

Methodological Article

# Cartography as a Research Method for Work and Subjectivity Studies

## Cartografia como Método de Pesquisa para Estudos de Trabalho e Subjetividade



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### ABSTRACT

**Objective:** the study aims to present cartography as a suitable method to research work and subjectivity in administration. **Proposal:** in this article, cartography is supported by Deleuze and Guattari's concept of 'rhizome,' aligned to post-structuralism and grounded on administration studies. Finally, this study proposes the flâneur-cartographer as a cross-cutting practice in research. The use of cartography is illustrated by describing the cartographic path of a study on subjectivation processes that make up the immaterial labor of migrants and refugees in Brazil. **Conclusions:** tracking, touching, landing, attentive recognition, and, above all, the journey as a flâneur-cartographer guide the approach to the territory. Participant-observation of events-activities and interview-meeting with the various participants are simultaneous strategies to follow the processes of the territory, evidencing the research-participation or investigation-interaction, the cartographer's political role, and the ethos of trust necessary in cartography. The analysis of the jointly produced data occurs throughout the research. Keeping vigilance to scientific norms, cartography configures itself as an affective and political method to assess the relationship between work and subjectivity in existential territories of difficult access. Therefore, the method offers a social contribution, welcoming multiplicity, alterity, and mobility.

**Keywords:** cartography; research method; subjectivity; labor; migration.

### RESUMO

**Objetivo:** apresentar a cartografia como método relevante aos estudos relativos a trabalho e subjetividade na área de Administração. **Proposta:** fundamenta-se a cartografia com base no conceito de rizoma, de Deleuze e Guattari, seu alinhamento ao pós-estruturalismo, alguns estudos na Administração, bem como propõe-se o flâneur-cartógrafo como prática transversal à pesquisa. Para ilustrar o uso da cartografia, descreve-se o percurso cartográfico de uma pesquisa sobre processos de subjetivação que compõem o trabalho imaterial de migrantes e refugiados no Brasil. **Conclusões:** o rastreo, o toque, o pouso, o reconhecimento atento e, sobretudo, o percurso como flâneur-cartógrafo guiam a aproximação do território. Observação-participante de eventos-atividades e entrevista-encontro entre os diversos participantes são estratégias simultâneas para acompanhar a processualidade do território evidenciando a pesquisa-participação ou investigação-interação, o papel político do cartógrafo e o ethos de confiança necessário na cartografia. A análise dos dados produzidos em conjunto ocorre ao longo da pesquisa. Mantendo a vigilância às normas científicas, a cartografia se configura como método afetivo e político para acompanhar a relação entre trabalho e subjetividade em territórios existenciais de difícil acesso. Logo, também apresenta uma contribuição social com um quê de acolhimento da multiplicidade, alteridade e mobilidade.

**Palavras-chave:** cartografia; método de pesquisa; subjetividade; trabalho; migração.

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## INTRODUCTION

Cartography is a method that originated from geography studies, and it seeks to guide the preparation of graphic representations of space through maps, charts, and plans of physical landscapes. More recently, geography has produced social cartography, adding an interdisciplinary approach to the production of collective maps built by both professionals and the community under study. According to Rolnik (2006), cartography can be “a drawing that follows and is prepared at the same time as the landscape changes” (Rolnik, 2006, p. 23), so that psychosocial landscapes can be mapped. The author calls this phenomenon sentimental cartography or psychosocial cartography.

This perspective is based on the philosophical work of Deleuze and Guattari, especially from their work “Rhizome,” written as the introduction to volume 1 of the book *A Thousand Plateaus*, first published in 1980. Rolnik (2006), Fonseca and Kirst (2003) and Passos, Kastrup and Escóssia (2015) are leading authors in Brazil presenting a collective construction that refers to cartography as a research method to follow processes of subjectivity production “that occur from a configuration of elements, forces, or lines acting simultaneously” (Kastrup & Barros, 2015, p. 77), and that is how cartography is understood in this article. This cartography deals with matters related to life and subjectivity, something that is simultaneously singular and collective. That is why it is not watertight, is always in motion, and is characterized by being relational, by establishing relationships between the subject-participant and the environment. Because it is always ‘between,’ it aims at the process and not a result, a conclusion (Costa, 2014).

