

Chapter 11

Dutch Inland Posts and the Limits of Jurisdiction and Interference (1737–1790)

Complementing the examination of the Dutch colonial occupation in Upper and Lower Essequibo between 1670/75 and 1803, this chapter traces the Dutch inland posts, which were established in Upper Essequibo in the period 1737–1790 (Arinda) and in Lower Cuyuni in the periods 1755–1758 and 1767–1771. At the same time, the chapter investigates the violent removal practices of the Catalonian Capuchins in the Cuyuni since the 1730s, along with the responses of both Indigenous Peoples and the Dutch, before the relation between the Dutch and Indigenous Peoples in terms of jurisdiction and interference are researched.

Arinda and the Limits of Jurisdiction (1737–1790)

The Dutch plantations limited to the first fall, the West India Company had also established a trading outpost in Upper Essequibo in January 1737, situated below Creek Sipuaruni (see Figure 14). Although trade with Indigenous Peoples between 1721 and 1737 had yielded no significant quantity of mearan, dye, salt-fish, or red slaves,¹ the commander deemed Jacobus van der Burgh's post as relevant, since "we become acquainted among the Indians further inland, and this trade may by degrees become considerable".² Known as Arinda between 1741³ and 1790,⁴ the location of the post until August 1764 changed twice, namely before June 1751,

1 Commander Essequibo, "Letter to WIC", 21 March 1733, in: BB3, serial No. 69, p. 84; Court of Policy, "Digest of Land Grants", 1720–1771, pp. 178–180; Court of Policy, "Letter to WIC", 4 August 1726, p. 78; commander Essequibo, "Letter to WIC", 26 September 1727, in: BB3, serial No. 58, p. 80. In exchange for dye, Indigenous Peoples received in January 1737: "We pay to the Indians for 4 balls of this dye one large axe; for three balls one medium axe, for two balls one small axe, three balls of dye weighting four pounds"(commander H. Gelskerke, "Letter to WIC", 12 January 1737, in: BC, No. 133, pp. 277–279, at 278), Indigenous Peoples were likewise paid for going salting and the transportation of salt fish from Arinda to the fort, at least between December 1732 and November 1734 (WIC, "Muster Rolls", pp. 179–180).

2 Commander H. Gelskerke, "Letter to WIC", 12 January 1737, p. 277.

3 WIC, "Muster Rolls", p. 160.

4 Ibid., pp. 150–182. For the last time, Arinda was mentioned in February 1790 (commander Essequibo, "Journal", 8 July 1790, in: BRC, serial No. 634, p. 78).

after the transfer of the post to the creek Rupununi⁵ was already ordered in June 1750,⁶ as this presented “the direct route of the tribes [*de natien*] who come from up in Orinoco and Corentyn and pass through the country to trade or make war higher up”,⁷ and again in March 1751,⁸ before the post was finally transferred to the Rupununi before August 1769,⁹ although the director general had already in August 1764 claimed that Arinda was then transferred to the Rupununi, situated “about seventy hours (at a guess, because it has never been exactly measured) above Fort Zeelandia”.¹⁰ Determined as trading place for “red slaves and annatto dye” in September 1763,¹¹ Arinda’s relevance for trade was in August 1764 determined as minor, since trade “contributes but little to the importance of this post”. Instead, Arinda was indicated as being of “great service in keeping up the communication and friendship with the inland nations by means of which great discoveries might be made”¹² and to undertake “future explorations of the lands

5 Alternative spellings are Ripenouni, Ripenuwini.

6 Consequently, the indication “Nieuw Arinda” at the Rupununi junction of the map of 1748/1749 expressed a plan and was not carried out yet (Storm van’s Gravesande, “Plantations of Essequibo”, 1748/1749, p. 137).

7 WIC (Zeeland), “Letter to commander Essequibo”, 22 June 1750, in: BRC, serial No. 258, pp. 66–68.

8 Acting commander Essequibo, “Letter to WIC”, 6 March 1751, in: BB3, serial No. 98, p. 95.

9 WIC (Zeeland), “Letter to States General”, 21 August 1769, in: BB3, serial No. 226, p. 173.

10 The second de facto transfer of Arinda between August 1765 and August 1769 is confirmed in August 1764, when the post was still not removed, as the Arinda location was determined as being situated “below [*sic!*] Siparuni” and “not far above [*sic!*] the post two other rivers (called Sibaruna and Ripenuwini [. . .]) fall into the River Essequibo”, respectively “at about four degrees and a few minutes’ latitude north”, when the Upper Essequibo was still unknown “a few days above the post” and “no one having gone in that direction” (Storm van’s Gravesande, “Trading Places”, August 1764, p. 129). Similarly, the postholder in August 1765 had “not yet removed the post”, since the selected site “at the corner of the Ripenuwini was covered with 4 feet of water in the rainy season”, whereupon he “had found a very good site half-an-hour higher up”, where he “had found the Macoussis and Wapissanes, the two nations living there, at war, which had stopped him half way” (Director General, “Letter to WIC”, 13 August 1765, in: BB3, serial No. 177, pp. 136–137). The transfer was then with certainty carried out until 1769, when the location of the post was indicated as situated “above Fort Zeelandia [. . .] in the River of Essequibo, towards the Portuguese side, above [*sic!*] the little River Rupununi, is a post called Arinda” (WIC [Zeeland], “Letter to States General”, 21 August 1769, in: BB3, serial No. 226, p. 173).

11 Governor Storm van’s Gravesande, “Letter to Governor Crommelin”, 18 August 1764, in: BRC, serial No. 397, pp. 114–115; commander L. L. van Bercheyck, “Journal”, Demerara, 2 November–27 November 1763, in: BRC, serial No. 168, enclosure, p. 127.

12 Storm van’s Gravesande, “Trading Places”, August 1764, p. 129; Director General, “Brief Treatise”, August 1764, p. 111.

and natives in the interior”,¹³ since the expedition of the “great discoveries” remained unsuccessful in May 1714, when the WIC in Amsterdam had ordered the Essequibo commander to carry out a secret gold expedition to “the Lake of Parime, also called Rupowini, being very famous for its richness in gold”,¹⁴ which was inspired by a similar undertaking to the Orinoco, mandated by the Society of Suriname in July 1711.¹⁵ Thereafter, subsequent Dutch expeditions to “the Lake of Parima” between 1739 and 1741¹⁶ remained likewise unsuccessful¹⁷ and an expedition to the “Calikko or Crystal Mountain” in 1746 failed due to the opposition of Indigenous Peoples, since the “Indian nations living in that district had not permitted them to approach it without a deal of difficulty”, as the mines are “situated full three days’ journey inland [where] the Indian nations were all at war with each other, and were nearly all at war, too, with the Portuguese, who were continually making raids upon them and carrying them off, and that this was a source of great danger to any Christians who came there”.¹⁸

In August 1764, the director general clearly admitted that “(w)e must have no expectations of getting information concerning any mines from the Indians”,¹⁹

13 Van’s Gravesande, “Letter to Crommelin”, 18 August 1764, pp. 114–115; commander L. L. Van Bercheyck, “Journal”, Demerara, 2 November–27 November 1763, in: BB3, serial No. 168, enclosure, p. 127.

14 WIC, “Letter to commander Essequibo P. van der Heyden Resen”, Amsterdam, 1 May 1714, in: BRC, serial No. 153, Annex, pp. 238–240, at 238. Furthermore, it is indicated that “there is also situated the so-called place Manoa, or El Dorado, or the Golden City, where, as in the whole region of Guiana through which the aforesaid river runs, there are very many gold and silver mines” (*ibid.*).

15 Ensign of the Secret Expedition to the Orinoco, “Journal”, 18 March – 13 July 1711, in: BC, No. 95, Annex 12, pp. 224–228. which was initiated by an encounter of the Governor of Suriname and the Carib Chief Tawaimara (Taweymanre, Taweymaire) of Copoerica, situated “about ten days by water above the little fort which the Spaniards possess in the aforesaid river Orinoco” (Willem Buys and Johann Althusius, “Documents relating to a Secret Expedition from Surinam to the Orinoco in search of a certain Treasure”, Amsterdam, 27 October 1707, in: BC, No. 95, pp. 209–214, at 209).

16 Commander Essequibo, “Letter to WIC”, 8 February 1742, in: BRC, serial No. 220, p. 36.

17 *Ibid.*; commander Essequibo, “Letter to WIC”, 14 September 1739, in: BRC, serial No. 212, pp. 30–31; Secretary Essequibo Laurens Storm van’s Gravesande, “Letter to WIC”, 30 April 1741, in: BRC, serial No. 214, p. 32; commander Essequibo, “Letter to WIC”, 10 June 1741, in: BRC, serial No. 218, p. 35. This was the so-called Nicolas Horstman expedition.

18 Commander Essequibo, “Letter to WIC”, 7 December 1746, in: BB3, serial No. 78, pp. 87–88. Another Crystal Mine is indicated in the neighbourhood of the first Arinda post a significant distant below (*ibid.*).

19 Storm van’s Gravesande, “Trading Places”, August 1764, p. 129. In this context, the Director General reason that this “was also the case in Cuyuni and Mazaruni, where the vast number of Indians [. . .] through fear of the Spaniards, allow no strangers to come into their country”

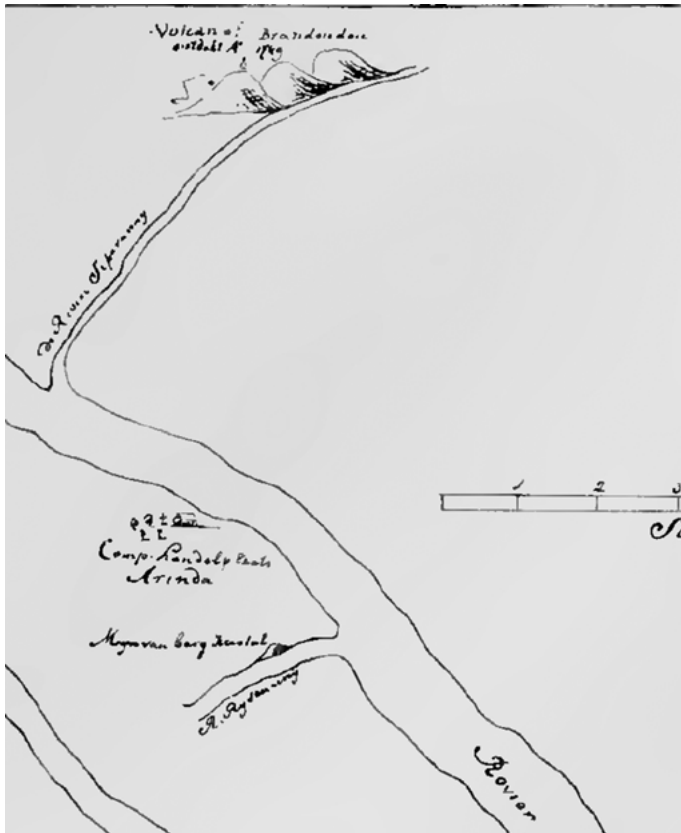


Figure 14: Drawing of the Arinda post below Siparuni of 1748/49.

whereas the mythological narrative about the devil Jawaho had an additional deterrent effect on the Dutch,²⁰ who was believed to dwell in “a very high

(Director General, “Brief Treatise”, August 1764, p. 109), which also corresponds with the statement of the commander in August 1764 that about Mazaruni “it is known but little or not at all”, while “a nation which had never seen a white man” in the context of colonist Piepersberg, who was “the only man to my knowledge who has been any distance up the river, in pursuit of thirteen of his runaway slaves” had “refused him admittance to its land [sic!], he having got his slaves back through the medium of a free Indian known to that nation, and by means of payment” and “had not dared to leave his boat” (Storm van’s Gravesande, “Trading Places”, August 1764, p. 129).

²⁰ Director General, “Instructions to postholder at Arinda”, Fort Zeelandia in Rio Essequibo, 14 August 1764, in: BB3, serial No. 171, enclosure 2, pp. 131–133, at 132.

pyramid built of stone” in the Upper Rupununi (Ripenuwini),²¹ which became most influential, after Pieter Tollenaer was in 1740 sent to examine the pyramid, returned with “a rough drawing thereof” and information about “various images which he had seen near it cut in the stone” and had suddenly died “shortly after his return”.²² Thereupon, the Dutch avoided the Upper Rupununi and even “itinerant hawkers” were “very careful not to come near those places”.²³ Only in June 1769, Arinda postholder Gerritt Jansse²⁴ carried out his order and proceeded up the Rupununi,²⁵ where he encountered the Makushi, known to the Dutch earliest since October 1753,²⁶ and the “the nation of the Parhavianes, who were [formerly] living up in Essequibo [but] being too greatly molested by the Carai bans, removed thither”. Thereupon, the postholder arrived at the Wapishana, described as the “nation [that] lives near the Crystal Mine on both sides of the river Maho”.²⁷

Nonetheless, Jansse also failed in gaining access to the mines, although the postholder made presents to the Wapishana Chief, namely “a bottle of powder and some small shot”, as the Chief still “strictly forbade him to search or to dig [. . .] up the crystal which grows there in many places in a red dry soil”, which obliged him to “wandering about the place, which they allowed him to

21 Ibid. Similar narratives were applied by the “chiefs and elders” of the respective Indigenous Peoples to keep the locations of minerals secret (Storm van’s Gravesande, “Trading Places”, August 1764, p. 129) or to participate in mining operations, since “they nore their people dared put a hand to the work, because the earth trembled when they only began to stir it, and they would surely perish” (Ensign of the Secret Expedition to the Orinoco, “Journal”, 18 March–13 July 1711, in: BC, No. 95, Annex 12, pp. 224–228, at 228), as stated by the Carib Chiefs Taywomary and Quatrymo of Orinoco in March 1712).

