INTRODUCTION

Decolonizing the Map: Recentering Indigenous Mappings

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ABSTRACT

For over five centuries, cartographic map-making has played a pivotal role as a political technology of empire-building, settler colonialism, and the dispossession of Indigenous lands. Yet Indigenous peoples themselves have long engaged in their own mapping practices to share ancestral knowledge, challenge colonial rule, and reclaim Indigenous "place-worlds." Although there is now a sizable body of scholarly literature on the mapping of empire, this special issue on "Decolonizing the Map" aims to recenter Indigenous mappings and decolonial cartographies as spatial practices of world-making. In this introductory article, we provide an overview of the theory and praxis of decolonial mapping and outline the key themes of the contributions to the present special issue. Drawing upon insights from this edited collection, we conclude that decolonial mapping requires a recentering of Indigenous geographical knowledge, respect for Indigenous protocols, and the active participation of Indigenous peoples in the mapping process itself if the project of decolonizing the map is to truly move beyond the colonial cartographic frame.

Keywords: cartography, colonialism, decolonization, decolonial mapping, Indigenous cartographies

RÉSUMÉ

Depuis plus de cinq siècles, la cartographie joue un rôle primordial à titre de technologie politique dans la constitution d'empires, le colonialisme de peuplement et la dépossession des peuples autochtones de leurs terres. Pourtant, les peuples autochtones ont eux-mêmes une longue tradition de pratiques cartographiques visant le partage des connaissances ancestrales, la contestation du pouvoir colonial et la récupération des « univers de lieux » autochtones. Bien qu'il existe maintenant un corpus de littérature assez substantiel sur la cartographie des empires, le numéro spécial ici proposé sur la « décolonisation de la cartographie » a pour but de recentrer les cartographies autochtones et les cartographies décoloniales comme pratiques spatiales de construction du monde. Les auteurs du présent article d'introduction donnent un aperçu de la théorie et de la pratique de la cartographie décoloniale et une description des principaux thèmes abordés dans les articles qui composent ce numéro. Des idées exprimées dans ce recueil, ils concluent que la cartographie décoloniale exige un recentrage des connaissances géographiques autochtones, le respect des protocoles autochtones, et la participation active des peuples autochtones au processus cartographique, si tant est que le projet de décolonisation de la cartographie doive véritablement dépasser le cadre de la cartographie coloniale.

Mots clés : artographie, cartographie décoloniale, cartographies autochtones, colonialisme, décolonisation

Introduction

On 7 June 2020, a bronze statue of the seventeenth-century British imperialist and slave trader Edward Colston was torn down from its pedestal in Bristol, England, and thrown into the city's harbor (BBC 2020). The toppling of the Colston statue – along with various other statues and monuments elsewhere, including those of Christopher Columbus, King Leopold II, and Confederate leaders such as Robert E. Lee – occurred amidst a wave of anti-racism protests worldwide in response to the murder of an unarmed Black man, George Floyd, by police in the US city of Minneapolis. Shortly after the statue's removal, social media was abuzz with news that the cartographic location of the Colston statue had been edited by a user of Google Maps to indicate its new abode at the bottom of Bristol Harbour (Varghese 2020). The statue's aquatic location in the harbor was similarly updated on OpenStreetMap as well. However, these cartographic revisions did not last long, as Google Maps swiftly reversed course to depict the statue's "official" location on land, and both Google Maps and OpenStreetMap eventually deleted any cartographic reference to the Colston statue altogether once the city government removed it from the harbor. When the statue was still submerged underwater, its "proper" place on the map seemed to depend upon how one viewed challenges to the legacies of colonialism, slave profiteering, and White supremacy. Although the removal of a colonial statue from its pedestal – both physically and cartographically – will not singlehandedly decolonize the map or territory, it does call attention to the power of decolonial movements to transform the map through direct action and the power of mapping to imagine decolonial worlds-in-the-making.

As a political technology, mapping has long played a key role in the world-making practices of colonialism through the appropriation, demarcation, naming, and partitioning of territory as part of the process of colonization and the assertion of imperial rule over peoples and places (Akerman 2009; Edney 1997; Huggan 1989; Pickles 2004). Consequently, the cartographies of empire have been instrumental in the dispossession of Indigenous peoples of the lands they have called home since time immemorial (Craib 2017; Harley 2001; Johnson, Louis, and Pramono 2006). Yet, despite common misconceptions, there is also a deep and rich history of Indigenous mapping involving ancestral, anticolonial, and decolonial Indigenous cartographic traditions (Lucchesi 2018; also see Lewis 1998; Louis 2017; Louis, Johnson, and Pramono 2012; Pearce and Louis 2008; Sletto 2009; Thom 2009). Decolonizing the map – and decolonial mapping more broadly – goes beyond the practice of anticolonial mapping (which is characterized by its resistance to colonialism), and seeks to reclaim place-based, ancestral, Indigenous knowledge while also enacting the contemporary world-making practices of Indigenous and colonized peoples in the present. Anticolonial and decolonial spatial practices are often intertwined, yet the former paradoxically has the effect of *re-centering* the "colonial" (as a target of resistance) whereas the latter *de-centers* colonialism as the primary pivot around which ways of knowing and being-in-the-world are conceived, imagined, and lived.

