



Mapeamento cultural: enfrentando o desafio de políticas e planejamentos culturais mais participativos e pluralistas

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Resumo: A evolução do mapeamento cultural interliga a pesquisa acadêmica e artística com os contextos de políticas, planejamento e advocacia. Seus contornos metodológicos atuais foram informados por cinco trajetórias principais de mapeamento cultural: empoderamento da comunidade e contra-mapeamento, política cultural, governança municipal, mapeamento como prática artística e investigação acadêmica. Este artigo fornece uma visão geral deste campo, identifica alguns dos objetivos e questões com os quais os pesquisadores estão envolvidos atualmente e oferece perguntas e sugestões para orientar os esforços para construir conexões mais próximas com os domínios da política e do planejamento cultural.

Palavras-chave: Mapeamento cultural; Planejamentos culturais; Política participativa e pluralista.

Cultural mapping: addressing the challenge of more participative and pluralist cultural policies and planning

Abstract: The evolution of cultural mapping intertwines academic and artistic research with policy, planning, and advocacy contexts. Its current methodological contours have been informed by five main cultural mapping trajectories: community empowerment and counter-mapping, cultural policy, municipal governance, mapping as artistic practice, and academic inquiry. This article provides an overview of this field, identifies some of the objectives and issues with which researchers are currently engaging, and offers questions and suggestions to guide efforts to build closer connections with the realms of cultural policy and planning

Keywords: Cultural mapping; Cultural planning; Participatory and pluralist policies.

Introduction

The term *cultural mapping* refers to both an interdisciplinary field of research, encompassing an array of approaches used in diverse contexts as a tool and method of inquiry, organization, and presentation; and an insight-generating praxis, as a participatory planning and development tool embedded in “*communal engagement and the creation of spaces to incorporate multivocal stories*” (DUXBURY; SAPER, 2015). The evolution of cultural mapping intertwines academic and artistic research with policy, planning, and advocacy contexts. Its current methodological contours have been informed by five main cultural mapping

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trajectories: community empowerment and counter-mapping, cultural policy, municipal governance, mapping as artistic practice, and academic inquiry (see Box 1). This article provides an overview of this field, identifies some of the objectives and issues with which researchers are currently engaging, and offers questions and suggestions to guide efforts to build closer connections with the realms of cultural policy and planning.

At its core, cultural mapping is defined as “*a process of collecting, recording, analyzing and synthesizing information in order to describe the cultural resources, networks, links and patterns of usage of a given community or group*” (STEWART, 2007, p. 8). Janet Pillai (2013, p. 1) refers to cultural mapping as providing “*an integrated picture of the cultural character, significance, and workings of a place*” in order to help communities recognize, celebrate, and support cultural diversity for economic, social and regional development. Cristina Ortega Nuere and Fernando Bayón (2015) observe a dual role for cultural mapping: as a witness, providing an account of what is there, checking and recording existing practices and infrastructure, and as a tool to detect the gaps and to highlight and share the *décalage* (mismatch) between citizens wishes and the institutional planning. Overall, the emerging field emphasizes the importance of linking academic and artistic inquiry with practice-based knowledge and systems, encouraging multidirectional knowledge flows and links to addressing social and other ‘real life’ issues.

Leading approaches to cultural mapping tend to acknowledge the shifting and fragmented nature of many communities and aim to reflect and privilege pluralistic local knowledges, perceptions of importance, and ways of understanding. The maps emerging from this work do not propose to make physical spaces static, to connote ownership, or to articulate and claim territory. Instead, they aim, in various ways, to highlight the dynamic lives of places in their complexity, diversity, and richness.