An integrative review of Brazilian literature carried out by Cintra, Mesquita, Matumoto and Fortuna (2017) reveals that cartography has primarily been practiced in the areas of health, education, and social work. Most cartographic studies contemplate formal spaces with disciplinary and standardized relationships, such as government institutions, prisons, schools, hospitals, and social networks (and other digital spaces) typical of the society of control. Some encompass connections between the composition of the subject and the world of work, approaching the area of administration, referring to specific groups, such as health professionals, teachers, flight attendants, to name a few. The critical positioning, the horizontality between researcher and object — considering that both are participants in the research —, the ethical-political commitment in defense of life, the affectation based on the difference, and the inquiries regarding the ways of experiencing the researched spaces

are characteristics common to these studies and made possible through cartography.

In administration, Weber, Grisci and Paulon (2012) stress that few studies mention the potential of cartography as a method, especially in the field of people management and work relationships, where subjectivity is an important scope of research. The authors encourage its use as an “alternative to traditional research methods, thus contributing to the production of knowledge about work in the contemporary scenario” (Weber, Grisci, & Paulon, 2012, p. 841). Although the administration has shown some openness to different epistemologies, the functionalist perspective of ‘management’ that characterizes the modern organization (Zioli, Ichikawa, & Mendes, 2021) is still mainstream and leads to methodological decals. The attempt to research how to work and organize in a way consistent with subjectivation movements requires new methodological practices that enable mapping territory transformations prioritizing the mobility of life (and, therefore, the mobility of the researcher), which is found in this cartography perspective.

Against this backdrop, this article presents cartography as a suitable method for studies related to work and subjectivity in administration. The study presents the origins and theoretical foundations of cartography, illustrating the use of the method by describing the cartographic path of an empirical study on processes of subjectivation that make up the immaterial labor of migrants and refugees in Brazil.

For the development of the research, the cartography was in constant theoretical-methodological-empirical rearrangement for the approximation and access to a research territory that favored migrants and refugees from the global south who use references from their countries of origin. This characteristic illustrates facets of immaterial labor that demand the individual’s life, their subjectivity at the heart of the (self)production process as a worker (Gorz, 2005). Therefore, a journey as a *flâneur*-cartographer took place — which proved to be a cross-cutting and significant contribution to the research — in the context of migration occurring in the city of Porto Alegre, the capital of the Brazilian state of Rio Grande do Sul. It was possible to follow an existential territory in which the subject and the research object participate jointly, relate to each other, and (co)determine each other (Alvarez & Passos, 2015). They express processes of subjectivation of the immaterial labor of these migrants and refugees. This study seeks to show the potential of cartography and encourage cartographic studies with other research subjects and their relationship with work.

The next section shows the alignment of cartography with post-structuralist thinking and studies

in administration and the theoretical tracks to practice the method. Subsequently, based on this epistemic-theoretical-methodological contribution, the article empirically exposes how the approach to the territory took place and how the strategies and procedures for cartography production were outlined in the case of migrants and refugees in Brazil. Finally, the data analysis procedures were presented, followed by reflections that point out the differentials and contributions of cartography in management research.

## POST-STRUCTURALISM, CARTOGRAPHY, AND STUDIES IN ADMINISTRATION

The meaning of cartography lies in following paths, in the implications for production processes, and connecting networks or rhizomes (Passos, Kastrup, & Escóssia, 2015). Cartography emerges as the principle of the rhizome, a philosophical concept by Deleuze and Guattari (2011), due to the lines, connections, heterogeneities, and multiplicities experienced in the reality. The rhizome, unlike the root, does not develop following an arborescent line of evolution but a logic of multiple singulars. It has several mobile centers, and it works by proximity and not by decal transfer.

The cartography offers the map that is part of the rhizome. The map has multiple entries, it “is open and connectable in all of its dimensions; it is detachable, reversible, susceptible to constant modification” (Deleuze & Guattari, 2011, p. 30). Thus, cartography differs from a decal transfer, as it “always comes back to the same,” it is a reproduction, a model, a copy (Deleuze & Guattari, 2011, p. 30). Such characteristics help understand how the territory of empirical research was accessed — it did not follow a model but the process of the field. Cartography consists of producing maps of the lines that compose relationships in a constantly moving territory.