This special issue brings together contributions by both Indigenous and non-Indigenous authors – including scholars from the fields of cartography, geography, history, and literary studies, as well as an artist, an elementary school teacher, and Indigenous elementary school students – each of whom considers different efforts to decolonize and/or Indigenize the map. Our aim in assembling this collection is to showcase contemporary scholarship and praxis that works toward decolonizing geography as an academic discipline, professional practice, and embodied world of everyday life. Although cartography is by no means the only arena in which decolonial and Indigenous struggles are at stake (Coulthard 2014; de Leeuw 2014; Daigle and Ramírez 2019; Simpson 2017), mapping plays an important ontological role in the making, unmaking, and remaking of "worlds" from the micro-scale of the home to the macro-scale of the globe as well as framing and enacting the very conception of scale itself. In many cases, map-making continues to be "weaponized" against Indigenous peoples in the twenty-first century (Bryan and Wood 2015), but decolonial mapping also has the potential to challenge neocolonial cartographies by reclaiming or reimagining worlds beyond the colonial frame of reference (Pearce 2010). Each of the contributions in this special issue seeks to contribute to precisely such a goal, albeit within different contexts – from the omission of settler-colonial boundary lines and place names from maps, decolonial readings of counter-mapping, and mapping the violence of colonial massacres to the reclamation of Indigenous toponymies and the development of protocols for Indigenous data sovereignty to inform cartographic research and practice.

In the remainder of this introductory article, we provide an overview of decolonial mapping theory and praxis, followed by a discussion of the key themes explored in the contributions to this special issue. We then conclude by reflecting critically on how Indigenous mappings and decolonial cartographies offer pathways for moving beyond the tunnel vision of Eurocentric colonialist geographies.

Decolonial Mappings: Theory and Praxis

Over the past two decades, there have been increasing calls to decolonize the discipline of geography and the academy more generally (Curley and Smith 2020; Davies and others 2003; de Leeuw and Hunt 2018; Louis 2007; Noxolo 2017; Rodríguez 2018; Radcliffe and Radhuber 2020; Shaw, Herman, and Dobbs 2006; Smith 1999). At its most fundamental level, decolonizing geography involves "the repatriation of Indigenous land and life" (Tuck and Yang 2012, 1). This is, first and foremost, a matter of securing

the Indigenous governance of Indigenous peoples and places. Given the ongoing role of colonialist–statist cartography in the dispossession of Indigenous lands and lives, as well as its pervasiveness as a naturalized norm of the Westphalian territorial system of state sovereignty, anticolonial "counter-mapping" remains a necessary, but insufficient, response to the territorializing logics of colonialist and statist cartographies (for a discussion of counter-mapping, see Peluso 1995; Wood, Fels, and Krygier 2010). Yet even ostensibly "progressive" counter-mapping projects can have the unintended effect of reinforcing colonial narratives that erase Indigenous histories, geographies, and lives. Although the legacy of colonial cartography – and the violence that it continues to inflict upon Indigenous peoples in the present – is undeniable and deserves critical scrutiny, decolonial mapping focuses instead on the reclamation of Indigenous ontologies of place that long predate the colonial cartographic enframing of Indigenous lands. In this respect, decolonizing the map is an *affirmative* practice that decenters the colonial geographical imagination by revalorizing Indigenous world-making practices – whether in the form of conventional cartographic products (i.e., maps) or performance-based mappings.

Decolonial mapping refers to the spatial practices and cartographic techniques that center on Indigenous relationships and responsibilities to land, including but not limited to spatial narratives, place ontologies, more-than-human relations, navigational guidance, and territorial demarcations. One of the primary threads that binds together "land and life" within Indigenous traditions is the ancestral knowledge embedded within Indigenous toponymies, or place-naming practices. In his landmark book, *Wisdom Sits in Places: Landscape and Language among the Western Apache*, the anthropologist Keith Basso (1996, 6) called attention to the importance of place naming in the making of Indigenous "place-worlds" over two decades ago. In recent years, the reclamation of Indigenous place naming has been employed as a spatial strategy of Indigenous resurgence around the world (Gray and Rück 2019; Rose-Redwood, 2016).

