
Call for papers:

Territories of Struggle and Spatial Justice

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The aim of this issue of *Justice Spatiale/Spatial Justice* is to approach collective action in terms of the different spatialities that it employs and deploys. It focuses in particular on collective action to promote greater justice. It seeks to understand how a space—in its material, symbolic, social and political dimensions—is also produced by forms of collective action, whether informal or in the process of institutionalization, whether autonomous or hybridized by interactions with public authorities. Collective action is understood here in the broad sense of “contentious politics” as defined by Douglas McAdam et al. (1996), and in terms of its capacity to transform territory(ies) and their government(s) through public policies.

By adopting this focus on the geography of collective action, we are pursuing a line of thought that is becoming increasingly established in the scientific literature (Auyero, 2005; Ripoll, 2008; Mahoudeau, 2016). This field first took shape in English language geography (Miller, 2000; Miller and Martin, 2000) and through the sociology of social movements associated with space (Mathieu, 2012; Nez, 2016; Borrás et al, 2018) and activism (Pailloux and Ripoll, 2019). A growing number of books and journal issues now seek to explore these “particular forms of collective action” (Rui, 2010) through their spatial dimension. More specifically, the question is how these actions produce territory. This call emanates from a French language perspective that is partly marked by a historical distinction between the public and private spheres. It invites us to reflect on how collective action contributes to shifting the lines of demarcation or increasing the porosity between public and private, on the one hand, and informal and institutional, on the other. We invite authors to observe this “blurring” through its territorial dimensions. Collective action “shifts the lines” of the relationship between the public and private, institutional and citizen spheres, and the spatial impact of these shifts. Of course, in many cultural areas, this porosity between the public and private spheres as instantiated, for example, in the governance of public spaces or the

delegation of public service roles or “community” programs, is no longer in question. We invite authors to focus on the disturbance introduced in these already porous spatialities between private and public by the initiation of forms of justice-related collective action with social justice goals. The aim is to see how they contribute to transformations of space, for example in the emergence of new places, in the transformation of networks, in the symbolic requalification of new spaces, or in new forms of territorial governance.

In order to approach territorial transformations through the lens of collective action, we suggest that the authors employ the notion of informality. This notion allows us to analyze “unofficial” modes of government, negotiations, and the “black box” of public policies, as well as to take into account forms of collective action that are categorized as illegal, “subaltern”, or “infra-political”. In the focus on spatial justice, forms of collective action raise questions about the normative order and the boundaries between the legal and illegal, the formal and informal. Moreover, their modes of action frequently combine practices in which legal constraints are deeply embedded, with other, more conflictual, modes that may be illegal or, more often, in a grey zone between the two (Yiftachel, 2009). These collective actions can emerge from activist movements, from “visible” struggles, in specific moments, as well as over the long term in everyday events, coming together coherently and concertedly to acquire new legitimacy for territorial transformation (Didier and Philifert, 2019). In this exploration, the aim should be to employ cross-cutting approaches that break down the dichotomy between North and South, approaches notably initiated by subaltern urbanism (Roy, 2005, p. 155) in the context of the Global South, and the work initiated later by the Inverses research group (2016) in the French-language literature. The aim of this call for papers is therefore to explore the extent to which territory, as both the medium and the target of forms of collective action, is profoundly shaped by the intersection of informal and institutional dynamics. Informality and institutionalization are understood here as non-exclusive, highly porous and usually hybrid notions (McFarlane, 2012). By examining, in particular, how these draw upon competing registers of justice and the general interest (see Issue 12 of the journal JSSJ), it will be relevant to cast light on the plural, ordinary and negotiated dimension that influences the making of territories (Bayat, 2009).

With this issue, our aim is to question the territorial dimension of collective action. For French speakers, the notion of territory—rather than space—offers a way to analyze issues of power and domination by emphasising the existence of power projected onto space (Faure and Négrier, 2020), instantiated for example by the power of public authorities in the case of urban projects. Territory can therefore be understood as a “produced and contested tool of political praxis” (Ince, 2012, p. 1646)

and territoriality as the spatial expression of power (Storey, 2020). The territory is thus a socialized geographical space, constructed by practices and representations, and endowed with historical depth, a space in which material, social, symbolic, identitarian and political dimensions combine (Bonnemaison and Cambrezy, 1997; Debarbieux, 1995; Di Méo, 1993). This term, which is widespread in the French-language literature, sometimes equates to “place” in English (Debarbieux, 1999; Massey, 1993; Harvey, 1989), and sometimes to “territory”, a term that has recently been adopted in English language scholarship because of the multiplicity of spatialities that it is able to address (Jackman et al., 2020). We invite contributing authors to tackle this proposal explicitly from their own academic, cultural and linguistic perspectives, in order to broaden the approach to the different spatial dimensions that can be encompassed (places, networks, lived spaces, symbolic spaces, etc.) and to the different contexts of knowledge production. These approaches are, moreover, of particular interest in the light of the rescaling (Brenner, 2004) of state action, especially in the context of the “roll-out” of neoliberalized state forms since the 1990s, as described by Jamie Peck and Adam Tickell (2002). By proposing this territorial approach, this call also seeks to align itself with—and to pursue—previous studies of the evolution of social movements and the role of territory within them. Despite the great diversity of these movements (Scott, 1985; Fautras, 2015), we identify a commonality of demands, which in many cases support the hypothesis of a “hyperlocalization of the social question” (Fourcaut, 2002): greater social justice, a democratization of local politics, a critique of state and technocratic action—including in authoritarian contexts (Geoffray, 2011)—in particular with respect to planning policies, an aspiration to protect the environment, increased attention to everyday uses and the living environment. More recently, the territorialization of social movements has been manifested through the informal occupation of city squares (Tahrir Square in Cairo, Puerta Del Sol Square in Madrid, Place de la République in Paris, Taksim Square in Istanbul, etc.) and of symbolic spaces in rural or peri-urban areas (traffic circles).

