

# *Counter-Cartographies, Indigenous (Counter-)Cartographies*

## Coordinators

**Agnès Trouillet** (Université Paris Nanterre, CREA-Centre de Recherches Anglophones, agnes.t[at]parisnanterre.fr) and **Baptiste Lavat** (MCF, Université Paul-Valéry Montpellier 3, IRIEC-Institut de Recherche Intersite en Études Culturelles, baptiste.lavat[at]univ-montp3.fr).

*IdeAs. Idées d'Amérique* is the open access online journal of the Institute of the Americas. Committed to a multidisciplinary approach that combines new perspectives emerging out of the social sciences and humanities, this journal is devoted to the study of the entire American continent, through the publication of two thematic issues each year that favor comparative and transnational approaches. *IdeAs* seeks to take advantage of its online format to publish articles in multiple languages, and to create forums for debates and exchanges on its selected themes.

The journal publishes several sections, including a main thematic dossier, with:

- **articles solicited** in direct relation to the dossier, selected by the editorial committee.
- **to contributions in response a call for papers**, reviewed by the editorial board and issue coordinators.

Issue 26 of the journal, to be published in **October 2025**, will focus on *Counter-Cartographies, Indigenous (Counter-)Cartographies*.

## Theme of Issue 26

Counter-cartography inscribes in critical, radical or alternative cartography, and challenges the hegemony of the Western map as a tool of universal representation of space (Bracco et Genay, Edney, Harley, Monmonnier, Noucher, Wood, Zwer). Counter-cartography is mostly used as a contemporary attempt to contest existing maps resulting from Eurocentric cartographic traditions. It can also serve to revisit ancient Western maps in order to make "erased" Indigenous populations visible and restore their centrality in the history of the regions under study.

In *Imagined Communities* (1983, London, Verso), Benedict Anderson evokes the map as one of the three institutions of power, with the census and the museum, which together profoundly shaped the way in which the colonial state imagined its dominion – "the nature of the human beings it ruled, the geography of its domain, and the legitimacy of its ancestry".

Cartography became a strategy and an instrument of colonization from the 17<sup>th</sup> century as mapping became the main instrument of division. Maps implemented linear boundaries between different territories, where prevailed centralized authorities that replaced the myriad discrete entities exerting various forms of sovereignty, as Stuart Elden explains in *The Birth of Territory* (University of Chicago Press, 2013). Maps now not only represented the world along geometrical references, they also started to define its visual representation as the forms of

authority that ceased to be represented progressively disappeared from settlers' imagination, as Jordan Branch states in *The Cartographic State – Maps, Territory, and the Origins of Sovereignty* (Cambridge University Press, 2014). 17th, then 18th-century cartographic representations thus progressively evacuated the Indigenous presence by literally erasing them from the map. Moreover, the new mapping techniques relied on Euclidian geometry and geographical accuracy, at complete odds with Indigenous conceptions of space and territory.

To this extent, there can be no decolonization without a reconfiguration of the colonial boundaries that have imposed a "knowledge" on territories and traced limits that define a frame of oppression, as Frantz Fanon posited well ahead of time. Only then can the postcolonial act of decentering from the Western canon be achieved, and a postcolonial epistemology emerge.

This issue will extend the traditional cartographic vocabulary beyond delineated maps and territorial division, to study the question of belonging and the way individuals inscribe in, or project themselves onto a defined space, question or redefine it. These various angles will allow to revisit the geography of the Americas, in a diachronic approach across several centuries, using multi-scalar lenses and various angles of analysis. The dossier naturally revolves around the issue of contested spaces, and of frontiers as boundaries, limits, separation, or intersection, whether these frontiers are territorial, judicial, cultural, linguistic, or conceptual. More largely, it tackles the concepts of landscape, environment and places, including the beliefs and practices involved in the use of land and natural resources. The idea is to bring together research from scholars working on various geographical areas using different fields and methodologies, as long as the focus is North America or Latin America. The topic is articulated around conceptions and practices of territory since mapping is one way of understanding and representing territory, yet there are various other ways to present a knowledge that contains numerous dimensions, geographic, political but also cultural. Historians, geographers, ethnologists, anthropologists working on time periods ranging from early modern (or anterior if needed) to contemporary colonization can contribute. Theoretical papers but also field studies, and concrete case studies are welcome.

A diversity of fields, approaches, geographic and time contexts around the topic will be presented in the dossier, yet contributors don't have to be experts in the history of cartography. An emphasis on Indigenous practices, however, is expected. The goal is to present international state-of-the-art research by scholars working in several fields around this topic, but also by members of the civic society, particularly in museal, artistic, and heritage management.

The suggested axes for this thematic issue are as follows:

- 1) Subversion of territorial, mapping, judicial, diplomatic techniques and practices to produce counter-cartographies; critical, radical, alternative maps
- 2) Cartographic conventions, post-representational and post scientific ideal approaches; representation of the surface and of the "figure" of the earth; map production, circulation and consumption

- 3) Antagonism between oral culture and visual and graphic representation; Indigenous actors and actresses' experiences and stories; history of Indigenous territories
- 4) Counter-cartographies: theoretical, methodological, political, and epistemological forms, practices, and challenges
- 5) Geographic and topographic characteristics, spatial practices, conception of places, mobilities
- 6) Relations to the landscape, natural resources, and the environment; land access and land use
- 7) Local, from below, multi-scalar, collaborative, artistic approaches; traditional processes and digital technologies
- 8) Work on museal collections; strategies for the preservation of traditions and cultural identities

### Submission guidelines

Proposals may be written in English, French, Spanish or Portuguese and must take the following form:

- A title
- An abstract (300 words maximum)
- 5 keywords
- A brief bio-bibliographical note (10-15 lines)

They should be sent to the editorial team by e-mail, before **November 20, 2024**, to:

Agnès Trouillet: [agnes.t\[at\]parisnanterre.fr](mailto:agnes.t@parisnanterre.fr)

Baptiste Lavat: [baptiste.lavat\[at\]ju-pec.fr](mailto:baptiste.lavat@ju-pec.fr)

cc: Françoise Martinez: [francoise.martinez\[at\]sorbonne-universite.fr](mailto:francoise.martinez@sorbonne-universite.fr)

cc: Hélène Quanquin: [helene.quanquin\[at\]univ-lille.fr](mailto:helene.quanquin@univ-lille.fr)