Box 1. Five main trajectories informing cultural mapping practice

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| Community empowerment/counter-mapping | This trajectory includes cultural mapping in Indigenous communities and territories as well as broader community development and collective action traditions concerning counter cartographies or ‘alternative maps’; citizen cartographies and people’s atlases; and mapping for change. These counter-mapping traditions generally seek to incorporate alternative knowledges and alternative senses of space and place into mapping processes. The goal of these types of cultural maps is not only to oppose dominant perspectives but, potentially, to build bridges to them as well (CRAWHALL, 2007). These foundations have propelled practices of cultural mapping in contexts of uneven power relations and in the service of articulating marginalized voices and perspectives in society. |
| Cultural policy | Influenced by these community-empowerment traditions, in a report for UNESCO, Tony Bennett and Colin Mercer (1997) identified cultural mapping as a key vector for improving international cooperation in cultural policy research. Cultural mapping, with its incorporation of both qualitative and quantitative mapping of cultural resources, values, and uses, was seen as a catalyst and vehicle for bringing together the academic, community, industry, and government sectors. Since that time, two avenues of work have developed from this: 1) growing attention to defining and mapping the presence and development of cultural and creative sectors (see REDAELLI, 2015); and 2) more holistic inquiries about local culture and place development. |
| Cultural mapping and municipal governance | As cultural planning has become more established in local governments and as culture has become more integrated within broader strategic development and planning initiatives, there has been growing pressure to identify, quantify, and geographically locate cultural assets (such as facilities, organizations, public art, heritage, and so forth) so that they can be considered in multi-sectoral decision-making and planning contexts. This activity has been propelled, on one hand, by rising attention to place promotion in the context of tourism and the (often related) attraction of investors and skilled workers. On the other hand, it also has included participative initiatives regarding community development and the improvement of quality of life in particular neighbourhoods or other target areas. Altogether, these considerations have given rise to a municipal cultural mapping framework with three-fold purposes: to build a knowledge base, to mobilize community collaboration, and to strategize or make decisions. |
| Artistic approaches to cultural mapping | Mapping has long informed the work of artists, particularly those involved in public works and socially engaged art practices. A wide variety of artists internationally have demonstrated critical and creative interest in maps, mapping, relational aesthetics, issues of urbanization, and social engagement – and have participated extensively in cultural mapping initiatives. The role of artists and the arts as agents for enhancing community self-knowledge and sustainable community development has emerged as a significant area of research interest and artistic practice |
| Academic inquiry | The so-called ‘spatial turn’ has influenced almost every area of academic work, and the early postmodern preoccupation with space, place, and spatiality laid the groundwork for the practice of contemporary cultural mapping. Currents of academic inquiry closely tied to mapping and map production also informs current theoretical approaches and practices. We can observe a flip from inquiry into ‘the cultural nature or embeddedness of maps’ to ‘maps as agents of cultural inquiry’, propelled and influenced by a variety of academic discourses and critiques, including those about the subjectivity of map-making, the use of maps to better understand human-environment relations, the nature of space, place as a contested site of representation, and map-making as both symbolic and social action. |

Adapted from: Duxbury, Garrett-Petts, and McLennan (2015)

As a practice that is taken up within planning systems as well as independently by activist-residents and researchers (in support or in opposition to the official planning systems), cultural mapping is infused with political dimensions. The roots of cultural mapping includes counter-mapping traditions that give voice and articulate perspectives that are counter to mainstream views and understandings (see MESQUITA, 2013). Jack Jen Giesecking (2013, p. 723) describes this as “*putting mapping and maps in*

the hands of people to allow for different points of views and ways of understanding and increasing agency in understanding, rights, and use of spaces". In this way, cultural mapping is viewed as a mechanism to foster democratic governance, citizen-led interventions, and "*democratic responsibility in city management*" based on processes that spearhead new modes of participatory interaction with citizens and use new technologies (ORTEGA NUERE; BAYÓN, 2015, p. 9; see also NUMMI; TZOULAS, 2015; VERONNEZZI PACHECO ; CARVALHO, 2015).

