Alsedo y Herrera, *Aviso histórico, político, geográfico con las noticias más particulares del Perú, Tierra Firme, Chile y Nuevo Reino de Granada* (Madrid: Oficinas de Diego Miguel de Peralta, 1740).

the Jesuits in the Spanish missions and the Carmelites from the Portuguese missions had already degenerated into armed conflict. After several attacks from both sides, the Spanish wound up losing territory to the Carmelites, who established themselves definitively in the region by around 1714, taking over and rebuilding the Jesuit missions destroyed during the conflict. In that same year, Fritz gave up his post as superior of the missions and moved to a village near the Jebero Indians, where he served as a priest until his death in 1725. By that time, the Carmelites were already administering 15 villages, paving the way for Portuguese expeditionary forces. These missions became bases for slaving operations, which in the following decades expanded toward the Rio Negro and the *sertão* of the Rio Branco in the northwestern Amazon. It was, therefore, the Portuguese (whose maps, if they existed, have not been preserved to our day) who finally conquered the disputed territory.

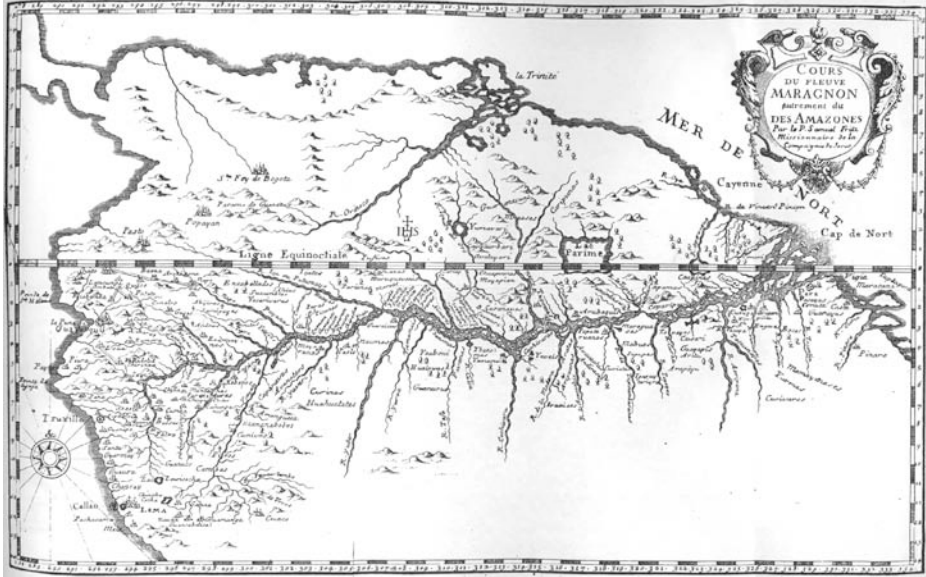
### **MARTYRDOM AND GEOGRAPHIC EXPANSION: MAPS AS POLITICAL PROPAGANDA**

Meanwhile, the prevailing discourse was quite different. In 1717, only three years after the end of the war between the Spanish and the Portuguese for the control of the territory, Fritz's map was published in volume 12 of the collection *Lettres édifiantes et curieuses écrites des missions étrangères par quelques missionnaires de la Compagnie de Jésus*, the most important report providing information on Jesuit activities to the European public (Figure 6).<sup>34</sup> The *Lettres édifiantes* were later translated into Spanish, Italian, German, and English, certainly a guarantee that the map was widely disseminated.

Yet the key to understanding this version of the map is no longer its "geographic reality," but rather its intentional omissions. In comparing it to the 1707 version, the first difference that jumps out at the observer is that the iconography has been greatly simplified. Nothing indicates that the territory represented was the object of violent territorial disputes. The title, formerly at the center of the image, was moved to the right. The coat of arms of the kingdom of Spain was removed, and the contours of the territory it had formerly encompassed were grossly filled in. There is no dedicatory to King Philip V. The legend, the images of cartographic instruments, the Castilian leagues, and the grid, which in the previous version helped to demarcate the center of the figure, were all eliminated. In general, the decorative emblems were deleted, and the representation was stripped of its natural and ethnographic information.