22 Director General, “Letter to WIC”, 13 December 1765, in: BRC, serial No. 411, pp. 130–131.

23 Storm van’s Gravesande, “Trading Places”, August 1764, p. 129. The Director General furthermore assumed that the “true cause [was] their ungrounded fear of the savage nations living in those parts” (Director General, “Letter to WIC”, 3 June 1769, in: BB3, serial No. 221, p. 167).

24 Appointed as postholder in December 1767 (Director General, “Letter to WIC”, 9 December 1767, in: BB3, serial No. 195, pp. 148–149, at 149) and described as “the honest, upright and sober fellow” (Director General, “Letter to WIC”, 3 June 1769, p. 166).

25 Director General, “Letter to WIC”, 3 June 1769, p. 166. An alternative spelling is Maccousis.

26 Director General, “Letter to WIC”, 20 October 1753, in: BB3, serial No. 106, p. 97. Furthermore, the Makushi had been also encountered by a previous postholder in August 1765 (Director General, “Letter to WIC”, 13 August 1765, p. 136).

27 Director General, “Letter to WIC”, 3 June 1769, p. 166. Alternative spellings are Wapissannes and Wapissanes. In this context, it is reported that they “live in the Savannahs by day, but at night they retire to inaccessible rocks and cliffs, where they have their houses and caves, all the approaches to which, however steep, are still defended by pallisades [sic!] through fear of the powerful nation of the Manos or Magnamos” (ibid.). An alternative name is Magnauts.

do, but always with a few young Wapissanes by his side". For that reason, Jansse returned to Fort Zeelandia and was immediately sent back to the Rupununi with "a few instructions how to behave" and an order to "obtain, in a friendly manner, permission from the Wapissannes to cross the Maho, and go to the neighbouring nations", for which Jansse had "departed" and would decamp "as soon as the water [. . .] begins to fall a little".²⁸ However, Janse, and some Caribs were attacked by Cerekon Chief Maripuma from Orinoco during this follow-up expedition and, in contrast to initial reports,²⁹ in fact not slain, but captured and brought to Orinoco, before the postholder "fortunately escaped" before May 1769.³⁰ Another attempt for a third expedition is not documented and appears unlikely, since Gerritt Jansse was officially replaced by Pieter Schreuder in December 1771,³¹ while postholder Le Clair in 1774 and again in 1776 was instead busy in establishing trade with the Magnauts, who live "near the Portuguese frontiers", which was still unknown in January 1776,³² before the Dutch post Arinda was mentioned for the last time in February 1790.³³

Previously, the Essequibo commander in February 1763 had intended to conclude a "Treaty of Commerce" with the Magnauts, to whom "[t]he Portuguese in Brazil are indebted [. . .] for the discovery of the gold and diamonds",³⁴ which was thwarted by the Carib attack upon the Magnauts.³⁵ Instead, in November 1766 the Magnauts were forming a settlement with a Portuguese missionary in the Maho creek, along with several Supenays and "nations of whom it sometimes is said that they have their faces on their breast and are cannibals", and had "driven away the Caribs and other nations" from the creeks Aurora and Maho, when the Carib Chief Marjarewyna went there to inquire.³⁶ Consequently, in February 1769 they were reported to occupy the area "(a) good way up the river [Upper Essequibo]", where

28 Director General, "Letter to WIC", 3 June 1769, p. 166.

29 Director General, "Letter to WIC", 15 March 1769, in: BB3, serial No. 216, pp. 161–162.

30 Director General, "Letter to WIC", 12 May 1769, in: BB3, serial No. 220, p. 165.

31 WIC, "Muster Rolls", p. 168.

32 Director General G. H. Trotz, "Letter to WIC", 23 January 1776, in: BB3, serial No. 271, pp. 190–191.

33 Commander Essequibo, "Journal", 8 July 1790, in: BRC, serial No. 634, p. 78. The post vanished from the muster-roll already after June 1785 (WIC, "Muster Rolls", p. 174).

34 Storm van's Gravesande, "Trading Places", August 1764, p. 129.

35 L. Storm van's Gravesande, "Letter to WIC", Essequibo, 17 May 1762, in: BB3, serial No. 154, p. 124.

36 Essequibo Assistant H. Milborn, "Letter to Director General of Essequibo", 19 November 1766, in: BC, No. 247, pp. 421–422, at 421. Assertively, this was based on the report of "a Carib" (*ibid.*).

“several [“well-populated”] villages of that nation” are established, “which white people have never seen”.³⁷

In 1769, the Indigenous Peoples of Upper Essequibo had also strictly forbidden the Portuguese access, threatening that “the whole nation would immediately break up and ‘trek’ further into the inland, thus losing the whole advantage”, whereupon the Portuguese had “not only abandoned” but also “strictly forbidden” any exploration.³⁸ Similarly, the “vast number of Indians” of the Cuyuni and Mazaruni had prohibited “strangers to come into their country”,³⁹ which is confirmed by the report of plantation owner Engelbert Piepersberg in August 1764, who had proceeded to the unknown parts up the Mazaruni in pursuit of thirteen of his runaway slaves and arrived at “a nation which had never seen a white man” and had “refused him admittance to its land”.⁴⁰

Prior, the Upper Essequibo had developed into an area of frequent ill-treatment by the Dutch, as the Indigenous Peoples filed numerous complaints to the commander in Essequibo. In response, regulations and orders were enacted for Dutch colonists and several Court sessions held, most notably against Nicolas Stedevelt, Jan Stok, and Peter Marchial, whereas the first known case of “brutal dealings” in Upper Essequibo happened in December 1747, when Hermanus Bannink and Gerrit Goritz were killed after having severely ill-treated Indigenous Peoples,⁴¹ which had left the commander unimpressed, who instead wondered “that this does not happen much oftener, because the brutal dealings of that sort of people, who hesitate at nothing, must stir the Indians to revenge”, while at the same time feared

that those tribes between the Amazon and this river [Essequibo], which are tolerably powerful, will be embittered extremely and, fearing that vengeance will be taken for this murder may perhaps raid our highest-lying plantations, and thus bring us into a war which might be by no means advantageous for this colony.⁴²

In addition, cases of enslavement and abduction took place in the 1740s and 1750s, such as in August 1748, when a Dutch colonist abducted the daughter of

37 Director General Laurens Storm van’s Gravesande, “Letter to WIC”, 21 February 1769, in: BB3, serial No. 212, pp. 159–159, at 158.

38 Director General (in Demerary), “Letter to WIC”, 12 May 1769, in: BB3, serial No. 220, p. 165.

39 Director General, “Brief Treatise”, August 1764, p. 111.

40 Furthermore, it was reported that Piepersberg received “his” slaves back through “the medium of a free Indian known to that nation, and by means of payment”, but “had not dared to leave his boat” (Storm van’s Gravesande, “Trading Places”, August 1764, p. 129).

41 WIC (Zeeland), “Letter to commander Essequibo”, 22 June 1750, pp. 66–68.

42 Commander Essequibo Storm van’s Gravesande, “Letter to WIC”, 29 December 1747, in: BC, No. 162, pp. 315.

Baraka from Moruca, who was sanctioned with repatriation,⁴³ in January 1752, when colonist Christian Tonsel⁴⁴ took away the children of the Caribs of Barima as “pledges for debts”,⁴⁵ after the cases of Peter Bakker⁴⁶ and Jean Peter Mailard (Peter Marchial) in January 1750, who “had fetched them [the Caribs of Mazaruni] from their dwellings” under the pretension “that it was by the orders of his Honour the commander”, whereupon Marchial was “sharply admonished to leave the Indians there unmolested in their liberties, and to duly pay them for their services rendered”.⁴⁷ Hence, the abductions continued until the first takeover by the English in 1781, such as the murder case in Moruca in June 1766,⁴⁸ the abduction of a Warouw by Louis La Tor in April 1778,⁴⁹ and in the case of the wanderer Nicolas Stedevelt, who in April 1760 had made “frivolous use of his Excellency’s name” in Upper Cuyuni and “ill-used the free Caribs, but also bound and put them in irons, and taken a woman away”.⁵⁰ In result, Stedevelt was sentenced to be “arrested and placed in the fortress”, ordered “to pay a fine of 250 guilders” and cautioned “that, should he not be more prudent for the

43 Court of Justice, “Minutes”, 1/2 August 1748, p. 89; Court of Justice, “Minutes”, 1 and 2 August 1748, in: BRC, serial No. 246, p. 56.

44 Shareholders of WIC (Zeeland), “Memorial”, 30 November 1751, in: BRC, serial No. 265, pp. 71–72. An alternative spelling is Christian Fousel (Court of Justice, “Minutes”, Fort Zeelandia, 3 and 4 January 1752, in: BB3, serial No. 100, p. 96).

45 Court of Justice, “Minutes of Proceedings”, Fort Zeelandia, 3/4 January 1752, in: BB3, serial No. 100, p. 96. The same passage is translated in Court of Justice, “Proceedings”, Fort Zeelandia, 3/4 January 1752, in: BRC, serial No. 266, pp. 72–73, at 73. In this translation it is indicated that “Christian Tonsel” would have “continually tyrannizes over them all, and that he took away their children and friends as pledges for debts” (ibid.). At the same time, “Bastian Christaansen also represents that the said Fousel had taken away a boy slave belonging to him, and offers as proof the evidence of the present Indians. This having been all considered, the said Fousel is sent for, and after appearing, he is reprimanded and ordered to deliver to the Carib his children, and to Bastian Christiaansen the boy in question” (ibid.).

46 Court of Justice, “Minutes”, 10 January 1750, in: BRC, serial No. 255, p. 64.

47 Ibid. At the same time, the Essequibo commander in January 1750 reported for Upper Essequibo that “[t]he wantonness goes so far that certain of these do not hesitate even to go with some tribes to make war upon others, or greatly to maltreat them, often carrying off free people and selling them as slaves, and abusing the Indian women” (WIC [Zeeland], “Letter to commander Essequibo”, 22 June 1750, pp. 66–68).

48 WIC (Zeeland), “Letter to Director General”, 19 June 1766, in: BRC, serial No. 413, pp. 133–134. Thereupon, the WIC approved measures since “in such cases one cannot be too prudent or cautious, in order to give no ground for dissatisfaction to the Indians” (ibid.).

49 Director General G. H. Trotz, “Journal”, 26 April 1778–17 October 1778, in: BC, No. 307, pp. 547–551, at 547.

50 Court of Justice, “Minutes”, Rio Essequibo, 8 April 1760, in: BRC, serial No. 346, p. 182.

future, he will be banished from the land”.⁵¹ By contrast, plantation owner Jan Stok was in January 1750 sentenced for his “intolerable and inexcusable dealings” in Upper Essequibo, since Stok had “attacked the nations, our friends close by the post Arinda, caused all the men to be killed and carried the women and children away as slaves, ruined all the provision gardens, and perpetrated many other unheard of things” and charged “with custody”, after the concerned Indigenous Peoples had “intended to take vengeance, therefore, so that the other wanderers who were still up [the river] were in extreme peril of life, and the plantations up the Essequibo ran the risk of being deserted”,⁵² whereas Jan Stok of Essequibo⁵³ was described as “a brutal and Godless man”, who “according to unanimous report [had] committed horrible enormities there”. At the same time, the commander of Essequibo had also “closed” the Upper Essequibo and prohibited colonists to trade there.⁵⁴ Already considered in 1737⁵⁵ and shortly implemented in January 1748,⁵⁶ the closure of the river in January 1750 was of little permanence, since the commander “was compelled by the Council of Justice again to make the trade open under certain conditions”,⁵⁷ but had managed “to prohibit until further orders traffic with the Indians on the Rivers Essequibo, Mazaruni, and Cayuni”,⁵⁸ as the colonists would never be condemned by the Court “as they deserve” and “the Indians who have been maltreated dwelling too far

51 Ibid. Witness in the case was Bastiaan Christiaansen, while “the complaining Indians being heard” in Court. Although Stedevelt had denied “having made use of the name of his Excellency”, Christiaansen confirmed that he “had bound a Carib, of the name of Arinopo”, whereupon the Court finally sentenced Stedevelt for using the name of the commander, but not for bounding the Carib (Ibid.).