The rhizome is not just a concept but an opening to explore elements marginalized by the dominant forms of knowledge (or elements these dominant forms did not access) (Cavalcanti, 2016). As a rhizomatic principle, cartography has “a movement in the world that is different from the classical-Cartesian one” (Pozzana, 2013, p. 335). It is as if it were a lifestyle that leads to experimentation, and therefore it is consistent with post-structuralist thinking.

Post-structuralism is a creative movement, constantly open to something new and unwilling to accept final and absolute certainties. For Williams (2017) “post-structuralism is a practice” (Williams, 2017, p. 20). It is a critical practice in embodying a network of interdisciplinary thinking, questioning the privileged status of dichotomies or binarisms (Peters, 2000). Post-

structuralist thinking may be considered a rupture, in which are observed resistances or the power to resist and work against established oppositions (Williams, 2017).

The cartography from this epistemic-theoretical-methodological perspective has gained interest, still punctual and incipient, in studies focusing on work and subjectivity that refer to the field of administration. For example, the study by Balestrin and Strey (2009) reflects on the ways of working and consuming in contemporary times, based on trade workers’ stories. The mappings reflect on small daily practices that produce certain social truths and gender nuances in a territory open to connections and developments, which make the ways of working in commerce a powerful device of subjectivation. Weber et al. (2012) present a methodological path of ongoing research that apprehends connections made in a collective blog linked to a public policy and analyzes possibilities of cooperation in the production of work and oneself. When presenting the cartography, the authors discuss their innovation in constructing knowledge in administration.

Some studies propose the analysis of organizations from the principle of the rhizome and the work of Deleuze and Guattari (Barreto, Carrieri, & Romagnoli, 2020; Cavalcanti, 2016; Grisci, 2008; Paes & Borges, 2016; Zioli et al., 2021), which reinforces the potential of using cartography for researching from this perspective in administration.

The foundations presented are intrinsically related to the objective of the empirical research that illustrates this article. They support the formulation of actions and care for the practice of cartography, as observed through the tracks presented below.

## TRACKS OF THE CARTOGRAPHIC METHOD

The cartographic method is not perceived as a closed and complete approach with general rules (Kastrup & Barros, 2015). According to Passos et al. (2015), it uses tracks as “references that contribute to maintaining an open attitude regarding the research production, calibrating the next movements along the research path” (Passos et al., 2015, p. 13). The authors suggested eight tracks, which are listed below. Before presenting them, this section introduces the proposal of a crosscutting practice in cartography: the *flâneur*-cartographer. It is necessary to advance in the cartographic construction by shedding light on the contributions of the *flâneur*-cartographer, as the cartographer operates in the logics of multiplicity, alterity, and mobility necessary to go around the territory during the research.

**Flâneur-cartographer as a crosscutting practice applied to the cartographic tracks** – Romero and Zamora (2016) link the *flâneur* (stroller) with the cartographer, arguing that the cartographer's body is central to the methodology of cartography in subjectivity studies. Jacques (2012) explains that the figure of the *flâneur*, present in the works of Charles Baudelaire and Walter Benjamin, refers to a practice of urban wandering. The *flâneurs* move according to the city's rhythm without protecting themselves from experiences of shock with the other. They experience alterity, let themselves be fascinated, but, at the same time, they react — they demonstrate critical power. Jacques (2012) emphasizes that the *flâneur* has an ethnographical sensibility that, in this article, is also understood as cartographic. The *flâneur's* goal is to show those who inhabit the city and report their experiences in narratives, creating critical communication. In the cartographic movement, the researcher moves in rhizomatic lines, producing agency of multiplicities that change nature and create new connections as they affect the cartographer. Therefore, the *flâneur*-cartographer's path crosscuts all cartographic work and, therefore, the practice potentializes the cartography tracks.

**Track 1 — Cartography as a method of research-participation or investigation-interaction** – For Passos and Barros (2015a), the cartographer does not follow a prescriptive work with previously established rules and goals. However, it is necessary to guide the research path in a process in which the researcher, object, and subjects interact and affect the investigation. There is an inseparability between research and intervention. For the authors, research is intervention. Therefore, both reality and the researcher are transformed. Although Passos and Barros (2015a) use the term 'research-intervention,' the term 'research-participation' or 'investigation-interaction' is chosen as it translates more appropriately and fairly both the statement of this track and the practice in the territory. It should be noted that research participation and interaction require the movement of the researcher-participant and the subject-participant. Therefore, the movement occurs because the *flâneur*-cartographer walks with the other research participants.

