
Spatial Justice and Cartography

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Given the fact that cartography is currently on the focus of public affairs management, it becomes relevant and necessary that a journal devoted to justice-space relations issues a special edition about links between justice spatial and cartography. As we already know, throughout history cartography has not only played a central role in establishing geography as a discipline, but has also worked as a defining and constitutive element of different social, political and economic world orders, regardless of historical moments or geographical regions.

Maps have been key to imagine the universe, represent the world and its borders, as well as to construct identity and the different forms of otherness. Taking the great European metropolises as their epicenter, cartographies have enabled to imagine empires, to record them and create the socio-spatial structures necessary for their expansion and consolidation. From the very beginning, and due to their own nature, the graphical, visual or aesthetic representations of some territories contributed to define, represent, put forward and consolidate certain social relations in territory. Such representations can, of course, be approached, read, interpreted and analyzed from the relationships that have developed, which can be more or less just or unjust.

Exploring the links between cartography and spatial justice can, however, become an unmanageable task because of the extension of the field and its blurred borders. To deal with it, we will set some conceptual and methodological principles and provide a more solid and structured ground for debate. We aim to outline a field that can foster a plural and diverse problematization that helps to build an updated representation of the links to be forged between cartography and spatial justice.

First of all, we will introduce our own definition of cartography and make a distinction of three of its dimensions. 1. It is important to consider cartography as a set of social and political practices having their own interests, epistemologies and objectives. We speak of "practices" to account for the

diversity of actors, formats, media and articulations that occur around cartography. 2. We consider cartography as a discipline; it means as a systematic set of concepts, techniques, technologies, verified knowledge and methodological principles within the production of graphical and visual representations of space. Far from the idea of being unrelated to the geographical and historical contexts in which it is inserted, we encourage to think of it as a discipline that is crossed by conflicting interests, ideologies, objectives and purposes. 3. We understand cartography as an object, that's it a set of spatial representations to which we resort to as an archive which can be questioned, analyzed and read critically.

Considered along with spatial justice, these three dimensions of cartography can be approached to through different perspectives.

The first one has to do with the practices that allow us see the territorial dimension of situations like unequal access to resources and services and unequal distribution of the impacts that certain policies and processes have on particular sectors of society. Through in-situ and concrete practices, a wide variety of social actors are "contesting" and challenging the apparent objectivity and neutrality of maps to unveil the interests at stake, the situated nature of cartographic knowledge they hide and the preconceptions through which some experiences, bodies and knowledge are stigmatized.

The second dimension relates to the way some technical and technological advances allow different sectors of the population to make certain spatial representations. Genders, ages, cultural identities or social classes differences play a determinant role in those representations. This is connected to the changes suffered by cartography due to the exponential expansion in the production and use of cartographic representations and to Geographic Information Systems tools becoming popular. Technological advances are indeed configuring a displacement of the "official" places where cartography was produced from States towards other types of actors such as private companies, social organizations or the media. Thus, the increasingly widespread access to forms of cartographic production is redefining who can use the power of maps, displacing the old mechanisms of authority, legitimacy and truth contributing, therefore, to greater plurality. However, cartographic production lays the necessary technical bases for specific forms of consumption, subjectivity and sensitivity that seem to have the ability to neutralize the political power of such plurality, limiting the possibilities of broad and transversal action and thought.

The third dimension about questioning cartographies from the problematic field of spatial justice considers the procedures through which cartographies were imagined, designed and produced. We are interested in researches aimed at documenting and analyzing the ways in which maps are produced, mainly in the context of trials and public affairs. In the context of trials and public affairs, more precisely, we want to study which instances of interaction, with which types of power relations and which strategies of participation of the actors, are put in place. Also taking into account that the map is a fundamental tool in the production of space, both in urban and rural contexts, it is essential to understand more precisely how its use allows or not a more or less fair, balanced, democratic and plural use of a given territory. With an interpretative and analytical approach, we are interested in contributions that question the reasons why a map was made or that consider it as the result of a process involving several actors, interests and techniques. These different objectives determine how each representation employs cartographic language throughout the whole process, which includes creative testing with spatial data, interactive digital formats and different levels of analysis and representation. Maps as objects can also be assessed according to their interactions, that is by focusing on the circuits through which these representations move. At this point, we are particularly interested in research and case studies that show how cartographies are used as a tool for advocacy, visibility and forensic action in judicial, museography and artistic fields but also for public policies and debates on development.

We do not intend to cover the array of aspects that may involve a dialogue between cartography and spatial justice. In this issue, we wish to at least outline a roadmap for its problematization:

Guiding themes of this issue:

Axis 1. Practices that allow for visualizing, problematizing or questioning spatial injustice situations

- Cartographic experiences that promote spatial justice from different purposes and social processes.
- Experiences about cartographies development that relate to judicial processes or mass or community media.
- Problematizations of hegemonic cartographies as a tool for social justice.

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- Community cartographic processes of resistance and recovery of collective memories.

Axis 2. Cartography and spatial justice: conceptual openings and methodological innovation and socio-territorial disputes

- Disputes in the way of understanding cartography itself, especially through ontological, indigenous, queer, relational or mobility shifts.
- Conceptual developments around cartography in relation to spatial (in)justice.
- Methodological and technological innovations in using cartography against spatial injustices.
- Effects and potential uses of Geographic Information Systems at different levels.

Axis 3. Cartographies as objects, narratives and representations

- Cartographies that contributed to highlight socio-spatial injustice relations.
- Circuits in the distribution of maps at different levels.
- Analyses that highlight the performative effects of producing and disseminating certain cartographic productions.

This special edition is based on the experiences of the proposing team's members. Located in different latitudes and in different positions, these experiences combine academic fields, collaborative networks, participatory research, legal aspects and public debate. We value the process and the result, and we are driven by the goal of opening academic debate and development

Instructions for authors

Articles in French or Spanish (7,000 words maximum; bibliography and abstract included) or in English (6,000 words maximum; bibliography and abstract included) should be sent to the journal at contactjssj.org@gmail.com and to the issue coordination team (addresses below).

The journal accepts submissions of articles in English, French or Spanish.

Authors should send their complete articles to the thematic issue coordinators by March 31, 2025. Publication is expected in 2026.

Justice spatiale / Spatial Justice is a bilingual peer-reviewed journal. Articles may be based on a case study or offer a more theoretical perspective. The journal uses a double-blind review, which means that all articles are reviewed anonymously. Please follow the recommendations for authors available online on the journal website: <http://www.jssj.org/recommandations-aux-auteurs/>.

Authors who have questions about the relevance of their proposal can contact the dossier coordination team.

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