52 Commander Essequibo, “Letter to WIC”, 10 January 1750, in: BRC, serial No. 256, p. 64; commander Essequibo, “Letter to WIC”, 10 January 1750, in: BB3, serial No. 91, pp. 92–93.

53 Jan Stok is recorded as plantation owner in Essequibo (above the junction) since September 1742.

54 Commander Essequibo, “Letter to WIC”, 10 January 1750, in: BRC, serial No. 256, p. 64; commander Essequibo, “Letter to WIC”, 10 January 1750, in: BB3, serial No. 91, pp. 92–93.

55 Commander Essequibo Storm van’s Gravesande, “Letter to WIC”, 29 December 1747, in: BC, No. 162, pp. 315. At this point of time, it was not carried out due to “much opposition on account of the profit which some draw from there through the slave trade” (ibid.).

56 Court of Justice, “Minutes of Proceedings”, Fort Zeelandia Rio Essequibo, 8 January 1748, in: BRC, serial No. 242, p. 55. This time, the commander indicated that in consequence if the “ill-behaviour of the traders in the Upper Essequibo [. . .] two or three Christians having already been killed by the natives”.

57 Commander Essequibo, “Letter to WIC”, 10 January 1750, in: BRC, serial No. 256, p. 64; commander Essequibo, “Letter to WIC”, 10 January 1750, in: BB3, serial No. 91, pp. 92–93.

58 In June 1750, the WIC in Zeeland also argued for closing the river, since the prohibition to trade in upper Essequibo “would cause no damage to the Colony for those people would then turn to some other and more useful means of livelihood, and the Carib nation would still bring

away and having never seen the European Colonies, dare not come down to complain". In addition, the commander emphasized that in known cases "legal proof is always wanting", since "the Indians are not believed [in Court] [sic!]"⁵⁹ This practice is impressively illustrated in the well-documented Court case of Peter Marchial of 1755/56. Notorious to the Court of Justice since 1748,⁶⁰ Lower Mazaruni plantation owner Jean Pieter Marchial was in 1755 accused to have incited⁶¹ the Carib Chief of Barima to kill eight Acowaio, but despite the detailed Court testimony of the Carib Cacique Araytana of Barima in January 1756 released as "innocent of the charges",⁶² since the accusations were "found to be without lawful and valid proof"⁶³ and the commander of Essequibo explained that it was "prescribed custom here that no Indian's testimony can hold good against that of Christians".⁶⁴

Henceforward, the Carib Chief of Barima Araytana (Maraywakke)⁶⁵ was examined by Adriaen Christiaanse on 17 December 1755 in Aymara-Aykoeroe,⁶⁶ who gave a detailed account on the events unfolding during his journey for making bread in Mazaruni (Tawaaykoere, near Cawaritana), gain support from other Carib Owls to "resist the Spaniards"⁶⁷ and "take revenge" for the killing of

slaves enough [and] they could betake themselves in the direction of Orinoco" (WIC (Zeeland), "Letter to commander Essequibo", 22 June 1750, pp. 66–68).

59 Ibid. During the Court case, the names "Jean Pieter Marchial" and "Jan Pierre Maillard" were used interchangeably (ibid.). See Court of Justice, "Minutes of Proceedings", Fort Zeelandia, 7/8 April 1755, in: BB3, serial No. 117, p. 103.

60 In January 1750, Marchial had already "fetched" the Caribs from Massaruni "from their dwellings" and let them "work for [. . .] four months, without payment" (Court of Justice, "Minutes", 10 January 1750, in: BRC, serial No. 255, p. 64) and abducted the daughter of a certain Baraka from Moruca (Court of Justice, "Minutes", 1/2 August 1748, p. 89). Pieter Marchial (Pierre Maillard) was a plantation owner since 1747.

61 Court of Justice, "Minutes", Fort Zeelandia, 7/8 April 1755, in: BB3, serial No. 117, p. 103.

62 Christianse, "Examination of Arraytana", Aymara-Aykocroe, 17 December 1755, p. 126; Adriaen Christiaanse, "Examination of Carib Chief Arraytana", Aymara-Aykoeroe, 17 December 1755, in: BB3, serial No. 124, enclosure, p. 106.

63 Court of Justice, "Minutes", 5 January 1756, Essequibo, in: BRC, serial No. 313, pp. 123–124.

64 Christianse, "Examination of Arraytana", Aymara-Aykocroe, 17 December 1755, p. 126; Adriaen Christiaanse, "Examination of Carib Chief Arraytana", Aymara-Aykoeroe, 17 December 1755, in: BB3, serial No. 124, enclosure, p. 106.

65 Most likely, Araytana is the same Carib Chief of Barima, indicated as the Saliva–Carib Cacique Aretana in the context of the Taricura attacks in the Orinoco during the 1730s.

66 Christianse, "Examination of Arraytana", Aymara-Aykocroe, 17 December 1755, p. 126. This was done by the interpreters Stephanus Gerardus van der Heyden and Bastiaan Christiaansen (ibid.).

67 Ibid. The Dutch original reads: "*Antw.*– Mijn reijs was, om dat Ik ontboden weird, door order van mijn maet zijn Excellentie, die miju zeyde, bij hem komende, dat sijn Ed. Had

his brother Tarawera “by the nations”.⁶⁸ At Marchial’s plantation, Araytana was then incited to “go and kill” the Acowaio, who would have been “looking for [him]” and would have had prepared “a large number of arrow-heads [. . .] to kill your people upon their departure”. At the same time, Engelbert Piepersberg, plantation owner in Lower Mazaruni at least since 1748/49, had requested Araytana “[after having] murdered the nation” to “let Oeracajare bring the women to me”, whereupon Araytana had confessed to have murdered the Acowaio in union with the Mazaruni Caribs and to having “brought the women down”, sold three of them to Marchial “and also had to give him a boy into the bargain as a present for encouraging me to commit the murder”, before the Cacique was forced to hand over “two of the best slaves” to Mr. Pypersberg and brought “one old slave” to “my ally, his Excellency”.⁶⁹ In contrast, Marchial had during the first hearing in April 1755 asserted “to having placed the pistol on Awacnoie’s breast; also that Accowais had been killed in his presence” without taking “part in it, either directly or indirectly”, whereas the “creole” Domingo and the “negro” Andries agreed that Marchial had “placed his pistol on the breast of an Indian called Awacnoie, who was indebted to him” and had said that ““You must and you can pay me; these are Accowais; kill them””. In result, “an Accowai and an Arawak” were killed.⁷⁰ Nevertheless, the Court of Justice acquitted Marchial in January 1756, who had initially refused “to be heard solely upon the accusations of a single Carib”.⁷¹

Most notably, the Marchial Court case of 1756 also reveals that the Dutch had no jurisdiction over Indigenous Peoples, since Araytana was also neither pleaded guilty, sentenced nor charged for having murdered the Acowaio.⁷² The same applies to the murder of several Dutch colonists on Marchial’s Mazaruni plantation by the Acowaio after the first case hearing in 1755, attacks on other

verstaen, dat de Spanjaers. Ons vervolgde en ook Dood Sloeg dat dat de Reden was, om hem te ontbieden om hem te Segge, dat hij op zijn hoede mogte Sijn, om’t Saemen Tegen de Spanjaerds te komen bestaen, en ook dat Ik alle de andere Caribische uijlen moest waarschoewen, om met haer onderhebbende volk in Gereedheijd te Sijn, om te kunnen bestaen” (Ibid.).

68 Christianse, “Examination of Arraytana”, Aymara-Aykocroe, 17 December 1755, p. 126.

69 Ibid. Likewise, Marchial would have told him that “they intend taking flight to Camoeran, above Masseroeny”, but also already “killed their friends” and seek “to kill [the Carib Chiefs] Arraytana, Awarawe, Karochpo, Aurachpo, and Oerakayare for revenge”, while the Acowaio would “not [be] his Excellency’s allies” (ibid.).

70 Court of Justice, “Minutes of Proceedings”, Fort Zeelandia, 7/8 April 1755, in: BB3, serial No. 117, p. 103.

71 Christianse, “Examination of Arraytana”, Aymara-Aykocroe, 17 December 1755, p. 126; also in: BB3, serial No. 124, enclosure, p. 106.

72 In this context, Jacob Schiltkamp highlights that “only a guilty suspect could be sentenced” (Schiltkamp, “On Common Ground”, p. 79).

Dutch plantations, whose owners had been identified as “having grossly ill-treated that nation”⁷³ and Marchial’s expel from his plantation by “large numbers” of Acowaio,⁷⁴ as well as to the murder cases of Bannink and Goritz in Upper Essequibo in 1747⁷⁵ and the cases of the postholders in Moruca (December 1767),⁷⁶ Cuyuni (March 1758),⁷⁷ and Arinda (December 1767).⁷⁸

In brief, the practices of the Court clearly indicate that the Dutch had also in practice no jurisdiction over Indigenous Peoples, who were neither charged nor sentenced for crimes against Dutch colonists nor accepted in the Court with regard to crimes carried out against them. Therefore, the Court of Justice in Essequibo acted in line with the European colonial law of the time, since the Dutch had by occupation only acquired land as property, but not jurisdiction, although the director general had since the boundary dispute with the Catalonian Capuchins in the 1740s sporadically claimed that either the Caribs of Mazaruni (April 1764)⁷⁹ or the Caribs of Cuyuni would “belong to our jurisdiction, and all their trade being carried on in the Dutch Colonies” (December 1748).⁸⁰

⁷³ Director General, “Letter to WIC”, 27 August 1755, in: BRC, serial No. 309, pp. 120–121.

⁷⁴ Christianse, “Examination of Arraytana”, Aymara-Aykocroe, 17 December 1755, p. 126.

⁷⁵ WIC (Zeeland), “Letter to commander Essequibo”, 22 June 1750, pp. 66–68.

⁷⁶ Director General, “Letter to WIC”, 9 December 1767, in: BB3, serial No. 195, pp. 148–149, at 149.

⁷⁷ Director General, “Letter to WIC”, 6 March 1758, in: BB3, serial No. 130, p. 109. Thereupon, the Cuyuni postholder Johannes Neumann in March 1758 was discharged and sent “back to Europe [. . .] to prevent him from doing mischief amongst the Indians” (ibid.).

⁷⁸ Court of Policy, “Provisional Instructions for postholder in Cuyuni Pierre Martyn”, Rio Essequibo, 16 September 1766, in: BB3, serial No. 184, pp. 140–141, at 140.

⁷⁹ Director General, “Letter to WIC”, 9 April 1764, in: BRC, serial No. 394, p. 105.

⁸⁰ Commander Essequibo, “Letter to WIC”, 2 December 1748, in: BRC, serial No. 248, pp. 57–59, at 58. Similar, this spatial strategy was applied “some weeks ago [when] a war having broken out between the Carib nation and that of the Warouwen, which is carried on very obstinately” and would “stop their [Spaniards] further progress, and possibly, if the Caribs obtain the upper hand, they may even be driven somewhat further off, without our having in the least degree to meddle therewith” (ibid.).

The Dutch Cuyuni Post and Capuchin Violent Removal (1730–1790)

Almost two decades later, the Dutch post Arinda in Upper Essequibo was joined by a short-lived outpost in Upper Cuyuni, which existed from May 1755 until August 1758 and again between March 1767 until December 1771. At the same time, the Upper Mazaruni remained exclusively occupied by Indigenous Peoples,⁸¹ despite an “annatto store” in October 1686,⁸² whereupon the Company in “up country” (1687)⁸³ traded in annatto dye and red slaves, which was strictly prohibited for colonists and planters, as resulting from the renewal of the prohibition by the commander at Kijkoveral in April 1730, proclaiming that “the rivers of Masseroeny and Cajjoeny [which] for years past been kept for the private trade of the Honourable Company [and] each and every one is hereby expressly forbidden to carry on any trade in them under the penalty of confiscation of the vessels, slaves, and other goods, and the imposition of an additional fine of 50 Caroly guilders”.⁸⁴ However, the WIC trade in Upper Cuyuni and Mazaruni was small in quantity, since negotiations were impaired by both the core period of the Carib-Acowaio war from June 1680⁸⁵ to January 1688,⁸⁶ and the French presence between 1682 (Orinoco, Trinidad)⁸⁷ and 1689 (Barima),⁸⁸ after Essequibo commander Hendrik Roll had in March 1673 reported that “(p)ease had been made

81 At that time, the plantations were limited to Lower Cuyuni and Mazaruni.

82 Essequibo Council, “Minutes”, 20 October 1686, in: BRC, serial No. 110, pp. 202–203, at 202.

83 Commander J. de Jonge, “Letter to WIC”, Bowrona, 8 May 1687, in: BB3, serial No. 19, pp. 62–63; commander Pomeroon, “Journal Baurona”, 13 June 1686–12 January 1687, in: BB3, serial No. 19, Annex, p. 64), 1701 (Court of Policy, “Regulations and Warnings”, Fort Kijkoveral, 5 July 1701, p. 67) and 1706 (commander Essequibo, “Letter to WIC”, Fort Kijkoveral, June 1706, in: BB3, serial No. 32, pp. 71–72).

