

maps published in our days of those great lakes, and that strange labyrinth of rivers, placed as if by chance between sixty and sixty-six degrees of longitude. No man in Europe believes any longer in the wealth of Guiana and the empire of the Grand Patiti. The town of Manoa, and its palaces covered with plates of massy gold, have long since disappeared; but the geographical apparatus serving to adorn the fable of El Dorado, the lake Parima, which, similar to the lake of Mexico, reflected the image of so many sumptuous edifices, has been religiously preserved by geographers. In the space of three centuries, the same traditions have been differently modified; from ignorance of the American languages, rivers have been taken for lakes, and portages for branches of rivers; one lake, the Cassipa, has been made to advance five degrees of latitude toward the south, while another, the Parima or Dorado, has been transported the distance of a hundred leagues from the western to the eastern bank of the Rio Branco. From these various changes, the problem we are going to solve has become much more complicated than is generally supposed. The number of geographers who discuss the basis of a map, with regard to the three points of measures, of the comparison of descriptive works, and of the etymological study* of names, is extremely

* I use this expression, perhaps an improper one, to mark a species of philological examination, to which the names of rivers, lakes, mountains, and tribes, must be subjected, in order to discover their identity in a great number of maps. The apparent diversity of names arises partly from the difference of the dialects spoken by one and the same family of people, partly from the imperfection of our European orthography, and from the extreme negligence with which geographers copy one another. We recognize with difficulty the Rio Uaupe in the Guaupe or Guape; the Xië, in the Guaicia; the Raudal de Atures, in Athule; the Caribbees, in the Calinas and Galibis; the Guaraunos or Uarau, in the Oaraw-its; &c. It is, however, by similar mutations of letters, that the Spaniards have made *hijo* of *filius*; *hambre*, of *fames*; and *Felipo de Urre*, and even *Utre*, of the Conquistador Philip von *Huten*; that the Tamanacs in America have substituted *choraro* for *soldado*; and the Jews in China, *Ialemeiohang* for *Jeremiah*. Analogy and a certain etymological tact must guide geographers in researches of this kind, in which they would be exposed to serious errors, if they were not to study at the same time the respective situations of the upper and lower tributary streams of the same river. Our maps of America are overloaded with names, for which rivers have been created. This desire of compiling, of filling up vacancies, and of employing, without investigation, heterogeneous materials, has given