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**Teaching and learning geography by drawing maps:
Instructions and exercises for teachers and students in late 19th to
mid 20th century school texts**

Although in the last two centuries the act of drawing maps and other types of cartographical diagrams has been consolidated as an eminently literary discipline, at the end of the nineteenth century, it was widely accepted as a useful exercise for thinking, interpreting and internalizing geographical information. In this presentation I analyze how the graphic skills promoted in elementary school geography varied from experiences, materials and activities developed in school institutions between the end of the nineteenth century and the mid twentieth century.

I will demonstrate that hand-drawing maps in learning history, geography, geomorphology, climatology and other earth sciences has been a fundamental tool to establish links among variables, to fix geographical contexts and to develop “spatial thinking” as a pedagogical and effective teaching strategy. For that reason, as I will show, school textbooks devoted many pages to exploring diverse drawing methods to promote graphic skill learning. I will also discuss the decreasing importance of map-making as a pedagogical tool during the twentieth century, a period when verbal information gained importance. Over time, maps came to be used merely as illustrations for texts, with no instruction on how to make or study them; consequently, graphic maps started to be used intuitively and induced by what “textual maps” described in school texts told about those (become) illustrative maps.

International cases chosen from the United States, France, Argentina, Brazil and Guatemala provide evidence to suggest that the patterns demonstrated in this study reflect broad shifts in knowledge acquisition and dissemination, rather than being dependent on the goals or reforms in one particular educational system.

First, I will contextualize the place and spatiality of the maps in formal instruction instances, and their impact on the modes of observation (mostly, school walls, journals for children, and school textbooks). Secondly, I will analyze what type of map drawing was promoted in modern school instruction contexts and for what pedagogical purposes (such as step-by-step instructions to copy, trace, transfer information from text to (carto) graphic formats, among others). Thirdly, I will analyze the didactic functions assigned to various cartographic drawing practices and geographic images according to the instructions given to produce them. Here I will examine didactic and pedagogical books, addressed both to students and to teachers in which it is explained for what and why it is necessary to draw maps in the learning of geography. Finally, I will review some cartographic drawing exercises related to the application of geometrical principles and the development of spatial thinking included in school texts.

Carla Lois has a degree in Geography and a PhD in Philosophy and Literature(specialized in History) from the University of Buenos Aires. She is a Researcher at CONICET (Consejo Nacional de Investigaciones Científicas y Técnicas) and Full Professor at the University of Buenos Aires. Aso Editor-in-Chief of the series BRP Map History (Brill) and co-editor of volume 5 in The History of



ISHMAP2020 Symposium, June 12-13, 2020

Cartography Project (University of Chicago Press) She coordinates the History and Epistemology Group of Cartographies and Technical Images (FFyL, UBA www.ghecit.org). Among her books: *Mapas para la Nación. Episodios de la historia de la cartografía argentina* (Biblos, 2014) and *Terrae Incognitae. Formas de pensar y mapear las geografías desconocidas* (Eudeba, 2018).

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