Toponymic reclamation involves not only the inclusion of Indigenous place names on existing colonialist–statist maps but also the making of new maps altogether, or some combination thereof. Indigenous-led or informed cartographic projects aimed at recovering place names stretch back at least as far as a 1915 Blackfeet delegation that asked the US Congress to re-establish Blackfeet names within Glacier National Park in Montana. When ignored, they went on to publish a book describing the meanings of over 300 Blackfeet and Kootenai place names (Barnd 2017; also see Keller and Turek 1998; Schultz 1926). Warhus (1997) describes several efforts of toponymic reclamation during the 1970s and 1980s, including the *Historical Map of Temagami*, the trilingual *Inuit Place Name Maps Series of Nunavik*, and the *Zuni Land Taken since 1846* (see Ferguson 1985; Macdonald 1978; Müller-Wille, Bachand, and Avataq Cultural Institute 1991; Pueblo of Zuni 1987). More recent projects include *Haa Léelk'w Hás Aaní Saax'ú/ Our Grandparents' Names on the Land* (Thornton 2010) and *Cáw Pawá Láakni/They Are Not Forgotten: Sahaptian Place Names Atlas of the Cayuse, Umatilla, and Walla Walla* (Hunn 2015). Website portals such as The Decolonial Atlas (https://decolonialatlas.wordpress.com), Native-Land.ca, and the *High Country News*'s interactive mapping of "Land-Grab Universities" (https://www.landgrabu.org) have also made substantive contributions to Indigenous mapping and decolonial cartography more generally.

It is also notable that much of the early efforts to document Indigenous place names were undertaken by women such as Yurok author Lucy Thompson (1991 [1916]), and today's scholarship on decolonial and Indigenous mapping has been led by Indigenous women such as Margaret Pearce, Renee Pualani Louis, and Annita Hetoevėhotohke'e Lucchesi. This is a significant difference from Western geography, which as a discipline remains male-dominated and is deeply rooted in colonial patriarchy. This is a reminder that Indigenous women's leadership and expertise, as well as gender equality, are in fact Indigenous protocols that are necessary to decolonial mapping. It has also expanded the focus of cartographic concern to topics that have been largely invisible to the male-dominated field, such as mapping the geographies of murdered and missing Indigenous women and girls under Canadian colonial occupation (Lucchesi 2019).

Although decolonizing and Indigenizing the *content* of maps is an important aspect of decolonial mapping, the *protocols* that inform the mapping process are just as significant, if not more so. If a map replaces colonial place names with Indigenous toponyms, or incorporates Indigenous content into an existing cartographic frame, such a mapping project can still have the effect of reinscribing colonial cartographic practices, despite the best of intentions. This is particularly the case if the mapping process itself adheres to – and thus legitimizes – colonialist–statist procedures and protocols, thereby reaffirming the colonialist assertion of a monopoly over the power to map (Tucker and Rose-Redwood 2015). It is therefore crucial to adopt a *processual* approach to the theory and praxis of decolonizing the map (Larsen 2013; Rundstrom 1991; Sletto 2009). However, the critical assessment of such mapping processes and practices is not always as clear cut as we may initially suppose.

In its ideal form, decolonial cartography would necessarily involve decolonizing both the content and processes of mapping. However, under conditions of (neo)colonial oppression, there are often significant barriers to achieving either of these goals – let alone both of them together. It is important, then, to consider the forces at work that constrain and enable decolonial mapping in different historico-geographical contexts, since the strategic use of

colonialist procedures can sometimes serve decolonial ends under particular circumstances. In some cases, for instance, those seeking to reclaim Indigenous toponymies have strategically engaged with settler-colonial institutions and their colonialist protocols in order to secure the desired outcome of an official place name change. On the one hand, such cases could easily be interpreted as reinforcing colonial cartographies. Yet, on the other hand, if those remapping efforts were part of an Indigenous-led movement, combined Indigenous protocols with colonial procedures, and resulted in the reclamation of Indigenous place names, then they could very well serve the broader aims of decolonial mapping. This is especially true if we understand decolonial mapping as a process of articulating Indigenous self-determination in relation to place. Any action Indigenous peoples take to assert, engage, rebuild, or reclaim their relationships to land and how those relationships are visualized on maps can be seen as decolonial mapping, no matter the specific methods chosen. One of the ultimate goals of decolonial cartography, however, is to develop a cartographic culture among both Indigenous and non-Indigenous cartographers that is based upon, and respects, Indigenous mapping protocols (Larsen 2013).

With these concerns in mind, we now turn our attention to work that has engaged with decolonial cartography as theory and/or praxis. As Lucchesi (2018) makes clear, the history of Indigenous mapping extends back long before European colonizers began mapping the world. In a very real sense, then, mapping has always been Indigenous. As noted above, Lucchesi distinguishes between three forms of Indigenous mapping – ancestral, anticolonial, and decolonial – that roughly map onto historical-geographical conditions occurring before, during, and with an eye toward after colonialism in different locales. However, these are by no means rigid categories, since the boundaries between them sometimes overlap, hybridize, and become fluid. As Warrior (1994) reminds us, adaptive innovations fit perfectly within the fluid and engaged work of longstanding Indigenous intellectual traditions. In what follows, we invoke two sets of sometimes overlapping intellectual traditions, one rooted in the formal institutions of academia or professional cartography, and another practiced and embodied by relational knowledge-building largely found within and responsive to Indigenous communities.