84 WIC (Zeeland), “Letter to commander Essequibo A. Beekman”, 21 August 1681, in: BC, No.61, p. 82.

85 Commander Essequibo, “Letter to WIC”, 28 June 1680, in: BRC, serial No. 94, pp. 183–184, at 183. The continuation of the war is, for example, confirmed in 1681 (commander Essequibo, “Letter to WIC”, 1681, in: BRC, serial No. 95, pp. 184–184, at 184).

86 In this context, commander Jacob de Jonge determines the erection of a “gallows in Berbice”, which “intended to hang the ‘Owl’, or Chiefs of the Indians” as the cause of the war (commander J. de Jonge, “Letter to WIC”, Pomeroon, 28 January 1688, in: BRC, serial No. 113, p. 206).

87 In this context, the French were reported to “keeping Trinidad and Orinoco blockaded and invested” in July 1682 (commander Essequibo, “Letter to WIC”, 18 July 1682, in: BRC, serial No. 96, p. 185.

88 Commander A. Beekman, “Letter to WIC”, 12 October 1689, in: BC, No. 71, p. 190.

with the Caribs in Barima and the Arawaks”.⁸⁹ Accordingly, the commander in June 1680 indicated that the trade in hammocks and letter-wood was stopped “on account of the war between those [. . .] of Cuyuni, Essequibo, and Mazaruni and the Accoways, who live up country”.⁹⁰ This was confirmed in 1681, when “(b)y reason of the Accoway war in Cuyuni [. . .] the trade in hammocks, especially in new ones, has resulted badly, for no one dares to trust himself among that faithless tribe”,⁹¹ after the Company’s “old negro Gilles” was “poisoned [up in Cuyuni]”.⁹² The “Accoway war in Cuyuni [sic!]” ongoing in 1681,⁹³ the war had still in July 1682 caused that the river Cuyuni “no longer furnishes provisions”.⁹⁴ Again, the WIC trade was reduced in June 1686 due to the French presence, since the result of the expedition of WIC out-runner Dantje to the “the savanna up in Cuyuni, from the Pariacotten”⁹⁵ was limited to “a little maraen oil”⁹⁶ and hammocks”, as “the French are making expedition through the country up there in order to buy everything”.⁹⁷ Thereupon, the WIC “dye store” in Mazaruni was, most likely, abandoned in result of the Akawaio attack on the Caribs, who had left “their houses and gardens [and] fled to the forest”,⁹⁸ since the store afterwards vanished completely from the records. Certainly, Dutch trade in Cuyuni improved again in 1699 and 1700, especially the trade in annatto dye (orange dye)

⁸⁹ WIC (Zeeland), “Proceedings”, 20 July 1673, in: BRC, serial No. 83, p. 173.

⁹⁰ Commander Essequibo, “Letter to WIC”, 28 June 1680, in: BRC, serial No. 94, pp. 183–184, at 183.

⁹¹ Commander Essequibo, “Letter to WIC”, 1681, in: BRC, serial No. 95, pp. 184–185, at 184.

⁹² Commander Essequibo A. Beekman, “Letter to WIC”, 28 June 1680, in: BC, No. 49, pp. 149–150.

⁹³ Commander Essequibo, “Letter to WIC”, 1681, p. 184.

⁹⁴ Commander Essequibo, “Letter to WIC”, 18 July 1682, in: BRC, serial No. 96, p. 185. This took place “on account of the war between the Caribs and the Accoways”. Similarly, Neil Whitehead indicates that the “persistent conflict between the Akawaio and Caribs” “hindered” Dutch traders from accessing the Mazaruni and Cuyuni (Whitehead, *Lords of the Tiger Spirit*, p. 151).

⁹⁵ Commander Essequibo Abraham Beekman, “Letter to WIC”, 7 June 1686, in: BC, No. 68, p. 182.

⁹⁶ Commander Essequibo, “Letter to WIC”, 5 April 1732, in: BB3, serial No. 68, pp. 83–84.

⁹⁷ Commander Essequibo, “Letter to WIC”, 7 June 1686, in: BB3, serial No. 17, p. 62. A slightly different translation is provided by: commander Beekman, “Letter to WIC”, 7 June 1686, p. 182.

⁹⁸ Essequibo Council, “Minutes”, 20 October 1686, in: BRC, serial No. 110, pp. 202–203, at 202; Council of Essequibo, “Minutes”, Essequibo, 20 October 1686, in: BB3, serial No. 18, p. 62.

and provisions such as bread, pork, fish, and turtles flourished.⁹⁹ A “dye store” established in September 1699 in Cuyuni,¹⁰⁰ was followed by a trading post in 1703, situated “up in the savanna, 6 weeks by boat”, which however vanished again from the Company’s muster-roll in 1704. At that time, the trade significantly declined since the establishment of the first Capuchin mission in the Orinoco in 1724 and subsequent practice of violent removals.¹⁰¹ In result, the trade in Cuyuni in July 1730 became “of less profit, except for the orange dye”, since “most of the Indians have left those parts.”¹⁰²

In contrast, the Company’s trade in Mazaruni was focused on “red slaves”,¹⁰³ recorded since September 1699, when the son of the Carib Chief “Owl” Makrawacque and the Company’s “old negro” Jotte undertook a joint expedition to Upper Mazaruni, “to bring down [to the fort] four or five slaves, whom the said son has offered to sell”.¹⁰⁴ Although Indigenous Peoples from Mazaruni also traded in annatto dye, salt-fish, crabs, fowls and turtles from 1699 until 1700 and again between May 1732 until October 1735,¹⁰⁵ such as the Carib Chief “Owl”

99 Commander Essequibo, “Journal”, Kijkoveral, 1699–1701, pp. 216–220; WIC, “Muster Rolls”, pp. 178–180. The WIC for a short period of time also traded for horses “up in Cuyuni”, which was stopped since the trade “does not go as briskly as it used to” (WIC [Zeeland], “Letter to commander Essequibo”, 23 October 1693, in: BRC, serial No. 121, p. 212; commander Essequibo, “Letter to WIC”, 1 April 1697, in: BRC, serial No. 124, p. 213)

100 Commander Essequibo, “Journal”, Kijkoveral, 1699–1701, p. 216.

101 WIC, “Muster Rolls”, pp. 149–187.

102 Commander Essequibo A. Beekman, “Letter to WIC”, 7 June 1686, in: BC, No. 68, p. 182. Furthermore, the commander indicated that he “ha[d] seen no Indians from that side [. . .] (f) or six months” (ibid.), which was arguably caused by the violent removal practice of the Capuchin missions (Chapter 7).

103 Trade in “red slaves” by Dutch postholders and “Caribs”, as well as the capture of African slaves by Indigenous Peoples in exchange for payment, is still hardly researched for the Wild Coast (WIC, “Muster Rolls”, pp. 179–180; commander Essequibo, “Letter to WIC”, 13 May 1710, in: BRC, serial No. 147, pp. 233–234; commander Essequibo, “Letter to WIC”, 2 October 1743, in: BRC, serial No. 224, p. 40; commander Essequibo, “Letter to WIC”, 3 April 1741, in: BRC, serial No. 226, p. 42; Acting commander Essequibo, “Letter to WIC”, 23 December 1750, in: BRC, serial No. 261, pp. 69–70), August 1778 (Administrator of the Company’s Plantations C. Boter, “Letter to WIC (Amsterdam)”, 31 August 1778, in: BC, No. 310, pp. 553–554), 1796–1797 (WIC, “Muster Rolls”, pp. 179–180) and the Convention concluded with the Spaniards.

104 Commander Essequibo, “Journal”, Kijkoveral, 1699–1701, p. 217. The expedition returned to Kijkoveral on 22 September 1699 “with four female slaves, two children, and a boy”, whereupon Makrawacque’s son was “paid by the commander [and] went away satisfied” (ibid.). An alternative spelling is Owl Mackerawacke.

105 WIC, “Muster Rolls”, pp. 179–180.

Away and Correcanne,¹⁰⁶ and were also paid for boat hire and the transportation of good between May 1732 and October 1735,¹⁰⁷ the Mazaruni trade in “red slaves” continued at least until August 1755, when the Carib Chief Araytana had handed over enslaved Acowaio¹⁰⁸ to Lower Mazaruni plantation owners Peter Marchial and Engelbert Piepersberg and the director general at Fort Zee-landia.¹⁰⁹ By contrast, the Upper Mazaruni was still “unknown” to Essequibo colonists in August 1764¹¹⁰ and has instead served the Caribs of Cuyuni as retreat in 1770 and 1790, when the violent removal practices of the Capuchin missions (undertaken since the 1730s) increased in the Cuyuni,¹¹¹ after Dutch colonist Christiaan Finet had in December 1748 reported to the commander in Essequibo that “the Spaniards [. . .] [are] continually taking them by surprise in their dwellings and carrying them off, with their wives and children, to send them to Florida” and the “Chief of the Spaniards” would have had “placed before his eyes the unfairness of this treatment, as well as the consequences of it [. . .] [and] had replied that the whole of America belonged to the King of Spain, and that he should do what suited himself, without troubling about us”. Already in December 1746, the Indigenous Peoples would have been “in the highest state of indignation”, whereas “four of their Chiefs [. . .] had sent knotted cords to all the Indian houses, which is their sign to meet on a certain day” and had “expressed a desire to surprise the Mission and level it to the ground”. In response, the Dutch commander indicated that “when they come to men that I can provide no redress for them, and that they must take measures for their own security”.¹¹²

106 Commander Essequibo, “Journal”, Fort Kijkoveral, 1699–1701, pp. 218–219.

107 WIC, “Muster Rolls”, pp. 179–180.

108 This was arguably done from a place called Coenawaroeka.

109 *Ibid.*

110 Storm van’s Gravesande, “Trading Places”, August 1764, p. 129.

111 Court of Policy, “Letter to WIC”, 14 July 1731, in: BB3, serial No. 65, p. 83; WIC (The Ten), “Proceedings”, 17 October 1685, in: BC, No. 65, pp. 174–175.

112 Commander Essequibo, “Letter to WIC”, 7 December 1746, in: BRC, serial No. 234, pp. 46–48, at 48; commander Essequibo, “Letter to WIC”, 2 December 1748, in: BB3, serial No. 85, p. 90; commander Essequibo Storm van’s Gravesande, “Letter to WIC”, 2 December 1748, in: BC, No 167, pp. 321–323. By this strategy, the commander felt “assured that in a short time no Spaniard will be visible any more above in Cuyuni”. At the same time, the Dutch commander attempted to restrain the Caribs from attacking the Capuchin missions in response, since “such a step would certainly be revenged upon us by the Spaniards” (commander Essequibo, “Letter to WIC”, 7 December 1746, pp. 46–47).

Thereupon, the Dutch had established a post “above in Cuyuni” until May 1755¹¹³ which was most likely prompted by the presence of the Capuchin missions, since the commander at Fort Zeelandia ordered the erection of the Cuyuni post after the Capuchin missions were known to the commander in July 1746¹¹⁴ and for him had become “quiet another affair” in September 1754, when Laurens Storm van’s Gravesande mistakenly assumed that the missions were “not in the Creek Mejou”,¹¹⁵ but “some miles lower, on the River Cuyuni”. Thereupon, the director general again requested the WIC in Zeeland to inform him “at the earliest moment [about] the so long sought definition of frontier, so that I may go to work with certainty”,¹¹⁶ before establishing the Cuyuni post before May 1755¹¹⁷ “about fifteen hours above the place where Cuyuni unites with Massaruni”¹¹⁸ and “ten or twelve hours from the Spanish dwellings”.¹¹⁹ In contrast, the post was

113 Director General, “Letter to WIC”, 31 May 1755, in: BRC, serial No. 118, pp. 103–104. Thereupon, the post was, for the first time, listed on the Company’s muster-roll on 1 June 1755 as “the Honourable Company’s new [sic!] post in Cajoine” (WIC, “Muster Rolls”, p. 162) with Johannes Neumann as first postholder (commander Essequibo, “List of the Honourable Company’s Servants in Essequibo and Demerary”, 1 June 1755, in: BB3, serial No. 119, p. 104), who was however dismissed until March 1758 “on account of his bad behaviour” and sent “back to Europe [. . .] in order to prevent him from doing mischief among the Indians” (Director General, “Letter to WIC”, 6 March 1758, in: BB3, serial No. 130, p. 109).

