

Living Traditions
 The features displayed here, precolonial historical sites and modern cities, illustrate the continuity of Indigenous land tenure. This is not a map of 1492. These place names are both ancient and recent. Indigenous peoples are still here, Indigenous languages are living languages, and the land is still unceded.

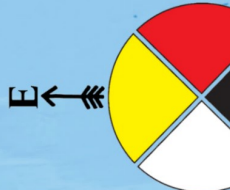
The Border Crossed Us
 Decolonizing requires us to see the land beyond the colonial border, which disorganizes traditional Indigenous communities, and disrupt traditional patterns of land use and governance. We are all connected.

Collaborative Cartography
 These place names are the intellectual and cultural property of the Indigenous people on whose territories they are located. They are shared here thanks to the dedication of hundreds of Indigenous elders, language-keepers, and tribal historians who generously shared their time and knowledge. Permission to publish these names on the online version of this map.

Pluralism of the Land
 Over 150 languages are represented here, but it is far from comprehensive. The magnitude of Indigenous diversity and traditional knowledge could never be distilled into a single map. The use of a particular Indigenous name does not diminish another one, as many places have multiple Indigenous names depending on language and context. This map serves only as a gateway to further understanding through consultation.

Older than "America"
 Among the many Indigenous names for the continent are Alva Yala, "Land of fullness" in Guna, and Turtle Island, the anglicized term among many Northeastern Woodlands peoples referring to the great turtle on whose shell earth was piled to create the land.

Reorienting to the Sun
 Every culture has its own unique set of values and practices which are reflected in the way that they create and use maps. This map is oriented to the East, the direction of the rising sun, in recognition of the many (but not all) Indigenous peoples, such as the Mayan and Olmecs, who have traditionally taken this perspective. The compass is in the form of a medicine wheel, a sacred symbol associated with the cardinal directions in many Indigenous cultures.



THE
DECOLONIAL
 ATLAS

TURTLE ISLAND

DECOLONIZED

Indigenous Names of Major Cities and Historical Sites

Indigenous place names carry the stories of the land and its people, reflecting the unbroken relationships between them. From the moment Columbus landed at Guanahani and christened it "San Salvador," place names became weapons to claim Indigenous land. The erasure of Indigenous peoples from colonial maps was deliberate. Reclaiming these names is part of a movement to revitalize endangered languages, undo centuries of suppression and widespread misinformation, and acknowledge unextinguished Indigenous land tenure.