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*towards a
critical area studies*

Edited by Wendy Bracewell, Tim Beasley-Murray, and Michał Murawski

Anti-Atlas is positioned at the intersection of several publishing genres: a reader, an edited collection, a manifesto, and a travel guide. It aims to upset rather than to consolidate taken-for-granted ideas about territory, chronology, culture and society. It provides its readers with a diverse set of intellectual resources, provoking them to think critically about the ways in which we – scholars, decision makers, producers and consumers – divide the world up into pieces, fencing off certain areas from other ones.

Anti-Atlas traces the alliances and enmities between continents and terrains old and new: between Eurasia and the Second World, the Third World and the Global South; between the suburb and the forest, the extra-terrestrial and the anthropocene, between financial tides and terraqueous drifts. It questions taken-for-granted chronologies and genealogies as well as spatial units: *when*, precisely, does space equal place? Although planetary in scope, *Anti-Atlas* is compiled from an (obliquely-defined) East European point of view, gesturing to a provisional 'Global East' but rejecting any claims to universal validity.

Anti-Atlas is intended as a critique of conventional area studies assumptions and investments, and as a manifesto for a new Critical Area Studies, here glimpsed through Eastern eyes.

Confirmed contributors include Jonathan Bach, Victor Buchli, Choi Chatterjee, Maja Fowkes, Reuben Fowkes, Juliane Fuerst, Diana Georgescu, Sarah Green, Zsuzsa Gille, Philippa Hetherington, Caroline Humphrey, Stef Jansen, Jan Kubik, Vladimir Kulić, Lisa Kirschenbaum, Ruth Mandel, James Mark, Maciej Maryl, Viatcheslav Morozov, Katherine Verdery, Peter Zusi

Call for Contributions: **200 word abstracts due 31 January 2018**

Final deadline for accepted contributions (up to 2,000 words): **31 May 2018**

Collage by Jan Dziackowski, from the "Keine Grenze" series, 2008

Although borderless in spirit and aspiration, *Anti-Atlas* is – by necessity – barricaded into the following sections: *Counter-Canon*; *Critical Continents*; *Wandering Critics*.

Each **abstract** should fit either into the **Critical Continents** or the **Wandering Critics** sections; and should also be accompanied by an annotated suggestion for a **text to be included (and/or to be removed from) the Counter-Canon**. Huge numbers of footnotes to be avoided, but suggestions for further reading will make the *Anti-Atlas* all the more useful.

Anti-Atlas: Towards A Critical Area Studies

1. Counter-Canon

What heterodox, counter-canonical mappings and genealogies of area can we draw on? This section will constitute about 20 short excerpts (approximately 800-2,000 words each) from texts illustrating potential mappings and divisions of the world, primarily – but not solely – rooted in a Global East, and polemically skewering conventional understandings of 'area' (this, of course, necessarily involves identifying variously defined 'canons'.)

[Proposed] texts by: *Johann Gottfried Herder, Svetlana Boym; Catherine II of Russia; Angela Davis; Alexandra Kollontai; Julia Kristeva; Stanisław Lem; Rosa Luxemburg; Claudio Magris (on the 'hinterland ecumene'); The Non-Aligned Movement; Robert Musil (on 'Kakania'); Anna Politkovskaya; Ayn Rand; M.N. Roy; Jozef Šafařík (1842 map of 'Slavonic Europe'), Jenő Szűcs (the historical regions of Europe), Ludwik Zamenhof (Esperanto); N.S. Trubetskoi*

2. Critical Continents

There are more areas to study than the seven continents we know, and the linguistically-defined or post-imperial husks we name our departments and institutes after. It is time to discover new continents, and to abandon, rip apart or re-draw the old ones. This section comprises approximately 20 delineations (800-2,000 words each) of alternate continents or terrains, as imagined by an interdisciplinary group of contemporary scholars.

Candidate continents: *Antropocena; Eurasia; The Fuzz; The Former West; Kosmos; The Grid; The Knot; Międzymorze; The Pale; (Post)Socialist Planet; The Republic of Letters; Sistema; Slaka; Soviet Chronotope; Subaltern Empire; Zona*

3. Wandering (or Sedentary) Critics (or Dogmatics)

All continents – dogmatic and critical – are known, inhabited, traversed by wandering critics (and dogmatics), the vanguard scholars of Critical Area Studies. This section comprises approximately 20 profiles (800-2,000 words each) of such critics – whether of those who wander or are forced into exile, or of those who are trapped or imprisoned within (or in between them).

Candidate critics: *Amerikanisti; Architektka; Comrade Woman; Die Schwarzwohner; The Travelee; The Lost Dog; The Oligarch; The Global Prisoner; Rabotnitsa; The Trafficked Woman; J.G. Herder; Witold Gombrowicz; Maxim Gorky; Danilo Kiš; Wanda Wasilewska*