114 Commander Essequibo L. Storm van’s Gravesande, “Letter to WIC”, 20 July 1746, in: BC, No. 155, pp. 305–306, at 305; commander Essequibo, “Letter to WIC”, 20 July 1746, p. 45. At that time, the Director General confirmed that “the report of the Caribs [. . .] some months ago is true, namely that the Spaniards have established a Mission up in the said river [. . .] with the intention of founding yet another Mission and fort some hours further down this river” (commander Essequibo, “Letter to WIC”, 7 December 1746, in: BRC, serial No. 234, pp. 46–48, at 46). In December 1746, the river was perceived as being situated “on your Honours’ territory” (*ibid.*). However, there was never a Capuchin mission on the banks of the Cuyuni itself. Instead, the Capuchins had founded a few missions at the Cuyuni confluence Yuruario (Chapter 7).

115 An alternative spelling is Mejou.

116 Director General Storm van’s Gravesande, “Letter to WIC”, 2 September 1754, in: BC, No. 181, pp. 346–349, at 347–348.

117 Director General, “Letter to WIC”, 31 May 1755, in: BB3, serial No. 118, pp. 103–104.

118 Director General, “Letter to WIC”, 1 September 1750, in: BRC, serial No. 342, p. 180.

119 Director General, “Letter to WIC”, 31 May 1755, pp. 103–104. Arguably, this was further triggered by the information that the Spaniards in December 1748 were “gradually approach[ing] the Upper Cuyuni” (commander Essequibo, “Letter to WIC”, 2 December 1748, pp. 57–58) and May 1755, when it was reported that the Capuchin missions “have taken in complete possession the Creek Iruway which flows into the Cayuni, which indisputably is your Honour’s territory” (Director General, “Letter to WIC”, 31 May 1755, pp. 103–104). Nevertheless, based on information of colonist Frederik Persik, the commander in Essequibo in June 1750 perceived both the Mission “in a certain little river called Imataca, situated far off in Orinoco” and the

in March 1746 initially considered to be placed on the road of Ignatius Courthial (see Figure 15),¹²⁰ which was built until 1750,¹²¹ in order to collect the “recognition money for the mules, cows and horses passing by”.¹²²

Notably, the post was established despite the “unknown” boundary,¹²³ as the director general in January of the same year (1755) was fully aware that there is no definition of boundaries “neither in the Treaty of Münster [. . .] nor in any other [. . .] about this”, while the “respective Charters granted to the West India Company at various times by the States-General”, had only determined “the general limits of the Company’s territories” and WIC Memorials just indicated brought limits, determined “on the one side, [by] that far-stretching and wide-spreading river, the Amazon, and on the other side, [by] the great and mightily-flowing river, the Orinoco, occupying an intermediate space of ten degrees of north latitude from the Equator”.¹²⁴ At the same time, the unknown boundary had prevented the commander from applying consequent measures against the Capuchin missions, such as in July 1746, when Storm van’s Gravesande considered to “driving them from there” but “dare[d] not to take the responsibility”, since “such a step being one of great consequence [. . .] as the true frontier-line there is unknown to me”.¹²⁵ Again, the commander in Essequibo regretted in March 1747 that he “should already long ago have seized and demolished the first fort above in Cuyuni [. . .] if I were but rightly conscious how far the limits of your territory extend”, as “an error in this might be the cause of quite too evil consequences”,¹²⁶ whereupon the WIC had ordered him in September 1747 to apply “indirect means”, that is “without yourself appearing

Mission “up in the River Cuyuni” as being “very much nearer to the side of the Spanish than to our territory” (WIC [Zeeland], “Letter to commander Essequibo”, 22 June 1750, p. 66; WIC (Zeeland Chamber), “Proceedings”, 22 June 1750, in: BC, No. 172, pp. 228–234; Storm van’s Gravesande, “Letter to WIC”, 20 July 1746, p. 305).

120 Commander Essequibo, “Letter to WIC”, 19 March 1745, in: BB3, serial No. 76, p. 86.

121 Storm van’s Gravesande, “Rios Essequibe et Demerary”, 22 June 1750, p. 139.

122 Commander Essequibo, “Letter to WIC”, 19 March 1745, in: BB3, serial No. 76, p. 86. The commander therefore decided to transfer the Demerara post to “this road” in Cuyuni, since “the post which lie in Demerary [is] now unnecessary there on account of the opening of the river” (ibid.).

123 Director General, “Letter to WIC”, 31 May 1755, pp. 103–104.

124 WIC (Zeeland), “Letter to Director General Storm van’s Gravesande”, 6 January 1755, in: BC, No. 186, pp. 355–359, at 357.

125 Storm van’s Gravesande, “Letter to WIC”, 20 July 1746, p. 306; commander Essequibo, “Letter to WIC”, 20 July 1746, p. 45. The Dutch Original reads “de regte grenscheijdinge mij niet bekent Sijn” (ibid.).

126 Commander Essequibo, “Letter to WIC”, 23 March 1747, in: BC, No. 158, pp. 309–311, at 310. The Dutch original reads “the limiten van UEGA territoir” (ibid.).

therein”.¹²⁷ Hence, van’s Gravesande again in June 1750 admitted that he does “dare not openly oppose them as might very easily be done, by means of the Carib nation, their sworn enemies” as the boundaries are “still unknown”, but considered this necessary “in order successfully to oppose the continual approach of the neighbouring Spaniards, who, if they are not checked, will at last shut us in on all sides”.¹²⁸ As the director general in September 1754 with certainty claimed “that mission was so absolutely and indisputably in our territory”,¹²⁹ he made a written complain to the governor of Cumaná and threatened “that, if he persisted in the design of founding a mission in the River Cayuni, I should be obliged to oppose myself there against effectually”,¹³⁰ after he had taken the previous promise of the Spanish governor “that it should not be progressed with”¹³¹ as “sterling value”.¹³²

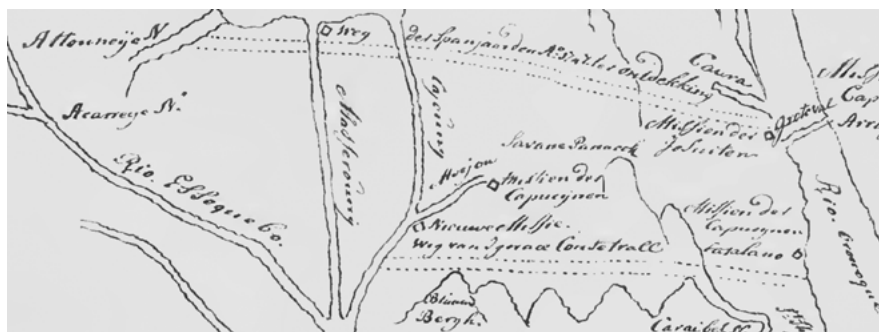


Figure 15: The Courthial Road between Cuyuni and Orinoco in 1750.

Prior, the commander in Essequibo in December 1746 had grounded his claim against the erection of the Capuchin mission on the basis of the Dutch occupation by plantations in the Lower Cuyuni, in particular by the former [sic!] WIC coffee plantation and the Company’s indigo plantation (established in 1732,

127 WIC (The Ten), “Letter to commander in Essequibo Storm van’s Gravesande”, 9 September 1747, in: BC, No. 161, pp. 314–315.

128 WIC [Zeeland], “Letter to commander Essequibo”, 22 June 1750, p. 66.

129 Director General Storm van’s Gravesande, “Letter to WIC”, 2 September 1754, in: BC, No. 181, pp. 346–349, at 347–348). The Dutch original reads “indisputabel op ons territor” (ibid).

130 Director General Storm van’s Gravesande, “Letter to WIC”, 2 September 1754, p. 349.

131 Commander Essequibo, “Letter to WIC”, 8 September 1749, in: BB3, serial No. 89, p. 92.

132 Director General Storm van’s Gravesande, “Letter to WIC”, 2 September 1754, p. 349.

abandoned until August 1764),¹³³ and had determined the Cuyuni mouth as the site, where the river “falls into the river Essequibo at the place where the old plantation Duynenburg used [sic!] to stand on the one side and where Mr. Van der Cruysse[n] dwells on the other side, half a cannon-shot below Fort Kykoveral”.¹³⁴ Hence, the Capuchin missions were assertively situated “on your Honours’ territory”, “in our own land [. . .] in breach of all custom” and “absolutely and indisputably in our territory”.¹³⁵ Identically, Laurens Storm van’s Gravesande in September 1759 determines the river Cuyuni as the site, where “your Lordships having had for very many years the coffee and indigo plantation there, also that the mining master, with his men, having worked on the Blue Mountain in that river without the least opposition”. Thus, the director general concludes that “the possession of that river, as far, too, as this side of the Wayne, which is pretended to be the boundary-line (although I think the latter ought to be extended as far as Barima)”, wherefore “your Lordships’ right of ownership is indisputable, and beyond all doubt”.¹³⁶ Despite the Grotian legal provision that occupation lawfully acquires only land ownership as property, the claim was repeated in July 1746¹³⁷ and reaffirmed in March 1767, as the director general again claimed that the Capuchin missions would be “situated on our frontier, even on our territory”.¹³⁸

Meanwhile, the Spaniards had attacked the Dutch Cuyuni post in August 1758¹³⁹ on initiative of the Capuchin missions, since the report of the Capuchin Prefect Fray Benito de la Garriga¹⁴⁰ about the Carib attack on the Guaica missions

133 Director General, “Brief Treatise”, August 1764, p. 111; Storm van’s Gravesande, “Trading Places”, August 1764, p. 129. The Director General in August 1764 also disclosed that “the Spaniards spread themselves from year to year, and gradually come closer by means of their Missions, the small parties sent out by them coming close to the place where the Honourable Company’s indigo plantation stood [sic!] and being certain to try and establish themselves if they are not stopped in time” (ibid.), whereas the indigo plantation was confirmed until May 1760 (Hildebrandt, “Account (23 April 1741–9 May 1741)”, *Alt Cartado*, 4 June 1741, p. 34); Hildebrandt, “Journal”, 20 May 1743–19 July 1743, p. 39; Director General, “Letter to WIC”, 20 July 1759, in: BRC, serial No. 338, p. 175; Director General, “Letter to WIC”, 2 May 1760, p. 185, although the indigo plantation was not indicated in Storm van’s Gravesande, “Plantations of Essequibo”, 1748/1749, p. 137).

134 Commander Essequibo, “Letter to WIC”, 20 July 1746, p. 45.

135 Director General, “Letter to WIC”, 2 September 1754, pp. 347–348.

136 Director General, “Letter to WIC”, 1 September 1750, p. 180.

137 Commander Essequibo, “Letter to WIC”, 20 July 1746, p. 45.

138 Director General, “Letter to WIC”, 27 March 1767, in: BRC, serial No. 424, p. 143. The Dutch original reads “op onse grense selver op ins territoir” (ibid.).

139 WIC, “Muster Rolls”, p. 163.

140 Director General, “Letter to WIC”, Rio Demerary, 9 September 1758, in: BB3, serial No. 132, pp. 109–110, at 110.

on the Supama in 1757¹⁴¹ “gave rise”¹⁴² to the secret expedition, fitted out by Interim commander Don Felix Ferreras and carried out by Don Santiago Bondalde to reduce the “Dutch and other foreigners influence [upon] the heathen Indians against the establishment of the [Capuchin] settlements, from which it results that the spread of the Gospel is not more extended in this province”, stop “the inhuman traffic of enslaving Indians” and also to prevent “any extension of the claims which the Dutch are every day advancing further in this part of his [the Spanish king’s] dominions”. In result, Bonalde ordered to “apprehend the Dutch man Jacobus upon the Island of Curamueuru” and the Carib Chief Bumutu,¹⁴³ attacked the Dutch post in Cuyuni in August 1758, burnt the hut¹⁴⁴ and imprisoned the postholder Johan Stephen Iskes, who was placed there since March 1758,¹⁴⁵ along with Bijlegger Guillaam Baptist de Bruijn¹⁴⁶ and “their wives and a negro

141 Prefect of Capuchin missions Benito de la Garriga, “Letter to commander Felix Ferreras”, Suay, 9 June 1758, in: BRC, serial No. 331, Annex 1, pp. 145–148. Accordingly, the Guaica Chief was killed in the attack by the “Caribs of the forest”, who was “engaged in establishing [a] village”, whereupon the Guaicas “returned again to the forests” and the village was “completely lost” (ibid., pp. 145–46). Furthermore, a Spanish investigation of May 1757 came to the conclusion that the attack on the Guaicas at Avechica was made by the Carib Chief Caiarivare, “living in the interior on the River Cuyuni and at the very mouth of the River Corumo [. . .] with some Dutchmen from the Colony of Essequibo, engaged in Slave Traffic”. Furthermore, the investigation determined “the closing [of] the pass of the River Usupama [Vsupama], and hindering them [the Caribs] from passing without being discovered” due to the foundation of “a settlement in the neighbourhood of Avechica” as “principal reason for their murdering [of] the said [Guaica] Captain” (De la Garriga, “Letter to commander Ferreras”, Suay, 9 June 1758, p. 145).