Mapping can be used to define and structure, to interrogate and probe, to challenge, and to imagine possibilities and alternatives. For example, the articles in a recent special double issue of the journal *Culture and Local Governance* on "*Cultural Mapping in Planning and Development Contexts*" demonstrated how cultural mapping projects are addressing a wide variety of objectives, for example:

- to recognize, articulate, and valorize the cultural aspects of a communities' collective quality of life and well-being;
- to define the spaces and dynamics linked to environments of conviviality and vibrancy or to those of unpleasantness, fear, or conflict;
- to identify locations of creative activity and inspiration;
- to explore the multilayered meaningfulness of shared urban spaces; and
- to interpret the tangible and intangible effects of the reorganization and repurposing of urban space (DUXBURY, 2015, n.p.).

As the aims and contexts of cultural mapping projects diversify, the limitations of 'traditional' cultural mapping approaches are becoming more apparent, fuelling both conceptual and pragmatic questions and initiatives to address and refine them. Danielle Deveau and Abby Goodrum (2015) outline a range of issues, including oversimplified definitions derived from categorizations which do not adequately capture complex activities, events, and spaces; the applicability of 'big city' categories that may misrepresent 'cultural vitality' in smaller places; the invisibility of some cultural activities; and the dilemma that some cultural activities are not conducive to mapping, such as festivals or events that move locations, or 'virtual' work. Questions around what counts as culture come to the fore when cultural mapping research interventions are undertaken in places not usually highlighted on 'official' cultural maps – such as suburban areas or marginal neighbourhoods.

For example, the limitations of a traditional 'top-down' cultural mapping approach (focusing on tangible cultural assets) became evident during a pilot project to closely map the cultural features of a marginal neighbourhood in a Canadian city that was not labeled as containing cultural assets. The pilot project showed that cultural mapping projects – "*particularly those that are framed by a pre-defined template for categorizing cultural resources with heavy emphasis on tangible cultural resources – can grossly understate the level of cultural activity in a neighbourhood*" (DICK, 2015, p. 86-87). The experience has forced the City's cultural mapping team to rethink the way culture is defined and categorized, and to place a greater emphasis on "*community-driven approaches to neighbourhood cultural mapping that recognize the importance of intangible cultural resources*" (DICK, 2015, p. 95).

In both research and policy/praxis contexts, the field is grappling with the limitations of traditional cultural mapping approaches, including the conceptualization of culture not only as a factor of economic dynamism, local identity promotion, and cultural policy, but more deeply, revealing the multifaceted ways that culture is embedded in, shaped, and produced out of relationships among people, place, and meaning.

Within this broader context, a focus of many research efforts and artistic interventions is how to integrate intangible cultural assets and aspects within cultural mapping processes and in resultant maps.

Bridging tangible and intangible cultural aspects

The current emphasis on both the tangible *and* intangible dimensions of culture represents an important moment in the development of cultural mapping as a method and field of interdisciplinary inquiry. Tangible cultural assets are most easily quantified (for example, physical spaces, cultural organizations, public forms of promotion and self-representation, public art, cultural industries, natural and cultural heritage, architecture, people, artifacts, and other material resources) while *intangible* cultural assets are more qualitative in nature (for example, values and norms, beliefs and philosophies, language, community narratives, histories and memories, relationships, rituals, traditions, identities, and shared sense of place). Together both dimensions of culture help define communities (and help communities define themselves) in terms of cultural identity, vitality, sense of place, and quality of life.

Work focusing on cultural intangibles aims to articulate the ways in which meanings and values may be grounded in specific places and embodied experiences, and to demonstrate how they are key to understanding a place and how it is meaningful to its residents and visitors (LONGLEY; DUXBURY, 2016). This research focuses on mapping the intangibilities of a place, those elements that are not easily counted or quantified (e.g., stories, histories, etc.), those aspects that provide a ‘sense of place’ and identity to specific locales. As Ortega Nuere and Bayón (2015, p. 11) highlight, cultural mapping is “*an unbeatable tactic to make the intangible visible and valuable*” – cultural mapping can register the invisible, what is not there, what is absent, lacking, and what is proven and asserted. Cultural mapping can reveal the indirect and intangible effects of processes on citizens, highlight “*how urban transformation has very diverse effects and meanings that are silenced*” (ORTEGA NUERE; BAYÓN, 2015, p. 18-20), and suggest “*the blind points in awareness of ordinary life that mark urban transformations*”. Aligned with this perspective, Soledad Balerdi’s (2015, p. 158) research, for example, is set in the context of contemporary attempts to reverse historic patterns of ‘invisibilizing’ indigenous populations, drawing attention to “*the historicity of the processes of visibility and invisibility of the various social groups in national identity formation*”.