**Track 2 — Attention during the cartographer's work** – For Kastrup (2015), cartography has no data collection. Instead, data production requires the cartographer's free-flowing attention to scenes, discourses, signs, and circulating forces that form processes. The author defines four gestures of cartographic attention: tracking, touching, landing, and attentive recognition. Tracking is a form of "field examination" (Kastrup, 2015, p. 40), where goals vary continuously as the territory is still unknown. Touching is a first glimpse that captures the cartographer's attention. Landing refers to observing

the field as if using a zoom tool, (re)defining the research territory. Finally, attentive recognition is achieved by walking through the field, observing what happens in the territory. Although there may be arguments advocating the cartographer's constant attention, the understanding adopted in this research goes in a different direction. The attention is not aligned with a level of rationality; it is a result of the interaction in the territory, which instigates and influences the *flâneur*-cartographer, gaining their attention throughout their stumbling and changing walk.

**Track 3 — Cartography is about following the processes — traces, steps, and footprints** – According to Barros and Kastrup (2015), in modern science, the research stages (data collection, analysis, and discussion) are carried out at different times, whereas cartographic research produces data through successive and inseparable steps. Each step is prolonged, as it carries the previous one. The cartographer enters the territory in the middle of the process already constituted by history and aims to "draw the network of forces connected to the object or phenomenon observed" (Barros & Kastrup, 2015, p. 57). Bearing in mind the traces, steps, footprints in the *flâneur*-cartographer's path, the coproduction of knowledge occurs during the investigation-interaction with participants.

**Track 4 — Movements-functions of the device in the practice of cartography** – Kastrup and Barros (2015) reiterate that cartography does not use a research model but requires procedures embodied in devices that perform movements-functions. The authors find support in Foucault and Deleuze's idea of a device as a set of lines of visibility, enunciation, force, and subjectivation, which can include discourses, institutions, laws, and scientific statements. The movements-functions can have different natures. They can be movements of reference (it works with some regularity) and explanation (determines the lines of the ongoing process), or lead to other movements-functions (that of reality production/transformation). The *flâneur*-cartographers undergo the movements-functions of reference and explanation, changing how they observe themselves and the territory.

**Track 5 — The collective forces as a plane of cartographic experience** – According to Escóssia and Tedesco (2015), cartography looks at "the changing plane of the reality of things" (Escóssia & Tedesco, 2015, p. 92). The cartographer emphasizes a reality different from the plane of forms — also understood as the plane of organization of reality (Deleuze & Parnet, 1998), which consists of stable and defined contours as forms, objects, or subjects that are simple to be identified — in order to expand the research scope. The cartographer works toward a plane of collective forces, understood as a plane of consistencies or immanence (Deleuze & Parnet, 1998)



producing these elements (forms, objects, or subjects). Thus, it is possible to comprehend what grants power to a thought that is not reduced, that expands from leaps and (i)mobilizations, which “give the elements new relations of speed and slowness that make them ... jump from one relationship of agency to another” (Deleuze & Parnet, 1998, p. 76). The collective referred to in this case is neither the social collective (group of individuals) nor in opposition to the individual. It has to do with the relationships established between the plane of forms and the plane of forces that produce reality. Such planes build relationships of reciprocity and multiple crossings among themselves. The walk of the *flâneur*-cartographer opens paths to access such planes.

**Track 6 — Cartography as a form of dissolving the observer’s point of view – Passos and Eirado (2015)** defend the idea of dissolving the observer’s point of view. This means that the cartographer must be open to the different points of view within the same experience, avoiding perception bias. It is necessary to open paths to multiplicities, opening

“the forms of reality, increasing its cross-cutting quantum ..., placing side by side ... the form of the phenomenon and its composition lines, revealing that the lines penetrate the forms and that the forms are only arrangements of lines of forces” (Passos & Eirado, 2015, p. 110).

Allowing and surrendering to the stumbling and changing walk is a condition for the *flâneur*-cartographer to be affected in cartography production.

