

river has been impelled westward, in consequence of the accumulations of earth, which occur more frequently on the side of the eastern mountains, that are furrowed by torrents. The cataract bears the name of *Mapara*,* as we have mentioned above; while the name of the village is derived from that of the nation of *Atures*, now believed to be extinct. I find on the maps of the seventeenth century, *Island and Cataract of Athule*; which is the word *Atures* written according to the pronunciation of the *Tamanacs*, who confound, like so many other people, the consonants *l* and *r*. This mountainous region was so little known in Europe, even in the middle of the eighteenth century, that *D'Anville*, in the first edition of his *South America*, makes a branch issue from the *Orinoco*, near *Salto de los Atures*, and fall into the *Amazon*, to which branch he gives the name of *Rio Negro*.

Early maps, as well as *Father Gumilla's* work, place the Mission in latitude $1^{\circ} 30'$. *Abbé Gili* gives it $3^{\circ} 50'$. I found, by meridian altitudes of *Canopus* and *a* of the *Southern Cross*, $5^{\circ} 38' 4''$ for the latitude; and by the chronometer $4^{\text{h}} 41' 17''$ of longitude west of the meridian of *Paris*.

We found this small Mission in the most deplorable state. It contained, even at the time of the expedition of *Solano*, commonly called the 'expedition of the boundaries,' three hundred and twenty *Indians*. This number had diminished, at the time of our passage by the *Cataracts*, to forty-seven; and the missionary assured us that this diminution became from year to year more sensible. He showed us, that in the

* I am ignorant of the etymology of this word, which I believe means only a *fall of water*. *Gili* translates into *Maypure* a *small cascade* (*raudalito*) by *uccamatisi mapara canacapatirri*. Should we not spell this word *matpara*? *mat* being a radical of the *Maypure* tongue, and meaning *bad* (*Hervas*, *Saggio*, N. 29). The radical *par* (*para*) is found among *American* tribes more than five hundred leagues distant from each other, the *Caribs*, *Maypures*, *Brazilians*, and *Peruvians*, in the words *sea*, *rain*, *water*, *lake*. We must not confound *mapara* with *mapaja*; this last word signifies, in *Maypure* and *Tamanac*, the *papaw* or *melon-tree*, no doubt on account of the sweetness of its fruit, for *mapa* means in the *Maypure*, as well as in the *Peruvian* and *Omagua* tongues, 'the honey of bees.' The *Tamanacs* call a *cascade*, or *raudal*, in general *uatapurutpe* the *Maypures*, *uca*.