Cultural mapping is a methodology that can also support an *interpretation* of space. At both individual and collective levels, it is a means to locate yourself in the world “*physically, culturally, and psychologically*” as well as politically (VERONNEZZI PACHECO; CARVALHO, 2015, p. 119). Mapping processes provide ways to interact creatively with urban reality, to uncover and articulate diverse perspectives, and to generate unique meanings and value that can be shared (ORTEGA NUERE; BAYÓN, 2015; see also SAPER; DUXBURY, 2015).

This work aligns, in part, with UNESCO’s work on intangible cultural heritage and its advocacy of cultural mapping. UNESCO’s views on cultural mapping have expanded from an initial focus on creating inventories to incorporate individual and collective interpretations of culture and how these cultural dimensions influence people’s perceptions of places. Cultural mapping is now viewed as going “*beyond*

strict cartography to include not only land, but also other cultural resources and information recorded by alternative techniques” (UNESCO – BANGKOK OFFICE, 2015).

UNESCO has shown a particular interest in cultural mapping projects conducted by indigenous communities to help revitalize and transmit cultural knowledge as well as to build community cohesion and enable better management of cultural resources (UNESCO, 2003; CRAWHALL, 2007). The process of auditing or inventorying intangible cultural resources serves, in the immediate time frame, to create “*tangible materials that help represent, explain and manage what is otherwise invisible ... [in order] to help audit what is at risk and create media to help others learn and appreciate that which was previously invisible*” (CRAWHALL, 2001: n.p.). Such projects have critiqued mainstream approaches to cultural resource management and contributed more nuanced understandings of culture as it is embodied in real places and among members of real communities, which, over time, has influenced the broader field.

For example, the Cultural Resources Audit Management (CRAM) approach developed by the South African San Institute emphasizes that the knowledge base may be fragmented with unequal access to cultural resources; values a community’s intellectual capacity and its self-defining of significant resources; and prioritizes the epistemology and cultural framework of non-dominant indigenous knowledge systems in identifying and locating “*what is of value to the community’s financial and spiritual well-being*” (CRAWHALL, 2001). Within this approach, *intangible cultural heritage* is defined broadly as

[...] that which exists intellectually in the culture. It is not a physical or tangible item. Intangible heritage includes songs, myths, beliefs, superstitions, oral poetry, as well as various forms of traditional knowledge such as ethnobotanical knowledge. For the southern Kalahari San, each tree and many other physical sites are part of their intangible heritage as their history is associated with these sites through stories, names and songs (CRAWHALL, 2001).

In turn, cultural resources are defined as that with a current application, which the community may draw upon: “Cultural resources include traditional indigenous knowledge systems, but also song, dance, knowledge of community history and experience, the ability to interpret events from a particular, culturally-informed position, etc” (CRAWHALL, 2001).

In a 2003 report for UNESCO, Peter Poole pointed out that for Indigenous peoples mapping has become a tool for recovering control of lost territory, negotiating access rights to traditional resources, or defending recognized territories against indiscriminate resource extraction. Known as tenure mapping, such maps are “generated in the course of conversations within communities and travel over the territory” and typically show local names, traditional resources, seasonal movements and activities, and special places (POOLE, 2003 p. 13). Poole views these tenure maps as cultural maps. He argues that the only distinction between tenure and cultural maps is in the way they are used: the purpose of tenure maps is to focus on cultural connections that can be placed on a map to emphatically and precisely illustrate the historic and cultural linkages between indigenous peoples and their ancestral territories, while cultural mapping is focused on cultural vitalization.