**Track 7 — Cartography is about inhabiting an existential territory – Alvarez and Passos (2015)** say that it is in the immersion and sharing of an existential territory that “subject and object of research relate and co-determine” (Alvarez & Passos, 2015, p. 31). The authors rely on Deleuze and Guattari’s concept of territory — which values expressiveness, rhythmic characters, and melodic landscapes. “Characters populate landscapes, and they belong to the landscape ... we are led to affirm that the ethos or the existential territory is in a constant production process” (Alvarez & Passos, 2015, p. 134). Inhabiting the territory requires the researcher to engage in constructive processes as an apprentice-cartographer, which, as argued in this study, may be related to the *flâneur* practice.

**Track 8 — For a policy of narrativity – Passos and Barros (2015b)** argue that the knowledge production in cartography occurs by taking a position that politically compromises the researcher. Politics is taken in its broad sense, a “form of human activity that, linked to power, places subjects in relation, coordinates them according to rules or norms that are not necessarily juridical and legal”

(Passos & Barros, 2015b, p. 151). The politics of narrativity is the expression of knowledge about the world and oneself, constituting a theoretical and a political problem.

After presenting the epistemic-theoretical foundations, the next section illustrates the cartographic path of an empirical study addressing the processes of subjectivation and the immaterial labor of migrants and refugees in Brazil.

## APPROACHING THE TERRITORY

**Tracking.** During my<sup>1</sup> first year as a PhD student in 2016, I sought ways of working — in courses, readings, spaces of circulation — that could lead me to themes for my thesis. It was a time of extensive international media coverage of the refugee ‘crisis.’ Images of boats full of people crossing the sea to reach Europe and individuals trying to cross the dry borders of Brazil on foot were captured in my mind. Sensitive to what was repeated in the news, I remember the feeling of indignation and impotence I felt in the face of lives being forced to leave their lands, which I already associated with the capitalist forces of globalization.

**Touching.** When walking through the streets of Porto Alegre, my attention was directed to individuals who spoke in languages that I did not know and who wore clothes or had characteristics embodied as foreigners. They were the ‘new faces’ of migration, as I once heard in a lecture, which I now associate with south-south migrations. I asked myself, then, how these people were rebuilding their lives in Brazil. Such an inquiry, still in a nebulous and very broad form, was faced as a research possibility. As a researcher, I have always been attentive to looking at individuals in intercultural contexts, so I saw in this theme a subject that the academy, especially in my area of expertise, had not approached. I searched databases for literature on the subject. The lack of studies in the field of administration called my attention to the need to shed light on this situation, especially since I started from the assumption that the insertion of refugees into the labor market is essential for them to live in another country. After establishing that the theme was worth attention in the field of administration, I asked myself what the focus should be. I noticed the predominance of discussions about precarious work, xenophobia, and racism, issues that, although offering an unadjusted panoramic view, revealed important clues allowing me to continue the process.

**Landing.** I managed to find my focus unexpectedly in 2017 when I went to a beauty salon for an eyebrow appointment, and the owner introduced me to a Syrian professional who did Egyptian hair removal. “He is Syrian, but he learned Egyptian hair removal in Egypt. He has

already been there and several other countries fleeing the war,” said the salon owner. How the service was presented to me highlighted the profitability of the refugee’s specific knowledge, consistent with the theoretical notion of immaterial labor. I decided to work on this research topic, attentive to the challenges ahead. The Syrian professional did not speak Portuguese, only Arabic, and basic English. At that moment, we exchanged just a few words in English along with gestures and looks that reflected our desire to establish a more profound communication, a situation instigated by curiosity. The Salon owner told me more about the story of the Syrian professional. The entrepreneur was part of a large community of Arab descendants in the city and offered the Syrian professional a job. In this scenario, I saw forms of work-life relationships experienced thanks to international mobility, relationships very different from those prevailing in administration studies, focused on the mobility of expatriates and global managers in multinational companies.

**Attentive recognition.** Porto Alegre is the eighth city with the highest number of migrants in Brazil (14,107) and the 17<sup>th</sup> with the highest number of asylum seekers (237), according to the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics ([Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística, 2019](#)). Despite these expressive numbers, it was unclear where to start the field research. I was looking for refugees who worked with elements related to their country of origin but initially, guided by an optical vision, I could not find them. It was necessary to take larger, more intense steps, guided by a haptic perception, as [Deleuze and Guattari \(2011\)](#) suggest. The meeting with the research participants took place after a long journey, which led me to find cartography and choose it as a research method. Cartography offered movements followed by free-floating attention ([Costa, Angeli, & Fonseca, 2015](#)) and an experience as a *flâneur*-cartographer.