34. *Cours du fleuve Maragnon autrement dit des Amazones*, map (257 × 380 mm) in *Lettres édifiantes et curieuses, écrites des missions étrangères, par quelques missionnaires de la Compagnie de Jésus*, 34 vols. (Paris: Le Mercier & Boudet, Marc Bordelet, 1707–1776) vol. 12, p. 212.

FIGURE 6  
*Cours du fleuve Maragnon autrement dit des Amazonas, 1717.*



Source: Cours du fleuve Maragnon autrement dit des Amazones p. le P. Samuel Fritz Missionnaire de la Compagnie de Jésus in *Lettres édifiantes et curieuses, écrites des missions étrangères par quelques missionnaires de la Compagnie de Jésus*, 34 vols. (Paris: Le Mercier & Boudet, Marc Bordelet, 1707–76), 1717, vol. 12, p. 212 (25.7 × 38 cm).

The symbols referring to the religious residences and small forts remained, but with no indication as to their belonging to the Portuguese or the Spanish, or to the Jesuits or to other orders. There is not even an indication of the missions established by Fritz himself among the indigenous Omagua, so carefully delineated in the original version. Thus, what was delineated with clarity and detail in the first printed version is in the second version simply reduced to the point of near-disappearance. The figure was flattened and stripped of the dynamism of the previous version, although references to the martyrdoms were purposefully maintained. The effort to strip the image of important content becomes even more evident when we note that the logotype of the Society of Jesus (IHS) remains but that the luminous rays that delimited the Spanish missions have been eliminated. With its relatively central location, and without the abovementioned rays, the “IHS” inscription takes on a position of greater significance, strongly suggesting the hegemony of the Society of Jesus over the entire territory.

35. In his study, André de Almeida classified the discrepancies between the original version and the second printing as “minor changes.” André Ferrand Almeida, “Samuel Fritz and the Mapping of the Amazon,” *Imago Mundi* 55 (2003), p. 118.

These fundamental variations have given rise to entirely different discourses.<sup>35</sup> The changes may be associated with what is generally known as a process of “homogenization” of space, characteristic of eighteenth-century cartography. If up to the end of the previous century maps were generally based on information collected from the physical and ethnographic environment, in the mid-eighteenth century a new method seems to have substituted this information with blank spaces. Yet the interesting fact is that this new paradigm takes on a political connotation, coinciding with the imperial desires to disseminate a homogenous image of the totality of their American possessions.<sup>36</sup> In a certain way, the differences in the two published versions of Fritz’s map seem to parallel this change, with the particularity that in this case the agent of discourse was the Society of Jesus. The erasure of information that in the 1707 version represented the real status of the Spanish missions’ occupation of the territory, seems to construct, within the discursive parameters of the *Lettres édifiantes et curieuses*, a space entirely occupied by the Jesuits.

The text that accompanies the image, *Description abrégée du Fleuve Maragnon & des Missions établies aux environs de ce fleuve*, also follows the editorial line of *Lettres édifiantes*, not corresponding to any of the texts from other versions of the map. As were others in the *Lettres édifiantes*, this text was probably rewritten by its editor, Father Du Halde, based on original documents. The text tells the tale of the martyrdom of Enrique Richter, the fellow Bohemian priest Fritz had followed to the Americas, killed by Piro Indians in 1695. Not entirely scrupulous in handling the information, Father Du Halde comments on Samuel Fritz’s saga only in his last paragraph:

We heard from Fritz himself that the Governor of a Portuguese station had taken him for a spy, & having incarcerated him for two years in a narrow prison, it was quite difficult after such a considerable period to regain his freedom. This Father established his Mission on this great river, which in several places resembles a vast sea. He takes care of thirty Indian Nations that inhabit the many Islands, with which the Maragnon is covered, from the place where the Pelados live [near the Napo River] all the way to the river mouth.<sup>37</sup>

In fact, we know that Fritz was not kept in a narrow prison, but in a Jesuit residence in Belém. Nor did he have under his responsibility villages located all along the Amazon River: they extended only up to the mouth of the Japurá River (more than 2000 kilometers from the Amazon delta), and some of them had even been taken over by the Portuguese in armed conflict between 1700

36. Nuria Valverde and Antonio Lafuente, “Space Production and Spanish Imperial Geopolitics,” in *Science in the Spanish and Portuguese Empires, 1500–1800*, Daniela Bleichmar, Paula De Vos, Kristin Huffine, and Kevin Sheehan, eds. (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2009), pp. 198–215.