The papers should therefore offer analyses that focus on collective actions that are anchored within struggles against forms of injustice, and explore their territorial component. In particular, they should explore how the tensions and interchanges between informality and institutionalization are expressed in these protest dynamics. The injustices targeted by collective protest can be of various kinds: spatialized inequalities, deprivation of access to a space, spatially expressed domination, lack of redistribution or recognition in the relationship to the territory (Young, 1990).

Three proposals for linking territory, collective action and justice are thus suggested.

1. Collective action and territorial dynamics: the interface between public powers and mobilizations

The territory as a living space and an area within which powers are exercised (Raffestin, 1980) is, of course, a locus of multiple domination issues. It can refer, for example, to a frame for the expression of a national community, or simply to the spaces of everyday life (Scott, 1985): the street, the neighbourhood, the village or the city, for example, constitute different scales of belonging that generate movements and struggles as forms of collective action organized around opposition to power exercised by an institution (public or private). In addition to this scalar dimension, which depends on embeddedness, belonging, attachments or identities, the territory can also be approached thematically, in a way justifying its construction as an object—rather than simply the spatial medium—of struggle. For example, the objective of the occupation of the Notre-Dame-des-Landes ZAD (Zone to Defend) was to safeguard cultivable and cultivated land, and hence to defend both the agricultural activities and the people living on that land. Similarly, some movements against gentrification mechanisms, such as those in Poble Sec in Barcelona or Jackson Heights in New York, claim to be acting in protection of mixed and historically welcoming territories. This informal construction of the territory as an object of collective action emerges in response to the transformations—institutional or otherwise—perpetrated on it, which are the vehicles of forms of injustice that collective action seeks to oppose. Authors are thus invited to reflect on the constructed dimension of the territory as an object of struggle. Papers may also examine how collective action generates territorial dynamics at the interface between public authorities and civil society.

2. The places of collective action: spaces of proximity and relational spaces

Struggles relating to urban or infrastructure projects often originate in acquaintanceship networks, which can be established at the scale of a neighbourhood, a population centre, or an informal entity. As McAdam (1982) has shown, proximity networks and pre-existing communities play an essential role in triggering social movements (Lichterman, 1996). Affective registers and interpersonal emotions are also sources of individual and collective engagement (Traïni, 2015; Dechézelles and Olive, 2016), and civil society organizations can construct territorialized social networks (Vermeersch, 2006) whose informality resembles a mode of government. Authors are therefore invited to explore how the bonds between the members of the movements studied form within a territory, where they operate, and at what scale(s).

By focusing on the networks of actors in these collective movements, authors will be able to propose an analysis of collective actions that focuses on the relational dimension of the places where they take shape.

3. A geographical reading of the places of collective action, between formal and informal

More pragmatically, through the spatial practices resulting from these collective actions, a specific geography emerges, a hybrid of public and private spaces, “official” institutional places, and more informal “everyday” meeting places. Moreover, this perspective is not necessarily restricted to insurgent urbanism (Hou, 2010; Maziviero, 2016) but can explore the extent to which places described as private can be the vehicles of collective action, to the point of becoming a condition, a modality of action, or even a symbol of the place as projected, imagined and symbolized by the activist movement. The territorial dimension examined here must therefore be grasped in all its complexity and depth, on the understanding that places are the product of connections between daily spatial practices, institutional rules of operation, material appropriations, or even symbolic constructions.

Instructions to authors

Authors are asked to align their contributions with one of these three threads. The call is open to authors from disciplines other than geography (urbanism, anthropology, political science, history, sociology...) provided that the territorial question is central to the approach proposed. Proposals that draw on international case studies are also welcome. It is suggested that authors present contributions based on empirical work informed by a clearly stated theoretical framework.

Justice Spatiale / Spatial Justice is a bilingual peer-reviewed journal. Articles can be submitted in French or English. Papers may be based on a case study or offer a more theoretical perspective. The journal uses double-blind review and all articles will be assessed by two anonymous reviewers. Articles sent in English should be limited to a maximum of 6,000 words including bibliography. Please follow the JSSJ article template available online at <http://www.jssj.org/recommandations-aux-auteurs/>.

Contributions illustrated by visual elements (photos, maps, spatial diagrams...) are also welcome.

Authors uncertain about the relevance of their proposals can contact the individuals responsible for the topic. Authors can submit proposals for papers before

October 22, 2021. Authors should send their complete articles to the coordinators of the special issue before December 1st, 2021.

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