**The *flâneur*-cartographer.** I realized that I had begun my practice as a *flâneur*-cartographer in 2017, when I started participating in seminars, meetings, and exhibitions organized by universities, government, and international, religious, and civil society organizations, predominantly in Porto Alegre. It is important to emphasize that my practice as a *flâneur* started during the tracking period. In the places where I circulated, I told people about my research, which yielded many recommendations for events-activities (detailed below), where I participated in making suggestions, taking part in discussions, and organizing activities. To my surprise, I was invited to coordinate the state committee on migration (promoted by the state government). I declined the invitation, explaining — as I had to do many times during the research period — that my role as a researcher-participant was mixed with that of a representative-participant of civil society. I also did a

course on immigration in a Graduate Program in Social Anthropology, where I contacted expert researchers on the subject. I followed the news in the media and pages of institutions and migrant groups on social media.

During this period, I learned about projects that assist migrants and refugees. The organization CIBAI (Italo-Brazilian Center for Assistance and Instruction to Migration) stood out as an institution responsible for leading humanitarian actions in a parish of the Catholic Church in Porto Alegre. I started volunteering at CIBAI as a Portuguese teacher for migrants and refugees from November 2017 to August 2018. I also participated, until 2019, in other activities, such as cultural tours and get-togethers, and gave lectures on the Brazilian job market, working with another volunteer.

I met many migrants and refugees of different nationalities in this space and listened to their stories. Many provoked feelings of anguish and helplessness, which at the same time mobilized me to help them in some way. As much as these individuals’ situations of extreme vulnerability are read in the news, hearing them firsthand took on a different dimension that made me reflect on my responsibility as a researcher-participant. Many saw me as someone who worked at the institution, so, at various times, I was like a mediator and spokesperson to help them understand local cultural and bureaucratic aspects, and I also shared such experiences in political and community decision-making spaces.

Becoming a *flâneur*-cartographer allowed me to observe-interact in events-activities, detect circulating forces, devices, and approach migrants and refugees. This period started in 2016 and lasted until the end of the research in 2020, although certain connections still remain, as the attentive and free-floating gaze of the cartographer inserted me into a network that keeps me active in the migration scenario.

## STRATEGIES AND PROCEDURES TO PRODUCE CARTOGRAPHY

The path as a *flâneur*-cartographer allowed the beginning of a ‘migration scenario in Porto Alegre,’ whose lines were designed when the presence of people and institutions in the events-activities was identified as recurrent. I used participant observation and interviews to monitor processes in this territory as data production strategies. Given the multiple possibilities that cartography instigates, these two techniques for data production were chosen because they enable the recording and maintenance of contact with the participant-subjects in their existential territory and are already familiar to me. However, it must

be clear that cartography does not have any technique or methodological tool as a prerequisite and that different inventive methodologies are encouraged. It is necessary to be attentive to the territory and be in the territory to mobilize what it requires in terms of research operation.

**Participant-observation** – For [Barros and Kastrup \(2015\)](#), cartography can approach ethnography by using participant observation and, from there, can inhabit an existential territory. Among multiple elements, the cartographers' hearing and visual or other perceptions guide their attention and help adjust the lens, reconfiguring the observation scope ([Kastrup, 2015](#)). The logbook gives visibility to participant observation. Moreover, daily writing offers “visibility to the process of collective construction of knowledge” ([Barros & Kastrup, 2015, p. 71](#)). According to [Barros and Passos \(2015\)](#), the logbook of a trip-intervention, or trip-interaction, when presented in the research, restores an expanded analytical text, as it prints ideas from both the researchers-participants and researched-participants.

**Interview** – For [Tedesco, Sade and Caliman \(2013\)](#), interviews in cartography must consider the life experiences or the lived experience, “which comes from the subject's reflection on their experiences and includes their reports about life stories, the narration of their emotions, motivations” and the pre-reflected experience,

referring to “the process, the dimension of co-emergence, common dimension, collective of forces, from which all representational contents come” ([Tedesco, Sade, & Caliman, 2013, p. 302](#)). The authors emphasize that language helps understand the interviewee's content and experience, which, in the context of the empirical research with migrant-participants and refugee-participants, was considered with extra attention as most of the interviews were not conducted in the participants' mother tongue. As seen below, these recommendations guided the production of data during participation in the events-activities and in the meetings and interviews.