37. *Lettres édifiantes et curieuses*, vol. 12, p. 212.

and 1714. The description of the missions also suggests to the reader that between the mouth of the Napo River and the Amazon delta there were only 30 indigenous nations, when we know they were much more numerous. The author of the text also omits the existence, all along the course of the river, of Portuguese forts, settlements, and missions. These rhetorical choices correspond visually to the erasure of cartographic information. Using Fritz's map as an illustration of the Jesuit missions in Amazonian territory, Du Halde's text gives the impression, in his editing of Fritz's biography, that he had led a life of martyrdom, yet had had remarkable success in the task of subjugating the Indians. He also suggests that the Jesuit missions had covered that entire territory, an image most strongly constructed, and most difficult to combat, within the heart of anti-Jesuit historiography itself.

It seems to me, therefore, that Samuel Fritz represented what for him was geographical reality. Both his hand-drawn version and the engraving were means of taking action within that reality: the Jesuit needed financing to expand his missions within that territory. Yet the image published in *Lettres édifiantes et curieuses* shows the territorial expansion of the Society of Jesus missions as a fact already accomplished, the result of successful catechesis at the cost of martyrs' lives.

## CONCLUSION

A version of Fritz's map corrected by Charles Marie de La Condamine was published in the Spanish translation of *Lettres édifiantes* in 1753. The course of the river was modified, and the connection of the Amazon to the Orinoco basin—confirmed by the Portuguese 10 years earlier—was added. It is an even poorer version than the French one with regard to hydrographic and ethnographic information. The symbol of the Society of Jesus, however, continues to reign in the center of the image. The English version of the map (Figure 7), published in 1712 in the travel book by Edward Cooke, is different still. As its literally translated original title states, it is in fact a map of the Amazon River showing the missions of the Society of Jesus. The grid was maintained and the proportions as well. The names of the islands remain, as does the indication of Omagua territory where Fritz had built a mission. Yet it is clear in the image that there is no commitment to missionary endeavors nor to the Society of Jesus. Besides the coat of arms, the lateral images and the legend have been removed, as well as the symbol of the Society of Jesus in the center of the image, which eliminates from the representation all the ideological content it had acquired, in distinct forms, in the two previously analyzed maps. It is also noteworthy that the representation is more homogenous with respect to the organization of the information: the left side, controlled by the Spanish, is not more saturated with information than the Portuguese side, as in Fritz's original engraving.

FIGURE 7  
*The Great River Marañon or of the Amazons, 1712*



Source: *The Great River Marañon or of the Amazons with the Mission of the Society of Jesus, geographically describ'd by Samuel Fritz, settled missioner on the said river*. F. I. de N. of the Society of Jesus, late Missioner on the River Marañon, engrav'd it at Quito 1707. Engrav'd at London by I. Senex, in Edward Cooke, *A voyage to the South Sea, and round the world, perform'd in the years 1708, 1709, 1710, and 1711*. London: B. Lintot and R. Gosling, 1712. Vol. 1, p. 233. (23 × 42 cm).

Other versions of this engraving can easily be found today in the old maps market. Each has its own characteristics, always attributed to Samuel Fritz, with more or less detailed information regarding the author and date of printing. After all, almost as many variations of this map exist as there were publications in which it appeared. Those analyzed herein mark the transformations of a discourse that can be associated with the institutional history of the Society of Jesus and its political intervention in European monarchies and colonial territories. In fact, each representation, in its differences from the original engraving, determines a distinct discourse, sometimes expressed in details that must necessarily be taken into account for any analysis that seeks to understand the process of commodification of the map. The intention of the map continues to be fundamental, as Brian Harley would point out, for the understanding of its discourse, a procedure also valid for the map buyer, so as to not run the risk of buying a pig in a poke.

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