Although its etymology might suggest otherwise, the turn toward the "decolonial" in geographical and cartographic circles is based upon the premise that "not everything has to be about colonialism" (Lucchesi 2018, 22). Rather, as Lucchesi (2018, 23) argues, even as "colonialism may be one of the realities we navigate … it does not define the type of stories we tell, or how we draw them." In their recent entry in *Keywords in Radical Geography*, Daigle and Ramírez (2019, 80) describe decolonial geography as "an affirmative refusal of white supremacy, anti-blackness, the settler colonial state, and a racialised political economy of containment, displacement and violence." The nature of this refusal is key to understanding decolonial mapping and decolonial geography more generally. Daigle and Ramírez slip across the admittedly fuzzy and sometimes interwoven line between the anticolonial and decolonial as they articulate a "vigilant" refusal that "requires the dismantling of systems of oppression" (80). In terms of mapping, a focus on dismantling or deconstructing the colonial map inevitably pulls back and tethers such acts onto the terrains of colonial cartographies, as many scholars have noticed (Barnd 2017; de Leeuw and Hunt 2018; Wood and others 2020). However, Indigenous participants in McGurk and Caquard's (2020) study indicate two parallel sets of mappings produced within Indigenous communities and their cartography units: one tabbed for anticolonial work and another protected and withheld for decolonial and culturally sensitive uses.

Wood and others (2020) point to the 1976 publication of the *Inuit Land Use and Occupancy Project*, which features a series of "map biographies" generated by 1600 Inuit knowledge keepers, as an important milestone in decolonial Indigenous cartography (also see Freeman 2011). Although partly motivated by land claims at the largest political scale, this example also aligns with our working definition of decolonial mapping, especially at localized and individual scales. This mapping effort was neither purely ancestral nor anticolonial but rather represents a collectively informed model of ongoing and culturally centered participatory mapping. As Freeman (2011, 22) notes, "each map biography and personal narrative constituted *prima facie* evidence of a living individual's use and occupancy of a particular territory throughout that individual's lifetime to the date of the interview, evidence which, if questioned, could be answered by that individual." The maps reflected and served Inuit practices and purposes even if infused by an externally motivated intent to engage in counter-mapping that ultimately helped produce the Territory of Nunavut in 1999. The project illustrates an overlap between anticolonial (the need to articulate land claims) and decolonial mappings (the ability to enact Indigenous spatial practices and knowledges in cartographic form), which validates localized Indigenous cartographies produced with the "experiential knowledge and understanding of local indigenous experts" (Freeman 2011, 29). The "map biographies" were lived cartographies and thus readily deployable for both anticolonial and decolonial ends. Or, as McGurk and Caquard (2020, 52) observe, "in this case, Western mapmaking practices were infused with Indigenous mapping approaches and processes."

Decolonial mappings speak powerfully to the possibilities and the continuations of Indigenous geographies and spatialities, and they therefore sometimes refuse to conform to Western techniques of cartographic representation. The refusal to generate maps that are legible as archivable and transportable documents of geographical knowledge

reflects a commitment to place-based practices aimed at continuing Indigenous knowledge production on its own terms. Decolonial mapping thus also exists beyond Western standards of universal legibility – in short, not everything is for everyone. Decolonial mapping may build on symbology or aesthetic choices that require cultural competency to be made evident (e.g., specific colors, shapes, patterns, symbols, or artwork that refer to tribally specific stories). While someone without the cultural knowledge may just see a beautiful map, there are much deeper layers of meaning to those who have the relationships and experiential knowledge to decipher them. In this way, decolonial mapping does not just decenter colonialism, but also decenters the intellectual imperialism and White privilege embedded in expectations of standardized legibility that result in the homogenization of Indigenous peoples and cultures. In short, it is not just who makes the map and how that is important, but also who the map is made for, how it is expected to be read or used, and what effects it has in the world.

Pearce and Louis (2008, 107) suggest that although Western geospatial technologies can be used inappropriately, they can also be employed productively by Indigenous cartographers "for protecting cultural sovereignty by communicating the importance of Indigenous cultural knowledge to people outside the community." Yet the reclamation of ancestral Indigenous knowledge through decolonial mapping need not depend upon an "outside" community to serve as an arbiter of cartographic legitimacy and recognition. Lucchesi (2018) notes the continuity of ancestral techniques such as Polynesian wayfinding, which have morphed into decolonial techniques. Most notably, these cartographies are centered on lifelong practitioner embodiments of Indigenous knowledge and thus remain relatively inaccessible – and professionally illegible – to non-participants such as non-Indigenous academic researchers.