**Events-activities and research participants** – The data production procedures are presented in three parts: (a) participant-observation of events-activities; (b) interviews with key informants; and (c) participant observation and interviews with migrants and refugees. These parts are not subsequent; they occurred simultaneously to follow the processes of the territory ([Barros & Kastrup, 2015](#)).

The first part refers to the participant-observation of the 36 events-activities that I experienced as a *flâneur*-cartographer. As an example, Table 1 details three of them, classifying them as academic (Acad), political (Pol), social (Soc), and cultural (Cult) event-activity — this classification is represented by colors in Figure 1.

**Table 1.** Trajectory as *flâneur*-cartographer in Porto Alegre 2017-2019.

Type of event	Events-Activities	Date/Hour/Place
E1 Acad	Lecture — Introduction to the topic of migrations — Selection process of [University project] 2017/1	April 29, 2017, 9 am – 12 pm Faculdade de Direito (Law School)
E5 Cult-Pol	Film exhibition — Perspectives on refugees — Organization: UNHCR in allusion to World Refugee Day	June 08-11, 2017, 7 pm – 9 pm Cineateca Casa de Cultura (Film Library)
E32 Pol	Meeting of the Municipal Committee for Assistance to Migrants, Refugees, Stateless Persons, and Victims of People Trafficking in the Municipality of Porto Alegre	August 20, 2019, 2 pm – 4 pm Porto Alegre City Hall

**Note.** Source: Elaborated by the author.

The events-activities experienced and practiced brought maturation and sensitization of how they were seen, imbued with the idea of dissolving my point of view as a researcher ([Passos & Eirado, 2015](#)). Assuming the posture of a participant-observer practicing participant-observation ([Barros & Kastrup, 2015](#)), it was possible to: (a) access devices through the movement-function of reference, explanation, and production of reality ([Kastrup & Barros, 2015](#)), such as laws, ordinances, international agreements, and institutions (public, international, religious, civil society); (b) monitor processes related to the functionality of these institutions,

interacting with their agents by repeatedly circulating in events-activities, talking during breaks, giving suggestions, teaching classes, and volunteering in the organization of events — offering concreteness to the character of what [Passos and Barros \(2015a\)](#) call intervention-research, and here it is emphasized to be understood as interaction-research; (c) build a collective plan of moving forces ([Escóssia & Tedesco, 2015](#)) by (re)meeting agents (such as key informants) and interacting with them, and by approaching, living, and interacting with migrants and refugees and their work; and

(d) produce logbooks with notes of the main perceptions related to experiences and reports of informal conversations.

The second part of the data production procedures refers to meetings with five key informants, members of religious organizations, civil society, universities, and public authorities. They were chosen for their representativeness or active participation in the events-activities that evidenced

the connections established with the migrants and refugees that caught my attention. Conversations were held focusing on their experiences of working with migration. I also asked these key informants to let me know of more migrants and refugees that adopt elements related to their countries of origin to work in Brazil, which resulted in more participants. As an example, Table 2 details information from three key informants.

**Table 2.** Key informants.

	Interviewees	Organization	Meetings		
			Place	Date	Duration
I1	Volunteers offering Portuguese lessons	CIBAI Migrações (Religious organization)	Cibai Migrações	May 24, 2018	30 min
I2	Coordination of the Migration Council	Ministry of Labor of Brazil	BRDE Auditorium	July 27, 2018	10 min
I5	Coordination of the Human Rights Commission — immigrants and indigenous populations	Porto Alegre City Hall	Porto Alegre City Hall	August 20, 2019	15 min

Note. Source: Elaborated by the author.

I emphasize that the International Organization for Migration (IOM) and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) were also considered key informants, as I held informal conversations with their representatives during the events-activities and exchanged emails that resulted in indications of official public documents.

The third part of the data production procedures included open interviews with migrants and refugees and participant-observation of their work activities in person (visits to places of work/residence and/or events-activities)

and online (social media such as Facebook, Instagram, YouTube, and WhatsApp). There was no previous script, and many of the experiences collected had already been shared and evidenced by the participant-observation due to the closeness between the researcher-participant and the other participants. This moment of the formal interview helped select important experiences from the point of view of migrants and refugees. Table 3 is an example of the data collected, presenting three of the 16 participants. They were named after rivers in their countries, alluding to flows, movements, displacement.