Along these lines, initiatives to map intangible knowledges, spaces, cultures, and practices not only aim to document and preserve this information but also to catalyze and propel place-embedded cultural traditions and knowledges into the future. As the Amazon Conservation Team’s manual on the Methodology of Collaborative Cultural Mapping (2008, p. 4) notes, “mapping, managing, and protecting”

are the three intrinsically connected processes required to safeguard the environment and strengthen culture. Each of these processes takes form through community leadership, collective discussion, and strategic collaboration, leading to a better foundation from which to act: “When a community is able to systematically articulate and represent its knowledge of its lands, it gains the necessary tools to establish laws, manage productive systems, implement protection methodologies and improve its quality of life”.

From a Canadian perspective, M. Sharon Jeannotte (2016) links citizen-based community story-telling initiatives, which aimed to uncover the intangible cultural dimensions of their communities, to contemporary research investigating the inclusion of cultural values and assets within an ‘ecosystem services’ framework (see CHAN et al. 2012, p. 41). She suggests that local sustainable development tends to be more closely tied to intangible cultural assets than tangible assets, and recommends that cultural mapping is understood as a “first step in a longer journey toward cultural sustainability”.

Cultural mapping in cultural policy and planning

How can cultural mapping become a more integrated part of cultural policy and planning, and embedded within broader policy and planning processes? This question requires us to consider two ‘ideal types’ of cultural mapping projects. As examined by Raquel Freitas in the article, “Cultural Mapping as a Development Tool” (2016), one can distinguish between instrumental, utilitarian approaches in line with “cultural industry intelligence,” and humanistic, integrated approaches in line with what has been developing as the conceptual and applied field of cultural mapping. Freitas (2016, p. 10) highlights the challenges of incorporating the latter approach, characterized by qualitative and intangible aspects, into “the more tangible and utilitarian needs of public policy planning”.

From a cultural policy or cultural planning perspective, most cultural mapping projects still tend to take an ‘inventory approach’, developing an accounting of tangible cultural assets, heritage resources, cultural venues, and arts and cultural organizations, which provides information from which to identify relationships, clusters, and gaps, and to plan and act from this knowledge base. These processes prove to be valuable in a number of ways. The process of mapping tends to reveal unexpected resources, builds new knowledge, articulates alternative perspectives, and can foster cross-sectoral connections. These cultural mapping projects can serve as an advocacy tool that can bring together cultural professionals, civil society, and government (ESSAADANI, 2015); provide a collaborative space for users, planners, managers, and researchers in the field of culture to work together (ATTARD, 2015); and can point to themes and areas requiring additional policy attention (KESSAB, 2015).

For example, as a result of growing interest from governments and civil society in the Maghreb region of northern Africa, a set of cultural maps were launched by establishing inventories of cultural sector actors and assets in order to better target specific needs of citizens and assist in the design of policy. The maps helped identify regional cultural disparities and highlighted where enhanced protection and promotion of the diversity of cultural expressions in the region was needed, relating to both tangible and intangible cultural heritage (KESSAB, 2015). Within Europe, a few cultural mapping projects have aimed to forecast future locations of creative economy ‘hotspots’ based on mapping emerging creative

entrepreneurial clusters, which valuably complements traditional mapping of 'tourist attracting' cultural assets and institutions such as historic museums and major art galleries (SACCO, 2015).

In many cities we can also observe neighbourhood-focused participative cultural mapping projects exploring memories, cultural and other assets, issues, and aspirations of residents. In these projects, cultural mapping forms a conversational platform and meeting place, enabled through various face-to-face workshops as well as crowdsourcing online platforms. The projects can facilitate direct involvement of residents and other site users in informational gathering, discussions, and decisions regarding the development of their locale. Cultural mapping can create opportunities for dialogue between a community and local authorities, offering "diverse sources of information [that] can overcome the limitations of expert opinions" (BETTENCOURT; CASTRO, 2015, p. 28). It can provide information that does not represent a 'final answer' or 'end result' but must be seen, instead, as "discussion openers" that open up new perspectives on mapping results and local development (NUMMI; TZOULAS, 2015, p. 172; see also PILLAI, 2015).