142 Governor Guayana J. Valdés, “Decree”, 30 October 1758, in: BRC, serial No. 331, Annex 9, pp. 157–158, at 157; Prefect of Capuchin missions Fray Benito de la Garriga “Report to King of Spain”, Alta Gracia, 6 July 1769, in: BRC, serial No. 463, pp. 19–25, at 23.

143 Provisional commander Guayana F. Ferrera, “Decree”, Fortress of Guayana, 27 July 1758, in: BRC, serial No. 331, Annex 2, pp. 150–151. At that time, the Spaniards were prohibited “by law and by repeated Ordinances” of the Spanish King (ibid.). Moreover, Bonalde was ordered on 27 July 1758 to “take their [the Dutch’s] slaves” and place them “at the disposition of the Reverend Father Prefect [. . .] for the purpose of being instructed in the Christian religion and settled” along with “Indians of any other nation, and bring them as prisoners, well-guarded, to this fortress, delivering up to the Reverend Father Prefect all the Indians that may be taken under the name of slaves” (ibid.).

144 The States General, “Remonstrance to the Court of Spain”, 31 July 1759, in: BB3, serial No. 136, enclosure 1, pp. 111–113, at 112. This was reported by the Director General in September 1758; BRC 340: 176, Director General, “Letter to WIC”, Demerary, 9 September 1758, p. 109; Director General, “Letter to WIC”, 9 September 1758, in: BRC, serial No. 330, pp. 143–144, at 143.

145 Formerly, he was a miner in the Company’s service (WIC, “Muster Rolls”, pp. 160, 163).

146 J. Valdés, “Decree”, Santo Thomé de la Guayana, 27 October 1758, in: BRC, serial No. 331, Annex 4, p. 153; WIC, “Muster Rolls”, p. 163. The Spanish names are Stephen Hiz and Juan Bautista Brum (Stephen Hiz, “Declaration”, Ciudad de Guaiana, 3 November 1758, in: BRC,

slave”,¹⁴⁷ who was later identified as “the creole Ariaen, and his wife and children”,¹⁴⁸ whereas “nothing whatever” was heard about “the Indian Famuto”.¹⁴⁹

Thereupon, the Dutch Cuyuni post remained abandoned until August 1767, after the Cuyuni Caribs had informed the Dutch in September 1758 about the “successful raid” of the Spaniards,¹⁵⁰ while the States General of the United Provinces had filed a remonstrance for redress at the Court of Madrid on 31 July 1759¹⁵¹ and the astonished Dutch in Essequibo demanded “the release of the prisoners” and “proper satisfaction for so manifest a violation of treaties and of the rights of nations”,¹⁵² as there is no “doubt concerning the ownership of this portion of Essequibo, [which is] most undoubtedly belonging, as it does, to the West India Company”. Although the Spanish commander in the Orinoco initially refused the Dutch claims, as “the River Cuyuni is Spanish territory”¹⁵³ and situated “in the dominions of the [Spanish] king my Sovereign”,¹⁵⁴ the Spaniards until 1761 had released the Dutch prisoners, whereupon bijlegger Guilliaam de Bruijn in August 1761 succumbed of his injuries from imprisonment¹⁵⁵ and postholder Stephanus Iske in February 1762 re-emerged on the Company’s muster-roll as

serial No. 331, Annex 16, pp. 165–166, at 165; Chief Jean Bautista Brum, “Declaration”, Santo Thomé, 3 November 1758, in: BRC, serial No. 331, Annex 17, pp. 167–168).

147 Valdés, “Decree”, Santo Thomé de la Guayana, 27 October 1758, p. 153. During the Spanish Juridical Proceedings in Santo Tomé, the Dutch post was determined as a “hut covered with palm branches and without side walls” two days’ navigation “downstream” (Don Santiago Bonaldes, “Declaration”, Ciudad del a Guayana, 31 October 1758, in: BRC, serial No. 331, Annex 3, pp. 159–160)

148 Director General, “Letter to WIC”, c. 1759, in: BRC, serial No. 334, p. 172.

149 Bonaldes, “Declaration”, Ciudad del a Guayana, 31 October 1758, pp. 159–160. Bumutu was claimed to be “persecuting the settled Indians of his nation”, who would capture “those of other nations for the purpose of selling them to the Dutch” (*ibid.*). The Spanish original reads “el Indio Caribe Hamado Bumutu” (*ibid.*).

150 Director General, “Letter to WIC”, Demerary, 9 September 1758, p. 109; Director General, “Letter to WIC”, 9 September 1758, p. 143.

151 Director General, “Letter to WIC”, Essequibo, 28 August 1761, in: BB3, serial No. 146, p. 111. In September 1758, he States General claimed that the Cuyuni “ha[d] always [been] considered [. . .] as a domain of this State, and have, in consequence, built on its banks a so-called post, being a wooden habitation [. . .] guarded by a postholder and outpostman with some slaves” (*ibid.*).

152 Director General, “Letter to commander of Guayana”, Essequibo, 30 September 1758, in: BRC, serial No. 340, enclosure 1, pp. 177–178.

153 Director General, “Letter to WIC”, c. 1759, in: BRC, serial No. 334, p. 172. The Dutch original reads “Spaensch territoir” (*ibid.*).

154 Councillor J. Padilla y Moron, “Report”, Cumaná, 28 December 1758, in: BRC, serial No. 331, Annex 20, pp. 169–170; Governor of Cumaná N. de Castro, “Letter to Director General”, 10 November 1758, in: BRC, serial No. 340, enclosure 2, p. 179.

155 Director General, “Letter to WIC”, 28 August 1761, in: BRC, serial No. 358, pp. 202–203, at 202.

bijlegger at the post in Moruca,¹⁵⁶ but had left the WIC service until January 1763, after Iske in November 1762 was “in a bad state of health, and only just able to walk”.¹⁵⁷

Meanwhile, the Capuchin missions continued their violent removal practices in Cuyuni and the Indigenous Peoples had in August 1761 “sent in complaint upon complaint” in response to the undertakings of “a party of Spaniards and Spanish Indians in Cuyuni”, who went “down to the lowest fall, where your Lordship’s indigo plantation is situated, driving all the Indians thence, and even, it is said, having killed several”.¹⁵⁸ Hence, in February 1762 the Capuchin missionaries had again sent out “daily patrols”, which are encroaching the area “as far as the great fall (just below which your Lordships’ creoles live)” and had until May 1762 prompted that “all the Caribs have also left that river [Cuyuni], and gone to live above Essequibo”,¹⁵⁹ where “swarms of Caraibans” were reported to surround the Arinda post in August 1765 and 1767 “had taken up a position there”.¹⁶⁰ Again, the Capuchin missionaries had been driven away the Caribs of Cuyuni in September 1763,¹⁶¹ whereupon the Dutch remained idle. Similarly, the Dutch had already in 1748 refused redress to the Caribs “when they come to men” and instead emphasized that “they must take measures for their own security”,¹⁶² when the Dutch colonist Christiaan Finet had reported to the commander in Essequibo about the Spanish practice in “continually taking them by

156 WIC, “Muster Rolls”, p. 164.

157 Director General, “Letter to WIC”, 6 November 1762, in: BRC, serial No. 374, pp. 217–218.

158 Director General, “Letter to WIC”, 28 August 1761, p. 202.

159 Director General, “Letter to WIC”, 17 May 1762, in: BRC, serial No. 368, p. 214.

160 Director General, “Letter to WIC”, 13 August 1765, pp. 136–137; Director General, “Letter to WIC”, 9 December 1767, in: BB3, serial No. 195, pp. 148–149, at 149).

161 Director General, “Letter to WIC”, 27 September 1763, in: BB3, serial No. 164, p. 126.

162 Commander Essequibo, “Letter to WIC”, 7 December 1746, in: BB3, serial No. 78, pp. 87–88; commander Essequibo, “Letter to WIC”, 2 December 1748, p. 58; commander Essequibo, “Letter to WIC”, 2 December 1748, in: BB3, serial No. 85, p. 90). At the same time, the Dutch commander attempted to restrain the Caribs from attacking the Capuchin missions, since “such a step would certainly be revenged upon us by the Spaniards” (commander Essequibo, “Letter to WIC”, 7 December 1746, in: BRC, serial No. 234, pp. 46–48; commander Essequibo, “Letter to WIC”, 7 December 1746, 78, pp. 87–88). The spatial strategy was considered before December 1748 for the war between the Caribs and Warows “which is carried on very obstinately” and might “stop” the progress of the Spaniards and “if the Caribs obtain the upper hand, they may even be driven somewhat further off, without our having in the least degree to meddle therewith” (*ibid.*).

surprise in their dwellings and carrying them off”,¹⁶³ which was, most likely, ongoing since the 1730s.¹⁶⁴ Again, in January 1757 the Dutch had refused the request of the Caribs of Cuyuni for “powder and shot”,¹⁶⁵ before military commander van Berckeyck after the Spanish raid on the Dutch Cuyuni post in December 1758 had disclosed the Spanish commander in Cumaná that the Caribs would plan an attack on the Catalanian missions, self-evidently in order to demonstrate the “good relations and friendship with his [Spanish] neighbours” and for the prevention that “a savage and brutal nation from doing any harm to your nation”,¹⁶⁶ although the director general in September 1758 had simultaneously considered to “mak [e] use of the Caribs” in order “to pay them [the Spaniards] back in their own coin and drive them from their present position”.¹⁶⁷

Instead, the director general in December 1764 concluded an agreement with the Caribs of Cuyuni, namely that the Dutch are giving “an assurance of protection against the Spaniards” in exchange for the Carib’s support in re-establishing the Cuyuni post,¹⁶⁸ as Laurens van’s Gravesande was “not been able to get any Indians up to the present to aid me in re-establishing the post in

163 Commander Essequibo, “Letter to WIC”, 2 December 1748, pp. 58, 90.

164 Court of Policy, “Letter to WIC”, 14 July 1731, in: BB3, serial No. 65, p. 83.

165 Court of Justice, “Minutes”, Fort Zeelandia Rio Essequibo, 3 January 1757, in: BRC, serial No. 318, pp. 130–131. Also, the Caribs and Panacay had offered their support in case of an attack, while the English Governor Clark of Barbados had warned the Dutch on 8 August 1754, as a master vessel and “a large number of small vessels with 500 men” had arrived in Trinidad for Cumana (NATT, Barbados Governor Clark, “Report”, 8 August 1754, publication No. 673). Most likely, this was the Secret Boundary Expedition of Spain.

166 Military commander Essequibo, “Letter to Spanish commander Orinoco”, 8 December 1758, in: BRC, serial No. 334, Annex, p. 173. However, the letter was “sent back unopened” (Director General, “Letter to WIC”, 29 May 1759, in: BRC, serial No. 335, p. 174).

167 Director General, “Letter to WIC”, 9 September 1758, in: BRC, serial No. 330, pp. 143–144, at 143. In this context, the Director General added in May 1760, “even in a case of the utmost emergency” would “hesitate before authorizing the cruelties indulged in by the Caraiban nation” (Director General, “Letter to WIC”, Essequibo, 2 May 1760, in: BB3, serial No. 140, p. 114).

168 Director General, “Letter to WIC Zeeland”, 28 December 1764, in: BC, No. 234, p. 404. On 15 June 1764, it was considered necessary to “make the necessary arrangements with the Caribs in Cuyuni to station an under-officer there with eight men” (Director General, “Letter to WIC”, 15 June 1764, in: BRC, serial No. 395, p. 108; Director General, “Letter to WIC”, Demerary, 24 October 1760, in: BRC, serial No. 352, pp. 196–197, at 197), after the Director General on 18 October 1763 had indicated that “[i]t is certain, your Lordships that this is not the time to think of the re-establishment of the post in “Cuyuni”, as “the Spaniards having driven all the Indians out of the river” (Director General, “Letter to WIC”, 18 October 1763, in: BRC, serial No. 389, p. 228).