In his important intervention within Pacific Islander scholarship, Epeli Hauʻofa (1994) reframes the wayfinding and oceanic scale of Polynesian mapping and navigation, which also generates the stunning effect of reasserting Oceania as a coherent "geography" that refuses the land-centered frames central to colonization. While the critique itself operates as an anticolonial remapping, the ancestral knowledge and practices that Hauʻofa uses to frame this critique are embodiments of decolonial cartographies adjusted for a global world and now facilitated by technologies of air travel and the Internet. Lucchesi (2018) points us to this significant model of praxis, recalling the Micronesian/Hawaiian knowledge-sharing led by Pius "Mau" Piailug, a master navigator who restarted the elaborate and impressive Pacific Islander navigational teachings and oceanic cartographies. Using a memorized and yet fluid cartography that encompasses time, space, astronomy, weather, and ecology allows contemporary master navigators such as Nainoa Thompson both to map the ocean and to "use

the best clues that we have" in real time under constantly changing conditions (Thompson n.d.). These activities not only sustain cartographies but promote their intergenerational survival, as the growth of the Polynesian Voyaging Society attests.

Jim Enote (2018) echoes the Polynesian and Oceanian wayfinding cartographic practices and their importance for intergenerational knowledge transmission through "unconventional" means when he notes that "we limit ourselves if we think of maps as only two-dimensional." As director of the A:shiwi A:wan Museum and Heritage Center, Enote oversees the ever-growing Zuni Map Art project, which has already gathered dozens of artistic creations that produce spatial and relational mappings of Zuni homelands. These artworks document complex mappings, yet they do not operate as an orthogonal-centered cartography constricted by abstracted measurements of distance and direction. Each work of art depicts multiple places of significance along with symbols of their place stories, all set in spatial relation to one another. As artist Mallery Quetwaki explains, her contribution *Grand Canyon* "is a map of a traveled landscape, the journey from creation to home" (Steinauer-Scudder n.d.). Although the Zuni Map Art project was initially conceived as a series of "counter-maps," the individual map art pieces and the collection as a whole have also come to reflect a cartography of memory already practiced in other forms and intended to help the community "start speaking about places, to start learning from each other and talking about places, that is uniquely Zuni" (Enote 2018). Reflecting on the work being produced by and explicitly for this community, Enote reminds us that "there are maps in songs and in prayers. There are maps that are etched in stone, woven into textiles, and painted onto ceramics" (Enote 2018).

The Bird Songs of the southwestern desert of North America offer another useful example of decolonial mapping practices. Bird Songs partially serve as ancestral maps that narrate creation and migration. They are ancient enough to include words indecipherable to today's singers, who hail from several distinct language groups. Yet as social songs they persisted through the experiences of colonization and assimilation. Stretching across multiple nights' worth of a continuous, non-repeating sequence, the songs follow a mapping inspired partly by bird migrations and a bird figure as well as stories that describe the emergence and transformation of people and other beings through their desert landscape experiences. The songs connect several Indigenous peoples who share the "bird," and thus chart a vast geography from the Pacific coastlines (Kumeyaay) to the desert inland of Arizona (Hualapai and Havasupai), from what is currently Los Angeles (Gabrieleno) to northern Mexico (Cocopa), and they are filled with cartographic insights and ecological signposts that shaped their historic movement and guide their ongoing ties with one another (Dozier 1996; also, see Jaskoski and Apodaca 1989). Such

song-based cartographies are common and essential mapping practices that endure and evolve in the present. In his work with the peoples of southern Arizona, for example, Schermerhorn argues that "not only are the O'odham inhabitants of their landscape covering it with songs, they are also inhabited by an ethical songscape" (Schermerhorn 2019, 54; also see Darling and Lewis 2007). Indigenous songs and oral histories have also been used as legal evidence to map Indigenous land claims in settler colonial courts of law (e.g., see *Delgamuukw v. British Columbia*; Borrows 1999; Stauffer 2019; Thom 2001).

Calls to decolonize the academy and recenter Indigenous knowledges and mapping practices have arisen not only in the Global North but in the Global South as well (Cruz 2017; Davies and others 2003; Quinjano 2005). Recent Latin American anticolonial and decolonial scholarship aims to challenge longstanding colonial efforts to repress Indigenous "ways of knowing the world" (Cruz 2017, 16, our translation). Although Moosavi (forthcoming) critiques the "Northerncentrism" of much of the literature on decolonization emanating from the Global North, Cruz (2017) observes that there is growing interest in decolonial thought in the Global South, especially among Latin American scholars working in a wide range of disciplines including geography, anthropology, history, philosophy, and education. Within this context, the turn towards Indigenous cartographies has drawn upon diverse epistemological frameworks and employed different mapping strategies (Acserald and Viégas 2013; Correia 2007). This scholarship examines the role of Indigenous mapping within broader struggles over the reclamation of Indigenous knowledges, subjectivities, identities, and territorial claims in the face of modernization projects promoted by the state and private capital (Acselrad and Coli 2008; Acselrad and Viégas 2013; Montenegro and Rocha 2017). However, Bryan and Wood (2015) caution that United States-led efforts to engage in participatory mapping of Indigenous lands in Mexico and Latin America more broadly pose serious ethical concerns, particularly in cases such as the Bowman Expeditions, where US military funds have been funnelled through the American Geographical Society to support ostensibly "academic" projects.