As the nature of the knowledge collected through these types of cultural mapping projects deepens, and as community-engagement becomes more central to the creation of cultural maps, public questions and expectations about what will happen with the insights and knowledge created and how they will be used are likely to become more prominent. The situation highlights two issues. First, a methodological concern: how to incorporate qualitative, complex, community-based inquiry and findings in policy and planning processes. Second, a more political concern: how to ensure policy, planning, and political processes take up and consider the findings.

The first issue raises a series of questions: How can cultural policy engage with ambiguity, emergent design, sensuality, intensity, and subjectivity? What cultural values – what "embodied, ephemeral, transitory, tactile, and affective elements" (LONGLEY; DUXBURY, 2016, p. 4) – go 'beneath the radar' of urban planning? Can intangible cultural practices and knowledge be turned into indicators, making them more tangible and more 'standardizable' elements that can be used for policy and planning purposes? How does one address the danger that the process of 'capturing' the knowledge, the stories, the memories, might 'fossilize' the shared knowledge and experiences?

While capturing and preserving such information is typically a significant part of the goals of cultural mapping initiatives, so is keeping the information collected 'vital'. This points to the need for serious consideration of active uses, the dynamics that are revealed, and layered possibilities of interpretation, reinterpretation, translation, reuse, and renewal. From this perspective, cultural policy and planning processes need to widen their scope to be able to incorporate, in different ways, the more intangible aspects of place-specific cultural meanings, characterized by pluralism and diversity with multiple layers of knowledge, experiences, storylines, and potentially conflictual memories. Towards this end, researchers and practitioners might work towards developing innovative ways of organizing, packaging, and communicating this information so that it can be brought into planning and other collective processes. In examining this issue further, the experiences of indigenous (and other) communities using cultural mapping for cultural revitalization aims may prove insightful, with particular attention to the multiple values and actions enabled through iterative approaches to mapping, analysis, interpretation, planning, and collective action.

The second issue raised is the need to add a ‘formal’ political dimension to cultural mapping initiatives that are intended to inform planning and policy. Cultural mapping is not yet integrated and regularized within planning processes (EVANS, 2015). If culture is to be a more integrated part of urban and community planning and development processes, cultural mapping projects must be integrated into more regularized systems, with direct links between mapping and planning/decision-making processes (HÄYRYNEN, 2015; see also ALLEGRETTI et al., 2014). Participatory projects raise expectations in the local community about future development, and if participation has no concrete effect, “a disillusionment concerning participation and collaborative planning may follow..., undermining rather than serving the goal of active citizenship and ultimately failing to mitigate marginalization” (HÄYRYNEN, 2015, p. 113). Advancing on this front requires further work on how to integrate the tools of cultural mapping and of bottom-up thinking into top-down administratively driven planning systems, supported by comparative research on pilot cultural mapping initiatives that are informing local planning (e.g., NUMMI; TZOULAS, 2015). Insights from experiences in other domain areas using mapping techniques for community engagement, planning, and decision-making would also be valuable (e.g., ROBINSON et al., 2016). Complementing this, more discussions and communications with politicians, planners, and other policy decision-makers on the benefits of participative cultural mapping approaches would be valuable.

In closing this section, I would also like to highlight a temporal issue. Cultural mapping largely continues to be viewed and implemented as ‘one-time’ projects. In a societal context where data to understand longitudinal changes and citizen-based monitoring is valued, it would seem that monitoring cultural changes and continuities over time would be a necessary dimension to informing cultural policy and planning. And if we view culture as encompassing an intrinsically dynamic, multi-layered, and complex array of resources, infrastructures, actions, relationships, expressions, knowledges, memories, and potentialities in our cities and regions, a multi-dimensional and dynamic approach to understanding its shapes and changes seems essential. In short, cultural mapping projects would gain value through continuity over time. Such a practice should be linked to the integration of cultural mapping within long-term research programmes as well as within policymaking and planning processes, both of which are still very rare.