Cuyuni, and without their help it cannot be done”.¹⁶⁹ The director general in September 1765 indicating that the assurance “was easy to promise” and the Caribs had accepted the agreement and “offer[ed] a helping hand” in establishing the post,¹⁷⁰ which they had fulfilled until 1766,¹⁷¹ before the Cuyuni post was completely “re-established” on 20 March 1767¹⁷² and listed on the Company’s muster-roll on 31 March 1767.¹⁷³ Beforehand, WIC Zeeland on 9 March 1767 had faulted the slow progress of the “erection of the post in Cayuni”¹⁷⁴ and encouraged the re-establishment of the post since September 1765,¹⁷⁵ after “a new Mission” was established by the Capuchin missionaries in August 1765, which was perceived to be established “between Cajoeny and Masserouny [. . .] in the middle of our land”. Most notably, the Dutch had not complied to their assurance of protection, as was inserted in the 1764 agreement with the Cuyuni Caribs, despite the re-establishment of the post in Cuyuni in 1767 (until 1770) with Pierre Martin¹⁷⁶ as postholder, Gerrit van Leeuwe and Jan Witting as assistants

169 Director General, “Letter to WIC”, 28 December 1764, in: BRC, serial No. 399, pp. 116–117, at 117.

170 WIC, “Letter to Director General”, 19 September 1765, in: BRC, serial No. 404, p. 121–122, at 122.

171 Nevertheless, the Director General in June 1767 reported that the Indigenous Peoples in Cuyuni “are unwilling to do the least thing for the postholder” by “obstinately refuse to do so”, and “when he threatens to shoot upon them, they reply that they have bows and arrows with which to answer” (Director General, “Letter to WIC”, Demerary, 27 June 1767, in: BB3, serial No. 191, p. 144; Director General, “Letter to WIC”, Demerary, 27 June 1767, in: BRC, serial No. 425, pp. 143–144, at 143).

172 On 20 March 1767, the Director General transmitted that “the post in Cajoeny [is] now being re-established” (Director General, “Letter to WIC”, 20 March 1767, in: BB3, serial No. 189, pp. 142–143, at 143).

173 WIC, “Muster Rolls”, p. 166.

174 Director General, “Letter to WIC”, 9 March 1767, in: BB3, serial No. 188, p. 142. On 18 October 1763, Storm van’s Gravesande explained the delay by the lack of Indigenous Peoples to support the work (Director General, “Letter to WIC”, 18 October 1763, p. 228) and on 1 October 1766 with the sickness of Pierre Martin, who was in September 1766 ordered “to build dwellings and lay out bread-gardens, with the assistance of the Indians”, still in December 1766 reported sick (Director General, “Letter to WIC”, 1 October 1766, in: BB3, serial No. 185, p. 141) and on 20 March 1767 “not yet quite recovered” (Director General, “Letter to WIC”, 20 March 1767, in: BRC, serial No. 422, pp. 141–142, at 142; Director General, “Letter to WIC”, 20 March 1767, p. 142; Director General, “Letter to WIC”, 9 February 1769, in: BRC, serial No. 451, enclosure, p. 2).

175 Ibid.

176 Director General, “Letter to WIC”, 13 August 1765, pp. 136–137; Director General, “Letter to WIC”, 20 March 1767, p. 142; Director General, “Letter to WIC”, 9 February 1769, p. 2.

(bijleggers) and Jan Willemse as pilot.¹⁷⁷ Instead, it was reported¹⁷⁸ that “a great part of the Caraibans” had in 1768 settled “there when the post was re-established”, but already fled in February 1769 after “a large party of Indians was captured and taken away”, while the Spaniards had also “threatened to come again during the next dry season and [then to] proceed as far as Masseroeny to capture a party of Caribs there, and that they would then sail down the Masseroeny and again up the Cuyuni and visit the post on their way”, which “filled the rest with terror, and they are gradually drawing off”.¹⁷⁹ Still, in June 1770 a party of Caribs “departed from Cajoeny to Masseroeny to make dwelling places there, and some have gone to Upper Siepanamen [Siparuni] to live there”.¹⁸⁰

Likewise, the Cuyuni postholder had jumped ship in February 1768¹⁸¹ on his request of December 1767 “to be placed elsewhere, saying that he cannot live there because the place is unhealthy”,¹⁸² and his indication that “the Indians flatly refusing to come and live anywhere near the post so long as he is there”.¹⁸³ Hence, Pierre Martin was followed by bijlegger Jan van Wittinge, who in June 1770

¹⁷⁷ WIC, “Muster Rolls”, pp. 149–187.

¹⁷⁸ Director General, “Reply to Runaway Slaves Petition”, 1767, in: BRC, serial No. 434, Annex, p. 158.

¹⁷⁹ Director General, “Letter to WIC”, 3 March 1769, p. 159; Director General, “Letter to WIC”, 9 February 1769, p. 1.

¹⁸⁰ Postholder J. van Wittingh, “Letter to Director General”, post of Cajoeny, 1 June 1770, in: BB3, serial No. 232, enclosure, p. 176.

¹⁸¹ Director General, “Letter to WIC”, 9 February 1768, in: BB3, serial No. 200, p. 151; Director General, “Letter to WIC”, 9 February 1768, in: BRC, serial No. 438, pp. 161–162. In contrast, the postholder’s position on the Company’s muster-roll was listed as “vacant” since 1767 and Pierre Martin as new postholder in Mahaicony in April 1768 (WIC, “Muster Rolls”, pp. 166–168). The replacement of the postholder became a problem, since the Indigenous Peoples of Cuyuni and Moruca had declared they “will on no account have a Frenchman there” (Director General, “Letter to WIC”, 9 April 1768, in: BB3, serial No. 204, pp. 152–154), while “[t]he proximity of the Spaniards, and especially of the Spanish Missions, renders it impossible to place the slightest trust in Catholics” (Director General, “Letter to WIC”, Demerara, 8 December 1766, in: BB3, serial No. 187, pp. 141–142). After “a troop of more than 100 Warouwans, all well-armed [. . .] arrived at the post Maroco saying that they came to see whether there was a Frenchman there, and intending to kill him if it were so” (commander Demerara, “Letter to WIC”, 18 February 1768, p. 152; Director General, “Letter to WIC”, 9 February 1768, p. 161), the WIC in July 1768 gave in by stating that “you cannot do otherwise than accede to the wish of the Indians in Cuyuni and Moruca, and send no Frenchmen thither as postholders, and therefore not even Pierre Martin” (WIC [Zeeland], “Letter to Director General”, 18 July 1768, in: BRC, serial No. 446, pp. 179–181, at 180).

¹⁸² Director General, “Reply to Runaway Slaves Petition”, p. 158.

¹⁸³ Director General, “Letter to WIC”, 9 February 1768, p. 151; Director General, “Letter to WIC”, 9 February 1768, pp. 161–162.

declared his reassignment for New Year's Day 1770.¹⁸⁴ Hence, bijlegger Gerrit Van Leeuwen¹⁸⁵ remained the sole WIC servant in Cuyuni until the post was abandoned in December 1771,¹⁸⁶ after post assistant Jan van Wittinge had until May 1769 without authorization¹⁸⁷ transferred the post to the island Toenamoeto,¹⁸⁸ “lying between two falls”,¹⁸⁹ after the Spaniards in February 1769 had established two more missions “not far above the post” and yet another in a creek a little higher up, flowing into the Cajoeny, both of which have been strongly manned”. Thus, the director general in February 1769 assumed that “[i]t is finished now, my lords; neither postholders nor posts are of any use now”¹⁹⁰ and in March indicated that the Spaniards would have had “practically [obtained] the mastery of the river [Cuyuni] [. . .] at the end of the past year [1768] [. . .] openly (as if in open warfare) in breach of the right of nations, in breach of all Treaties of Alliance with his Catholic Majesty”.¹⁹¹ In consequence, WIC Zeeland in July 1769 issued another remonstrance at the Court of Spain, while the director general in March 1770 had again expressed his wish that he “would have liked to move the post gradually higher up the river”.¹⁹² Hence, the Dutch Cuyuni post was, instead, abandoned in December 1771¹⁹³ and never re-established. Accordingly,

184 Postholder Van Wittingh, “Letter to Director General”, post of Cajoeny, 1 June 1770, p. 176.

185 Director General, “Letter to WIC”, 9 February 1769, p. 1.

186 WIC, “Muster Rolls”, pp. 166–168; Director General, “List of WIC Servants”, 31 December 1771, in: BB3, serial No. 246 enclosure, p. 180.

187 Director General, “Letter to WIC”, 25 March 1770, in: BRC, serial No. 481, pp. 45–46; postholder Van Wittingh, “Letter to Director General”, post Cajoeny, 5 May 1769, in: BB3, serial No. 220, Incl. 2, p. 166.

188 By contrast, the Spanish Governor of Cumaná in 1770 indicated that the Dutch post was situated “on an island called Caramacúra, in the River Cuyuni, in the territory of the Missions (no doubt the same as that called by the Dutch in the paper mentioned the River Coyoelij” (Governor Cumaná P. J. de Urrutia, “Reply to Royal Order of 23 September 1769”, Cumaná, 10 May 1770, in: BRC, serial No. 484, pp. 74–76, at 75).

189 Postholder J. van Wittingh, “Letter to Director General”, Cajoeny, 5 May 1769, in: BB3, serial No. 220, enclosure 2, p. 166. The reason for the transfer was that “on that island, the post will be better and healthier”.

190 Director General, “Letter to WIC”, 3 March 1769, p. 159.

191 Director General, “Letter to WIC”, 15 March 1769, in: BRC, serial No. 456, p. 6; commander Guayana M. Centurion, “Report”, Guayana, 5 April 1770, in: BRC, serial No. 483, pp. 70–74, at 70–71.

192 Director General, “Letter to WIC”, 25 March 1770, in: BRC, serial No. 481, p. 45–46; Director General, “Letter to WIC”, 25 March 1770, in: BB3, serial No. 231, pp. 175–176, at 175.

193 WIC, “Muster Rolls”, pp. 166–168.

still in March 1773 the positions for the Cuyuni post were listed as “vacant offices”¹⁹⁴ and the plan of 1785 to send the replaced Moruca postholder, Arnoldus Dyk, to “the old post in Cuyuni” was never implemented,¹⁹⁵ as the post vanished completely from both the Company’s muster-roll, kept until 1786, and Dutch records until the Dutch Capitulation in 1796.¹⁹⁶

Instead, in July 1790 “four Indian Owls” coming “from the Spanish Missions” stated that they would “dwell in Mazaruni”.¹⁹⁷

The Limits of Dutch Interference (1673–1776)

Intensified after the Court acquittal of Peter Marchial of Lower Mazaruni in 1756¹⁹⁸ and the murder of the Guaica Chief of the Avechica mission (Supama) by Caribs in 1757,¹⁹⁹ the second Carib-Acawaio war, after a neutralization period in 1763, culminated again in 1765, after the Caribs had “robbed them [the Acowaio] of everything in Upper Demerary”²⁰⁰ and were in May 1765 in Upper Mazaruni “at war with that of the Acuways”, who “had massacred all the women and children in a Caraiban village on the Masserouny”. Subsequently, in December 1765, the Carib Chief of Upper Mazaruni (assertively because of having “an old grudge against the Acuway nation”) would have had requested the support of a “Spanish goat”,²⁰¹ who would

194 General Chartered Dutch West India Company, “Resolution at the Meeting of Ten”, Amsterdam, 26 March 1773, in: BRC, serial No. 514, p. 107–108, at 107.

195 Court of Policy, “Instructions for Moruka”, 3 March 1785, in: BRC, serial No. 604, pp. 28–31, at 31.

196 WIC, “Muster Rolls”, pp. 168–175.

197 Commander Essequibo G. E. van Meyerhelm, “Journal”, Essequibo, 8 July 1790, in: BRC, serial No. 633, p. 78.

198 Repeatedly, Araytana had referred to the friendship status with the Dutch and the prohibition of harm by the Director General (Court of Justice, “Minutes”, 5 January 1756, Essequibo, p. 123).

199 Arguably, this incident has triggered the Spanish Raid upon the Dutch Cuyuni post. It was also reported that “[a]mong the Acuways [Acuwaijen] it remains quiet; we hear nothing more of them; but their Chiefs have not yet come to me, so that we must still be on our guard” (Court of Justice, “Minutes”, 5 January 1756, Essequibo, pp. 123–124).

200 Director General, “Letter to WIC”, 30 May 1766, in: BRC, serial No. 412, pp. 131–135, at 135. By contrast, Neil Whitehead assumes a stronger Spanish influence on the Akawaio of the Sierra Imataca and Dutch influence on the Caribs of Mazaruni (Whitehead, *Lords of the Tiger Spirits*, p. 166).

