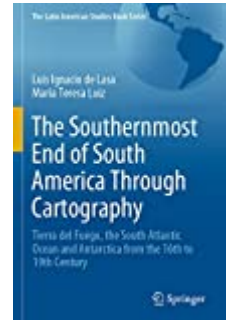


**Luis Ignacio De Lasa, María Teresa Luiz.** *The Southernmost End of South America through Cartography: Tierra del Fuego, the South Atlantic Ocean and Antarctica from the 16th to 19th Century (The Latin American Studies Book Series).* New York: Springer, 2022. 188 pp. \$169.99, paper, ISBN 978-3-030-65881-6.



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## **Gandara-Chacana on de Lasa and Luiz, *The Southernmost End of South America through Cartography***

De Lasa and Luiz's book examines the ways in which the southernmost tip of America and its surrounding waters were integrated into Western geographical knowledge systems, analyzing imperial and national cartographies from the sixteenth to the nineteenth century. Following Harley's work on the history of cartography, this book makes an important case for maps as political, economic, and symbolic tools. Its analytical approach emphasizes the ways in which maps produce and reproduce the power relations that shape spaces, pointing out the different valorizations of these southern territories throughout the period under study. Using a wide range of primary sources, this book argues that maps have played a crucial role in the production of knowledge about this region, significantly contributing to its symbolic and political appropriation by capitalist, imperial, and national agents. The latter category is particularly relevant as the authors highlight the

role played by various actors, including traditionally studied figures such as naturalists, hydrographers, explorers, geographers, and map-makers, but also integrating lesser-known figures in map production, such as sealers and religious missionaries. In the same vein, the book also recognizes the role played by Indigenous spatial knowledge, underscoring at the same time how Western maps have erased their presence. In the process, they make visible the imperial and colonial agendas of early modern and national cartographies. *The Southernmost End of South America through Cartography*, though, overlooks important elements of cartographical analysis and mapping history, such as the context of the production and consumption of historical maps. It also utilizes anachronistic spatial categories in its analysis.

This book encompasses five different chapters that explore the territorialization process of this region and its different historical representations,

ranging from the early European cartographic enterprises of the so-called Age of Discoveries to the late nineteenth-century national annexations. Chapter 1 lays the conceptual and methodological foundations of the book, delving into the instrumental and political nature of maps and the ways in which the different cartographical discourses feature this region as a space to be appropriated. The second chapter examines the process of knowledge construction of Patagonia and its surrounding waters by analyzing the first European maps of the Americas in the Renaissance period. In particular, this chapter scrutinizes how this region was integrated into Western knowledge systems, analyzing competing (and at times complementary) geographical discourses such as the fifth continent, the imaginary of the antipodes, and the theory of climatic zones. Chapter 3 focuses on the process of cartographic construction of the South Atlantic region in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, a period of high inter-imperial competition for the control of the globe's maritime routes. It examines how early modern maps produced long-lasting cartographic representations that depicted the region as the "border of the ecumene," a frontier and an inhabitable region, reproducing Eurocentric views regarding nature and space. It also showcases the changes in the geographical imagination of this region as it became a strategic space for transoceanic navigation and an important center of marine-animal exploitation in the late eighteenth century.

Chapters 4 and 5 represent the most important contribution to the field as they expand the scope of the analysis by including less traditional cartographies and a wider variety of map producers. Yet these cartographies are still tied to the imperial and national discourses that aimed to politically, economically, or symbolically assimilate this space. Chapter 4 delves into Jesuit cartographies of Patagonia's hinterlands in the second half of the eighteenth century. By doing so, this chapter considers the role played by Native American actors in the construction of colonial carto-

graphies, constituting an important tool to analyze Indigenous territorialities. Finally, chapter 5 explores the economic integration of the southernmost region of South America into the global capitalist system and its political annexation to Chile and Argentina after the demise of the Spanish Empire in the nineteenth century. It describes the changes that transformed Patagonia and Tierra del Fuego from inhospitable and unknown territories into savage lands ready to be exploited and politically assimilated. This chapter highlights the different strategies designed by imperial and national actors, exploring, for example, how Great Britain incorporated this region into its imperial cartographies by creating the discourse of the circumpolar territories, or how the Latin American states promoted maps that erased the presence of Indigenous communities, depicting the region as a vacuum.

Significantly, this book fails to address the context of the production, circulation, and consumption of the maps it analyzes. Recent research has underscored the importance of studying maps as instruments of power relations, as well as giving attention to mapping practices. The material context of the production and circulation of maps, as well as questions about actors, spaces, scales, and circuits of consumption are central in the history of cartography. De Lasa and Luiz do not engage with these questions, leaving important queries about the extent of the social and political impact of these maps about Patagonia and Tierra del Fuego undiscussed. Moreover, this book does not pay attention to the translation of maps and their inter-imperial circulation, questions highly relevant for unveiling the political nature of maps.

Another important critique focuses on the use of contemporary categories to analyze the area of study. Far from being a naturally preexisting space, the South Atlantic is a historical, political, and cultural construction. In the early modern period, the boundaries between the South Atlantic and South Pacific Oceans were not clearly defined

in the geographical imagination of explorers, geographers, and mapmakers. Even more so, these southern seas were conceived as one continuous maritime region, as maps and voyage accounts of the period show. By using the contemporary concept of the South Atlantic, the authors neglect cartographical representations of the western side of Patagonia and Tierra del Fuego, marginalizing this region within their historical analysis. This, in turn, underpins anachronistic spatial distinctions between the east and the west, which ultimately reinforces national divisions of the region.

There are some conceptual categories that also need further discussion. For example, the authors widely use the epitome of "scientific cartography," but this idea goes unexplained and is principally utilized in chapter 5 to describe imperial and national maps of the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. What constitutes this idea of "scientific cartography" and how does it differ from previous representations? Particularly problematic is the idea of "Amerindian maps" proposed in the conclusion of chapter 4. This could be a useful concept for analyzing colonial and imperial maps of the early modern period and even the early national cartographies in the Americas. However, the term fails to recognize the instrumental ways in which imperial and national actors integrated Indigenous spatial knowledge into their own cartographical representations. We need a new term that allow us to showcase the importance and nuance of Indigenous spatial knowledge in Indigenous, Western, and Latin American maps.

In spite of these shortcomings, De Lasa and Luiz's book offers an important opportunity to deeply examine the ways in which cartography plays a significant role in the territorialization of spaces and the development of geographical imaginations. By studying the case of Patagonia and its surrounding waters, the authors demonstrate how maps are effective discursive devices that express territorial projects and claims, acknow-

ledging them as crucial tools for the legitimation and political validation of imperial and national spatial configurations. Notably, the historical overview offered by this book brings about the diverse strategies used by Latin American states to erase the presence of Indigenous communities, presenting these territories as a vacant space. These are long-lasting images that have contributed to the historical marginalization of these groups, reminding us how the process of national territorialization often meant the violent deterritorialization of Native communities.

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