In closing: Evolving methodologies

With the adoption of cultural mapping as an emerging methodology within a variety of research areas, reflecting the spatial turn of many disciplines in recent years, methodological approaches to cultural mapping are expanding. Researchers are intersplicing theories and methodologies from multiple disciplines to investigate and articulate the cultures and meanings of specific places to the people who live there. Interest in ‘making the intangible visible’ is heightening the importance of “drawing on cultural research traditions that are primarily qualitative in nature and, in some cases, drawing on ethnographic and artistic traditions of inquiry” (DUXBURY; GARRETT-PETTS; MACLENNAN, 2015, p. 18). Kimberly Powell’s (2010, p. 539) student mapping projects in Panama City, for example, argue for the unique contribution of mapping as a visual, qualitative method of inquiry, “particularly in the ways that contemporary aesthetics of mapping can be used to evoke the lived experience of social, cultural, and political issues related to place”. Diverse artistic and ‘deep mapping’ approaches are creating a “complex spectrum that in turn reveals unexpected

articulations” and thus provide and inspire new perspectives on particular places (JOHNSON, 2015).

The breadth of this experimentation serves as a rich ground for advancing research methodologies and theories. New methodological approaches are being invented, many innovating “new ‘mash-ups’ of approaches to research, analysis, documentation, interpretation, and communication to multiple publics” (LONGLEY; DUXBURY, 2016, p. 6; see also RADOVIĆ, 2016). Such experimental methods of inquiry are leading the emerging field to rethink the relationship between culture and mapping “away from the literal and geographic, towards inquiries into alternative representations of human-place relations and the ideas we use to mark and navigate” (DUXBURY; SAPER, 2015). However, the wide range of approaches also brings challenges in embracing an understanding of the ‘whole’ of the field, which may seem a bit too multifaceted, with interpretations of mapping and representation going far beyond literal geographic representations of physical contexts (see, e.g., SAPER; DUXBURY, 2015).

Going ‘back to basics’, cultural mapping can provide a clear organizing structure to hold together hybrid modes of information, and thus holds great potential as a bridging methodology for interdisciplinary projects. The map itself can embed spatial and chronological information, description, narrative, sound, moving and still images, quantitative and qualitative data through a visual interface that carries affective and stylistic qualities as well as ‘basic’ information (LONGLEY; DUXBURY, 2016). The processes through which many cultural maps are created are community-engaged and participative and are sensitive to multiple ways of knowing, experiencing, and articulating the pluralist cultural meanings of specific places. They aim, in various ways, to highlight the dynamic lives of places in their complexity, diversity, and richness.

Yet most cultural mapping projects tend to pay more attention to the processes of creating and developing the cultural maps, rather than the uses and audiences for the maps that may follow. There are some signs that this may now be shifting, with some projects highlighting the importance of giving greater consideration to the audiences and use-contexts of the knowledge developed and articulated through cultural mapping products, and to the ways in which these uses might be built into the overall creation/development processes (see, e.g., ERÄRANTA et al., 2016). This is a bridge that needs to be strengthened. While acknowledging the importance of a wide scope for experimentation and ‘pure’ research, the evolution of cultural mapping as a field will also benefit from continuing to intertwine academic and artistic research with policy, planning, and advocacy contexts.

As Graeme Evans (2015) and others have observed, cultural mapping is not yet integrated and regularized within planning processes, and cultural mapping projects largely exist on the margins of these processes as one-time special initiatives. Efforts to address this situation should explore find ways to better integrate these participative knowledge-development and articulation processes – with their complex, layered, quantitative and qualitative findings, and community-based insights and interpretations – within policy and planning processes and linked to political decision-making processes. In turn, integrating participative cultural mapping approaches meaningfully into cultural and community planning and policy processes will enable citizens to collaboratively co-construct maps that can serve as the scaffolding for local knowledge-development and a deeper understanding of place, and the foundations for collective planning and action.

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