201 Director General, “Letter to WIC”, 13 August 1765, pp. 136–137; Director General, “Letter to WIC”, 18 January 1766, in: BB3, serial No. 181, pp. 138–139, at 138.

have had been “eager to escape Capuchin evangelisation”,²⁰² since his insistence on “others of his [Carib] nation”, who would assertively live “under this [Dutch] jurisdiction to help him to fight the Acuways” was “refused”, whereupon “the Acuways” in 1765 were “on their guard, and ready to receive them [the Caribs] well”, after having been “warned by the other Caribans”.²⁰³

However, the Caribs only in May 1766 were “getting ready to attack them [the Acowaio] in still greater numbers”, whereas the Acowaio “had assembled, several hundred strong, on the place of the Owl Maritane”, that is “right up between the Rivers Demerary and Essequibo”, wherefore the Dutch were “expecting a bloody battle every day”,²⁰⁴ after the director general still in April 1766 had indicated that “although there is a great feeling of bitterness on both sides”, the war was very much “restricted to a few skirmishes that occurred under cover of night”.²⁰⁵ Despite, the Carib-Akowaio war in 1767 proceeded “in a very half-hearted and sluggish manner”, while the director general assumed that “there is great probability that it will soon be settled”,²⁰⁶ the Carib-Acowaio war reached its peak in May 1768, after the Carib Chiefs threats,²⁰⁷ the “killing of three Caribans on the coast of Berbices” by Acowaio in February 1768²⁰⁸ and their subsequent fear in April 1768 “of being unexpectedly attacked by the Caribans” in Upper Demerara.²⁰⁹ In May 1768

a body of six hundred Caribans had passed the fort there and together with several other bodies had taken the road to Upper Demerary and Essequibo, so that now our Caribans of Essequibo and Masserony will take up arms and the war will become universal.²¹⁰

Hence, the decisive battle took place on 31 May 1768, when “the Caribans above Berbices having been defeated by the Acuways”.²¹¹ Notably, during the

202 Whitehead, *Lords of the Tiger Spirit*, p. 167.

203 Director General, “Letter to WIC”, 13 August 1765, p. 136; Director General, “Letter to WIC”, 18 January 1766, p. 138.

204 Director General, “Letter to WIC”, 30 May 1766, in: BB3, serial No. 183, pp. 139–140, at 140; Director General, “Letter to WIC”, 30 May 1766, p. 135.

205 Director General Essequibo, “Letter to WIC”, 6 April 1766, in: BB3, serial No. 182, p. 139.

206 Whitehead, *Lords of the Tiger Spirit*, p. 167.

207 Precisely, the Carib Chiefs had announced “that if the Acuways do not behave well or allow the negroes to escape they will attack the Acuways themselves” (Director General, “Letter to WIC”, 10 February 1768, in: BB3, serial No. 201, p. 151).

208 Director General, “Letter to WIC”, 10 February 1768, p. 151.

209 Director General, “Letter to WIC”, 9 April 1768, pp. 152–154. Those Acowaio were known to the Dutch as “Arawak Acowaio or Wapenansis” (ibid.).

210 Director General, “Letter to WIC”, Demerara, 6 June 1768, in: BB3, serial No. 206, p. 156.

211 Ibid.

whole second Carib-Acowaio war (1755–1768), the director general had strictly ordered all WIC servants, colonists, and planters to non-interference, such as in 1765 and 1767,²¹² and had in May 1766 instructed the commander in Demerara on “spot” in Upper Demerary “in case of unforeseen events” again

not to interfere, directly or indirectly, in the matter, nor to help either of the nations in the slightest manner, and to make an effort, if there be still time, to reconcile the two parties and prevent bloodshed, through the mediation of the Arawaks, who are friends of both sides.

Moreover, the Demerara commander was ordered “to take special care that strict neutrality is maintained by the citizens”,²¹³ before in April 1768 once again reaffirming his order to earnestly warn all the citizens and his soldiers [. . .] they are not to interfere, directly or indirectly, except to make peace if possible, and especially are they to take care not to provide either party with arms or otherwise to assist them, since such action might bring the other party upon us and have fatal results, especially for those colonists who live up the river in isolated places.²¹⁴

According to Neil Whitehead, those orders were expressed due to the Dutch “fear” of getting again involved in the Carib-Akawaio war,²¹⁵ after the Acowaio had attacked the Lower Mazaruni plantations in August 1755. In contrast, the Dutch had during the first Carib-Acowaio war (June 1680–January 1688)²¹⁶ (unsuccessfully) attempted to interfere, since the commander at Kijkoveral in June 1680 “with many but fruitless arguments, tried to persuade the highest Chief to make peace

212 WIC (Zeeland), “Letter to Director General”, 2 December 1765, in: BRC, serial No. 407, p. 127. Priorly, the Dutch Director General had “expressly forbid[den]” the Caribs “to molest our Acuway subjects” (Director General, “Letter to WIC”, 20 March 1767, pp. 142–143; Director General, “Letter to WIC”, 20 March 1767, p. 143), which had no impact, since the Caribs continued their war with the Acowaio after 1765.

213 Director General, “Letter to WIC”, 30 May 1766, p. 140; Director General, “Letter to WIC”, 30 May 1766, p. 135. In this context, the Director General, nevertheless, claimed that he had “several times” successfully applied the means of both “persuasion and threats” (ibid.).

214 Director General, “Letter to WIC”, 12 May 1769, in: BB3, serial No. 205, pp. 154–156, at 154. Non-interference was also practiced by the Essequibo colony with regard to the Carib Warouw war of December 1748, but support offered to the Caribs of Waini against a nation from Orinoco, whom the Caribs of Waini expelled.

215 Whitehead, *Lords of the Tiger Spirit*, pp. 166–167.

216 Commander Essequibo, “Letter to WIC”, 28 June 1680, in: BRC, serial No. 94, pp. 183–184, at 183. The continuation of the war is, for example, confirmed in 1681 (commander Essequibo, “Letter to WIC”, 1681, in: BRC, serial No. 95, pp. 184–184, at 184); Commander Pomeroun J. de Jonge, “Letter to WIC”, Pomeroun, 28 January 1688, in: BRC, serial No. 113, p. 206.

with the aforesaid nation” in order to stop “the war between those [i.e., the Indians] of Cuyuni, Essequibo, and Mazaruni, and the Accoways, who live up country”. However, the “highest Chief” in June 1680 responded by “threaten[ing], [that] if we would not let them continue the war, to depart in great numbers to Barima and elsewhere”. Consequently, the commander was “compelled to desist” since “[t]hese being the most important traders in dye”.²¹⁷ Hence, the commander again unsuccessfully considered to “bethink me of means for conciliating that tribe” and instructed a WIC servant “if it be possible, to make peace between the Accoways and the Caribs”, before the Essequibo commander in October 1686 attempted to dissuade the Carib chief Makourawacke²¹⁸ from attacking the Acowaio in Upper Mazaruni,²¹⁹ situated “close by the Caribs and the annatto store”, and preventing them from going to “war with the Akuwayas upon the Demerara” by persuading the Carib Chief “to [instead] go and salt pork above in the Mazaruni River” or “make war far away in Mazaruni and moreover inland”, but Makourawacke “had not complied thereto”.²²⁰ Instead, the war had in January 1688 even extended to Berbice, when Pomeroon governor De Jonge indicated that the “Indian war” had spread. Therefore, de Jonge on 23 January 1688 intended to proceed “to help to free [sic!] that river”.²²¹

Similar to the second Carib-Acowaio war, the Dutch had also switched from interference to non-interference in the case of the Magnauts of Upper Essequibo.²²² Accordingly, the Dutch in August 1724 (on information of Carib Chief Jackannarie that the Magnauts would have killed “all the Caraibans and Acuways they could get hold of”) had fitted out at least two expeditions of the postholder of Wacupo with “a great a force of Indians, well-armed with bows and arrows and the necessary ammunition of war”²²³ to “proceed against the said

217 Commander Essequibo, “Letter to WIC”, 28 June 1680, in: BRC, serial No. 94, pp. 183–184, at 183.

218 He was also determined as the “father-in-law of the Company’s old negro Jotte” (Essequibo Council, “Minutes”, 20 October 1686, p. 202).

219 Previously, Makourawacke had attacked the Acuwayas of Upper Mazaruni (“some months ago”) and killed “some Akuwayas dwelling not far from the annatto store”, whereupon the “friends” of the Acowaio from “above the annatto store in Mazaruni” had “killed both married women and children of the Caribs [of Chief Jan Genasie “above in Mazaruni”], [and] have so intimidated the rest that they, having abandoned their houses and gardens [and] have fled to the forest” (Essequibo Council, “Minutes”, 20 October 1686, p. 202).

220 Essequibo Council, “Minutes”, 20 October 1686, p. 202.

221 De Jonge, “Letter to WIC”, Pomeroon, 28 January 1688, p. 206.

222 Alternative spellings are Magnouws, Magnamos or Manoas.

223 The expeditions were scheduled for December 1724 (Court of Policy, “Minutes”, 3 September 1724, in: BRC, serial No. 52, p. 78) and about March 1724, as goods were “delivered in

Magnouws, and to kill or capture all”,²²⁴ as the Caribs and Akowaio concerned would be “under the protection of this river [and represent] a source of great advantage to the same, being frequently sent up above, salting, by the Honourable Company and by the colonists, it being, moreover, a great and insufferable insult for Christians to be told by heathens that they were coming to kill them”.²²⁵ Again, in 1751 the commander in Essequibo considered to apply violence against the Magnauts, as they are “attacking and driving away the other nations far up in the Essequibo”, had “killed a certain trader named Pieter Lons”²²⁶ and in October 1753 also the three Essequibo colonists “Marchaud, Porret and Walye”. Thus, Laurens Storm van’s Gravesande ordered Arinda postholder Muschak to “inform himself of their villages, number, and strength” and “attack them with the assistance of the Caribs”, who had “offered their services for this purpose”.²²⁷ By contrast, the Dutch in the 1760s changed their Magnauts approach to non-interference, since they remained idle in December 1763 during the war between the Caribs and Magnauts, situated “a good way up” on the banks of the Essequibo, which took place after the Caribs assembled and had “lain in ambush for the Manoas”. In result, “both sides lost heavily” during the “sharp fight” and “the Caraibans were totally defeated and put to flight”. Hence, the Dutch in February 1763 had attempted to conclude a “Treaty of Commerce” with the Magnauts, which was, however, hindered by a Carib attack, whereupon the Magnauts were “feeling themselves too weak after their losses [and] postponed their journey”.²²⁸ Other attempts to draw the Magnauts closer to the Dutch Essequibo colony failed in 1774 and 1776, after the Magnauts had been “injudiciously and childishly driven away”.²²⁹

payment to 60 Indians who have been at post Wacquepo to serve 60 days against the Magnauts” (WIC, “Muster Rolls”, pp. 149–187), whereas Whitehead reports that the Magnauts “first came to trade directly with the colony of Essequibo in 1722, and again in 1723, but were stopped from doing so” (Whitehead, *Lords of the Tiger Spirit*, p. 168).

224 Court of Policy, “Minutes”, 3 September 1724, in: BRC, serial No. 52, p. 78. The expedition was carried out “on the condition that for each head which he and his men take they shall receive two large axes, and for every slave taken and brought here as much in cash as such slaves are worth in public sale” (ibid.).

225 Court of Policy, “Minutes”, 16 August 1724, in: BB3, serial No. 51, p. 78.

226 However, the Maganauts remained at least until 10 June 1751 (Acting commander Essequibo, “Letter to WIC”, 10 June 1751, in: BRC, serial No. 264, p. 71).

227 Director General, “Letter to WIC”, 20 October 1753, pp. 96–97. Moreover, Neil Whitehead indicates that “the Manoas, or *Maganouts*” have “occupied the region of the Rio Negro headwaters” (Whitehead, *Lords of the Tiger Spirit*, p. 168).

228 Director General Essequibo Laurens Storm van’s Gravesande, “A Brief Treatise”, August 1764, p. 129.

229 Director General, “Letter to WIC”, Rio Essequibo, 17 May 1762, p. 124; Storm van’s Gravesande, “Trading Places”, August 1764, p. 129.

Identically, the Dutch practised non-interference in the Carib-Warouw war of November 1748, since the “obstinately” war might “stop their [the Spaniards] further progress” and would “even” drive them “somewhat further off, without our having in the least degree to meddle therewith”, as the Spaniards had already commenced to “gradually approach the Upper Cuyuni”.²³⁰ In contrast, the only exception presented the Dutch offer to provide “powder and shot” for the Caribs of Waini of July 1746, who were facing the threat of an attack of the Spaniards of Cumaná. At the same time, the Moruca postholder was instructed to “assist the Caribs” in order to “maintain the Company’s territory”. In result, the Dutch assistance against the Spanish became unnecessary, since the Waini Caribs had in March 1747 already received the Orinoco nation “reasonably”.²³¹ In sum, this chapter has traced the timely and spatially extent of two Dutch posts in Upper Essequibo (1737–1790; Siparuni and Rupununi) and Lower Cuyuni (1755–1758 Island of Curamueuru; 1767–1771 Island of Toenamoeto/Cramacúra). Moreover, the chapter has revealed that the Dutch had neither exercised jurisdiction nor sovereignty over Indigenous Peoples, which is in line with the European colonial law of Hugo Grotius, since the Dutch had never lawfully acquired jurisdiction or sovereignty, but only land as property for the areas occupied by the Dutch.

²³⁰ Commander Essequibo, “Letter to WIC”, 2 December 1748, p. 58.

²³¹ Commander Essequibo, “Letter to WIC”, 20 July 1746, p. 45; 23 March 1747, in: BRC, serial No. 235, p. 48.