Indigenous peoples in Latin America have long struggled and mobilized to preserve their existence, identities, and knowledges against the genocidal forces of colonialism (Salas 2020). Contemporary decolonial mapping praxis in Latin America – when done well – can support these Indigenous-led struggles and social movements. As Montenegro and Rocha argue, "it is clear that social cartographies have the potential to play an important political role in territorial disputes, when used by the people and traditional communities for this purpose" (Montenegro and Rocha 2017, 155, our translation). There is a need, therefore, to develop new methodologies and cartographic practices based upon the co-creation of knowledge with and among Indigenous peoples (Kozel 2007). However, it is important that such mapping projects be designed to serve the needs of Indigenous communities themselves rather than primarily serving the interests of "parachute" cartographers whose primary goal is to extract knowledge from Indigenous communities for external use.

Indigenous-led decolonial mapping projects can serve as a powerful political and legal tool in territorial struggles while also documenting the deep historical ties of Indigenous peoples to the lands they call home (Acserald 2013; Acserald and Coli 2008; Almeida 2005). In the recently published edited book, *Geografia e Giro Descolonial: Experiências, Ideias e Horizontes de Renovação do Pensamento Crítico* (Cruz and Oliveira 2017), various contributors examine how Indigenous cartographies offer a means of reinventing spatialities and reaffirming collective Indigenous identities (Barcelos 2017; Cruz and Oliveira 2017; Montenegro and Rocha 2017). As these studies suggest, Indigenous mapping can also provide a basis for supporting environmental protection against the destructiveness of large infrastructural megaprojects and the extractivism of capitalist development deeply rooted in colonialist–statist discourse and praxis. Barcelos (2017, 268, our translation) reflects on the importance of Indigenous cartography to "reallocate in the map those who should have never been left out of it" and suggests that Indigenous and social cartographic praxis can contribute to Indigenous resurgence, counter-hegemonic movements, and social mobilizations that aim to "denaturalize the development" that comes with colonialist–statist attempts to "modernize" Indigenous territories.

Decolonial cartographic theory and praxis have much to offer to the broader project of decolonizing the academy and the geographies of everyday life. As we have argued above, decolonial mapping not only entails "deconstructing" the (colonial) map (Harley 1989; Rose-Redwood 2015), but also enacts a recentering of Indigenous mappings and decolonial cartographies, and more broadly, Indigenous sovereignty and self-determination. This is far more than an intellectual exercise, since it requires a sustained commitment to bringing more Indigenous, Black, Latinx, and other voices into the field of geography, thereby challenging the pervasive whiteness of the discipline both academically and professionally (de Leeuw and Hunt 2018; Pulido 2002). If decolonial mapping is reduced to a mere theoretical enterprise monopolized by White geographers and cartographers, this will only further reinscribe the colonialist legacies of geography and result in cartographies that are "uncoupled or disconnected from the way decolonization is circulated and lived" (de Leeuw and Hunt 2018, 3). Decolonial cartography certainly requires critical theoretical work, yet this must not be decoupled from the decolonial praxis of Indigenous and colonized peoples both within and beyond the academy.

Contributions towards Decolonizing the Map

The articles in this special issue contribute to the ongoing work of decolonizing and Indigenizing mapping practices in the twenty-first century. As a collection, the contributions focus on three main themes: (1) decolonizing cartographic protocols and practices, (2) reclaiming Indigenous toponymies and ancestral memories that have been placed under erasure by colonialism, and (3) critically interrogating the potential and limits of counter-mapping. Given the importance of recentering Indigenous voices and knowledges to the project of decolonizing cartography, the majority of the contributors to this special issue are themselves Indigenous, although several of the contributions – including this introductory article – are hybrid texts co-written by Indigenous and non-Indigenous authors.

In her contribution to this special issue, Cheyenne cartographer Annita Hetoevėhotohke'e Lucchesi offers a "practical guide" to ethical protocols for cartographers, geographers, and other scholars to follow when working with Indigenous communities. Drawing upon the recent work of Kakutai and Taylor (2016), she argues that Indigenous data sovereignty is an integral principle of decolonial mapping protocols. If non-Indigenous cartographers plan to engage in mapping activities on Indigenous lands, Lucchesi maintains that the self-determination and sovereignty of the community must be upheld by following the protocols of the community and allowing those protocols to shape the methodology of the work. She therefore calls for decolonial mapping to be based upon an ethics of relationality, since cartographers have "a responsibility to build relationships with the communities in which we work, defined by deep respect, humility, and generosity. The research will be better for it, as will our communities."

