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Maps have many different purposes, such as human navigation, geopolitics, or environmental records. No map, even a globe, will be perfect for all of the possible purposes. Because of this, each map and each projection of the earth has tradeoffs, for example between preserving distance, angles, or area. The Peters projection preserves area while distorting shape. The World Bonne projection is a heart shape instead of a rectangle and preserves area very well, but it has the added bonus of also preserving shape. On the other hand, the Sphere van Der Grinten projection is more similar to Mercator in that it preserves shape but distorts area.

There have been many critiques in the cartographic community of projections that distort the area of the poles. For example, the Mercator and Sphere van Der Grinten projections vastly exaggerated the sizes of northern America and northern Europe. Arno Peters, the creator of the Peters Projection, opined that “the Mercator projection overvalues the white man and distorts the picture of the world to the advantage of the colonial masters of the time” (Crampton 1994). This was the justification for his new projection, which represents the size of countries more accurately and places the equator in the middle. Peters believed that the Mercator projection was eurocentric, and that “by placing the equator deep in the southern half of the map, two thirds of the available map surface were available to represent the northern half of the globe... This tactic allowed Germany... to be placed in the center of the map” (Peters 1984). He believed that the Mercator projection perpetuated a colonial view of the world.

In terms of the point of view or ideology of a map, the center point is important. For Gerardus Mercator, it was Germany. All three of the maps I produced for this assignment place West Africa in the center, which is arbitrary. I could have centered the map around the Pacific instead of the Atlantic, centering the world on eastern Asia, with North America and Western Europe on the fringes.

Crampton, Jeremy. 1994. “Cartography’s Defining Moment: The Peters Projection Controversy, 1974–1990.” *Cartographica: The International Journal for Geographic Information and Geovisualization* 31 (4): 16–32. <https://doi.org/10.3138/1821-6811-l372-345p>.

Peters, Arno. 1984. “Die Neue Kartographie (the New Cartography).” *New York, NY: Friendship Press*.