

Tuesday, 7 January / Martes 7 de enero

11:00-12:30: Salón Rubí

Special Session / Sesión Especial

Mapping Latin American Geographies

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El mapeo de las geografías latinoamericanas

Chair: Karl Offen

The “Great Lakes” project in Chocó, Colombia: Cold War mappings for an alternative inter-oceanic canal project

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In 1967 the Hudson Institute “founded by American futurist, military strategist, and systems theorist Herman Kahn” proposed to create a “South American Great Lakes System” as part of their vision of “National Security and International Order”. Aimed to generate massive water reservoirs, hydroelectric power and navigation networks in the subcontinent, the scheme was taken with diffidence by many South American governments. The Colombian authorities nevertheless manifested strong interest in the Chocó subproject, an inter-oceanic waterway lake system connecting the Atrato and San Juan rivers, revitalizing previous inter-oceanic Colombian plans. Even if not implemented, the project generated great enthusiasm and criticism at diverse local, national and international levels; surviving in some Colombian official cartography and in the geographical imagination of different social groups. My paper examines the cartographies of this “Chocó Development Project” - as it was also known- exploring some of their geographical and political discourses, uses and implications.

Keywords: Hudson Institute, Colombia, inter-oceanic projects, cartography, Cold War

Élisée Reclus’ Latin American Mapping: Forerunner of Today’s Critical Cartography

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One of the strongest areas of the French anarchist geographer, historian and cartographer Élisée Reclus’ (1830-1905) monumental body of work was cartography. All of his main works -- notably his trilogy: *La Terre* (1868-1869), *Nouvelle Géographie Universelle* (1876-1894) and *L’Homme et la Terre* (1905-1910) – are profusely illustrated with maps of a remarkable originality and diversity, many of them

treating Latin America. Based in Belgium during the last decade of his life, he energetically pursued various cartographical projects and proposed the development of a cartographical institute. He was, for political and pedagogic reasons, highly concerned with the three-dimensional representation of earth's surface relief and curvature, and with the construction and use of globes — one of them of monumental size, never built, for the city of Paris. His career cartographical production totals more than ten thousand maps. In this paper we characterize and classify Élisée Reclus' cartographic production corresponding to Latin America, and place it in its larger theoretical contexts as constituting a precursor of today's efforts at critical cartography and emancipatory mapping.

Keywords: Élisée Reclus, cartography, Latin America

Zonas de Vida: Biogeographical Mapping in Costa Rica

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This paper examines the history of bio-geographical mapping in Costa Rica. Specifically, we compare maps that predate the wide acceptance and application of the Holdridge Life Zone System (HLZS) with those immediately following the 1969 publication of *República de Costa Rica Mapa Ecológico según la clasificación de Zonas de Vida del Mundo de L.R. Holdridge* by Joseph Tosi. The purpose is to understand the significance of this map in the evolution of bio-geographical mapping and conservationist thought and planning in Costa Rica. The talk represents initial research into the role of *República de Costa Rica Mapa Ecológico* in shaping the conservationist ethos that is now a part of Costa Rica's national identity.

Keywords: biogeography, Holdridge, Costa Rica

Cartographic Sleuthing: The toponym ‘Mosquito’ and early colonial maps of Caribbean Central America

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This paper analyzes several rare or poorly known maps showing eastern Central America from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries to interpret the significance of the toponym “Mosquito” in what is today northeastern Nicaragua. Of course the word Mosquito today refers to the Mosquito (Miskitu) people, or to the offshore Cayos Mosquitos. Given that the ethnic term ‘Mosquito’ does not appear in English or Spanish until 1671, it is worthwhile to ask when the toponym first appeared on maps? What did it serve to represent? How might its changing location be illustrative of processes on the ground? In short, what can be learned by contextualizing old maps and their placenames? Rather than address some antiquarian problem, the study provides unique evidence for early and significant relations between coastal indigenous peoples, English settlers and Dutch mariners associated with the Puritan colony at Providence Island, and the commodification of natural resources in the first decades of the seventeenth century.

Keywords: history of cartography, West Indies, la Mosquitia, Isla Providencia

***Reading the map: The consequences of Capt. B. Dickson's boundary post 16 placement
in the 1902 Argentina-Chile arbitration***

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Under the boundary Treaty of 1881 Chile and Argentine agreed to use the principle of the highest peaks and *divortium aquorum* as defining elements in their Andean boundary. The only problem was that, upon field inspection, the intercontinental divide did not coincide with the watersheds. In 1902 the British Crown was accepted as the arbitrator of disputed Andean territory and after field surveys a boundary line was drawn and entered onto an official map. To demarcate the line on the ground boundary markers were positioned. In the sector to be discussed here the arbitration award read (Article III: *From the fixed point on the River Palena the boundary shall follow the River Encuentro to the peak called Virgen, and thence to the line we have established crossing Lake General Paz....*). Unfortunately, the river Encuentro did not lead to the Virgin Peak, which led to a new 1966 arbitral decision.

Keywords: boundary dispute, 1902, Argentina-Chile, field interpretation of maps

Mapping Flowers in the Equatorial Andes

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Cut flowers have become the major export of the Equatorial Andes over the last two decades. The expansion of this activity has been documented in maps by a variety of actors, including the Ecuadorian industry association “Marketing Flowers.” Wall maps from this association are presented and analyzed in terms of their purposes, makers, and utilization; a comparison with other (including scholarly) maps of floriculture provides insights into the diverse interpretive communities involved in landscape development and change.

Keywords: mapping, agriculture, flowers, modernization, Ecuador