Next, Potawatomi cartographer Margaret Pearce and British historical geographer Stephen Hornsby provide an account of how Pearce sought to follow Indigenous protocols in the making of the *Coming Home to Indigenous Place Names in Canada* map. In response to the colonialist–nationalist celebratory commemoration of the one-hundred-fiftieth anniversary of Canadian confederation in 2017, they embarked upon a cartographic project that recenters Indigenous geographies by making a map of Canada that omits colonial place names and territorial boundaries, and instead only includes Indigenous place names. Given the importance of place naming to Indigenous peoples, Pearce made it a priority to follow the protocols of each Indigenous nation by seeking permission to include its place names in the *Coming Home* map. This was a major undertaking that involved contacting over 200 Indigenous sources from a wide range of different communities, and although Pearce acknowledges that mistakes were sometimes made in following protocols, she sought to learn from those experiences in order to improve cartographic practice in subsequent engagements with

Indigenous knowledge holders. Pearce views the *Coming Home* map less as an example of decolonial cartography than as a form of Indigenous mapping. As she explains, "I am *Indigenizing* the map, not decolonizing the map. I do not deconstruct, dismantle, or critique the colonizing assumptions of the dominant discourse. Instead, I normalize a map of Indigenous sovereignties." Yet, as we have suggested above, the recentering of Indigenous mappings – and the consequent decentering of colonial cartographies – is one of the hallmarks of decolonial mapping itself (Lucchesi 2018). To put it concisely, the practice of Indigenizing the map under conditions of ongoing colonial oppression is a profoundly decolonial act – even more so to the extent to which the cartographer refrains from explicitly deconstructing or critiquing colonialism but rather refuses altogether to reproduce the colonial geographical imagination as the centerpiece of cartographic attention.

The reclamation of ȽÁU, WELṈEW̱ as the SENĆOŦEN name for a mountain in W̱SÁNEĆ territory on Turtle Island (North America) not only serves as an inspiring example of the power of naming in the reassertion of Indigenous claims to place but also highlights the political agency of Indigenous children in reclaiming their ancestral geographical knowledge. We are fortunate to include an article in this special issue that was co-written by Indigenous elementary school students at the ȽÁU, WELṈEW̱ Tribal School in collaboration with their Euro-settler third grade teacher, Melanie Neilson, who led the collective effort to reclaim ȽÁU, WELṈEW̱. In their article, they recount the story of how a field trip with their teacher and an Indigenous elder led the students to wonder why a sign in the park where the mountain stood bore the name of a European colonizer rather than its longstanding name of ȽÁU, WELṈEW̱ ("place of refuge"). They explain how the students then successfully petitioned the provincial government of British Columbia to acknowledge ȽÁU, WELṈEW̱ as an official name for the park. Reflecting on their experiences, the students conclude that "[t]hrough the process of reclaiming the name ȽÁU, WELṈEW̱, we, the students at ȽÁU, WELṈEW̱ Tribal School, have learned that our voices are powerful." As an act of Indigenous resurgence, the reclaiming of ȽÁU, WELṈEW̱ shows how place naming can play an integral role in reasserting the power of Indigenous voices in the enactment of Indigenous geographies. Moreover, it also underscores how the reclaiming of Indigenous place names is an embodied practice that forges intergenerational connections between the wisdom of Indigenous elders and the eyes-wide-open questioning curiosity of the next generation.

Kiowa geographer Mark Palmer and non-Indigenous political geographer Cadey Korson broaden the discussion of Indigenous toponymies by considering how World Heritage maps produced by the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) have the potential to incorporate Indigenous content more

meaningfully, beyond the current practice of merely including decontextualized depictions of Indigenous place names as static textual features. Drawing on a case study of UNESCO maps of the World Heritage site of Tongariro National Park in Aotearoa/New Zealand, they observe that the inclusion of Indigenous place names in most resource management maps is generally not accompanied by interpretive content that explains the meaning or history of Indigenous toponymies. As a remedy, Palmer and Korson propose the development of what they call "Indigital story maps" that can incorporate multimedia sources (audio, video, and additional interpretive content) to enhance the richness and depth of mapping as an Indigenous story-telling practice. Moreover, they advocate for a participatory approach to story mapping that recenters Indigenous knowledge by enabling "communities to incorporate their own voices, languages, names, and stories into maps." This form of Indigenous mapping, Palmer and Korson argue, can contribute to decolonizing World Heritage maps by reclaiming Indigenous place-worlds.

Three team members of "the names of places" multimedia art project (non-Indigenous technical support and project manager Greg Hooper, non-Indigenous archival historian Jonathan Richards, and team lead Aboriginal Waanyi artist Judy Watson) discuss their ongoing work mapping massacres of Aboriginal peoples across Australia. Drawing on archival sources and oral histories, the practice of mapping "the names of places" memorializes the survivors of frontier violence and expresses a decolonial perspective from those descendants who carry the memory of massacres not verified by colonial bureaucracy. The team reflects on the lessons it learned from the process of working on the project, and a special emphasis of their work is placed on the Native Police. This was a special paramilitary branch of the Queensland police made up of Aboriginal troopers led by European officers, who were instructed to crush Indigenous resistance against colonization and were responsible for many of the massacres on the Australian frontier, including a killing from which Watson's great-great-grandmother Rosie escaped at Lawn Hill. They seek to provoke questions about the role of Indigenous dispossession in the formation of modern settler colonial states and to force audiences to recognize that frontier violence is foundational to colonialism. For the authors, decolonizing the map involves cartographically documenting and prioritizing Indigenous experiences of place both historically and in the present.

Cree scholar Dallas Hunt interrogates the place of counter-mapping as a practice for decolonization and the problems that arise when digital counter-mappings continue to reproduce settler colonial erasures by analyzing Sylvia Grace Borda's art installation "Every Bus Stop in Surrey, BC." In particular, he discusses how counter-mapping can serve to reinforce colonial erasure by reinscribing White settler histories onto the land, using Borda's artwork as an example of how the intention to practice cartography as a means of subverting hegemonic narratives may instead fortify Indigenous dispossession. Drawing upon the work of both Indigenous and non-Indigenous theorists, Hunt illustrates how the bus stops that Borda photographs and maps with the intention of foreshadowing the urban community that will utilize this transportation network erases the presence of Indigenous peoples through its anticipation of the urban and reinforcement of colonialist nostalgia for a romanticized image of rural Surrey. While not proposing a model for decolonial mapping per se, Hunt encourages map-makers to cultivate a decolonial sensibility when engaging with digital cartography and not to forget or neglect the history of Indigenous dispossession and forced removal. He argues that truly decolonial maps would be grounded in lived resistance and enacted as a form of intellectual revitalization and resurgence, while also documenting the processes of settler colonial slow violence.

In the concluding contribution to this special issue, three non-Indigenous members of the kollektiv orangotango+ (Severin Halder, Boris Michel, and Paul Schweizer) discuss the process of producing their collective's volume of global counter-cartographies, *This Is Not an Atlas*, and how their project is situated within debates over decolonial mapping. Conscious of their own positionality as German academics and activists, kollektiv orangotango+ implemented strategies to address problems both of accessibility and of representation in an attempt to resist reifying hegemonic frameworks of cartography in order to make underrepresented struggles visible. Despite the challenges encountered in the publication of *This Is Not an Atlas*, Halder, Michel, and Schweizer argue that their volume resists the conventions of the colonialist atlas by bringing together a mosaic of map-makers from the Global North and South that juxtaposes cartographic languages and ontologies, thereby refusing a singular, universalizing projection and instead offers traces that present possible futures for decolonial mapping.

Moving beyond the Colonial Cartographic Frame

Decolonizing the map is a prefigurative process of cartographic reclamation in the here and now, not an end state that will only arrive in a postcolonial utopian future. From a decolonial perspective, the anticolonial move of deconstructing and dismantling colonial cartographies is a necessary first step in the process of decolonizing geography, whereas decolonial mapping signals an affirmative recentering of the imaginative geographies of Indigenous and colonized peoples (Lucchesi 2018). This process of decolonizing cartography is already taking place – with Indigenous cartographers and knowledge holders leading the way – and it will proceed irrespective of whether it gains recognition from "mainstream" (read: non-Indigenous,

predominantly White) geographers and cartographers. At the same time, the "colonizer's model of the world" (Blaut 1993) continues to shape both conventional and critical traditions of geographical thought and praxis (Oswin 2020). However, the cracks in the façade of the colonial geographical imagination are becoming increasingly evident, and the mappings of Indigenous, Black, and Latinx geographies offer pathways toward moving beyond the colonial cartographic frame and the Eurocentric tunnel vision of the so-called "geographical tradition."

As statues, monuments, and place names honoring colonizers and White supremacists continue to fall, public debate generally concentrates on who the commemorated colonizer was, what he did, and whether his legacy is worthy of the honor bestowed upon it by public commemoration. Although these debates are strategically important arenas for anticolonial resistance, they nevertheless tend to re-center the colonizer as the central focal point of attention. However, there are moments when the anticolonial removal of a statue is coupled with the revalorizing of Indigenous ceremony and protocol, such as when members of the American Indian Movement – including those from the Chippewa, Dakota, and Ojibwe nations – engaged in ceremonial song and danced around the fallen statue of Christopher Columbus on the grounds of the Minnesota State Capitol on 10 June 2020 (Van Berkel 2020). This celebration of the statue's removal was preceded by an even deeper ceremony held where George Floyd was murdered by police. The jingle dance, which notably emerged during the 1918 influenza pandemic as a healing dance for the people, was performed by Indigenous women where Floyd was killed, bringing healing medicine to the stolen land that bore witness to the anti-blackness that stole Floyd's life. This was a powerful act of reclamation and place-making rooted in kinship, ceremony, and a decolonial present and future in which Black and Indigenous peoples honor each other.

Both the performance of the jingle dance and the Indigenous-led toppling of Columbus's statue were decolonial acts of Indigenous self-affirmation that reframed this historical moment according to Indigenous protocols. It is this spirit of Indigenous resurgence, reclamation, and renewal that will hopefully guide the way toward decolonizing both the map and the territory in the years to come.

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