**Table 3.** Presentation of migrant-participants and refugee-participants.

Participant	Country of origin	Sex	Age	Marital status	Languages	Time in Brazil	Legal status (migrant/refugee)	Element related to the country used in the current work
Estère	Haiti	F	42	Single	Creole, French, English, Spanish, Portuguese	6 years and 6 months	Migrant	Language
Euphrates	Syria	M	30	Single with a child	Arabic, English, Portuguese	4 years and 5 months	Refugee	Food
Casamance	Senegal	M	42	Single with a child	Wolof, basic French, Portuguese	4 years and 6 months	Migrant	Fashion

Note. Source: Elaborated by the author.

Table 3 presents the first analyses related to demographic data, legal status in Brazil, and striking elements of life stories. The six countries of the global south from which the research participants come are Venezuela, Haiti, Syria, Senegal, Ivory Coast, and Nigeria. The elements related to their countries of origin they used in their work

are food, dance, language, fashion, music, and political-cultural representation, which expresses the plurality of elements that make up the characterization of immaterial labor by combining self-saleability with affective elements (country of origin) and political (fighting for rights in the destination country).



It was this identification of the vernacular characteristics related to their ways of eating, dressing, dancing, singing, talking, fighting for their rights, and their own refuge/migration situation as a way to monetize their work, characterized in the study as immaterial labor (Gorz, 2005), that sensitized me as a researcher during the meetings at the events-activities. Inquiring about their products and services was a starting point for me to approach them and get closer. In these first informal conversations, I felt the need for them to get to know me too. I talked about myself, my life story, my principles, and the positions that led me to my studies and the cartography I carried out. I felt that it made them more comfortable expressing themselves.

Furthermore, they were able to get to know me for my role in events-activities that were spaces of power and decision-making, always defending the right to migration and the need for collective organization, which made my political role as a cartographer evident. It was important to make this clear to them, as cartographic research does not mean neutrality. I understand that in the ethos of trust, agency relationships emerged, allowing me to follow their mobile ways of living and working while requiring mobility from me as a *flâneur*-cartographer.

The interviews took place in the participants' workplaces, study places, homes, or cafes/restaurants, according to their schedules. The average interview duration was one hour, and the interviewee chose the language used for communication. The interviews in a foreign language were translated into Portuguese (research working language), and some excerpts were grammatically corrected for better intelligibility. It is noteworthy that only certain words or expressions were kept in the mother tongues to give value to the performative function of the ways of saying, as suggested by Passos and Barros (2015b).

Furthermore, I occasionally met migrants and refugees at events-activities and/or on visits to their workplaces or homes. I observed their accounts on Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp to follow up on posts related to the development of their work-life. These face-to-face and online meetings were part of the participant-observation exercise of each participant's daily life, which led to informal conversations recorded in logbooks.

As an example, Table 4 presents three interviews and meetings with migrants and refugees, illustrating the cartography construction process.

**Table 4.** Interviews and meetings with migrant-participants and refugee-participants.

Participant	Work where the interviewee was first identified	Form of contact or who recommended	First contact	Interview				Communication through social media	Meeting with participants with informal conversation and participant observation
				Date	Place	Language	Recording		
Unare	Dancer of traditional Venezuelan dances	Uncle indication	Intermediated by Orinoco and WhatsApp	July 6, 2019	Residence of the interviewee's uncle	Spanish	52 min	Facebook WhatsApp	Visiting the uncle's residence Visit the interviewee's workplace: dance class
Falémé	Speaker about Senegal	The interviewee is a regular speaker at events on migration	Conversation during an event (E17)	August 6, 2019	Coffee shop	Portuguese	80 min	Facebook Instagram WhatsApp	E3, E4, E17, E18, E25, E27, E35 Launch of the Comoé store Coffee shop
Niger	Musician of Yoruba and African rhythms	Speech and presentation of the interviewee's work during the Africa Week	Conversation during an event (E17)	July 9, 2019	Coffee shop	Portuguese	81 min	Facebook WhatsApp YouTube	E4, E17, E18, E27, E30 Launch of the Comoé store Coffee shop

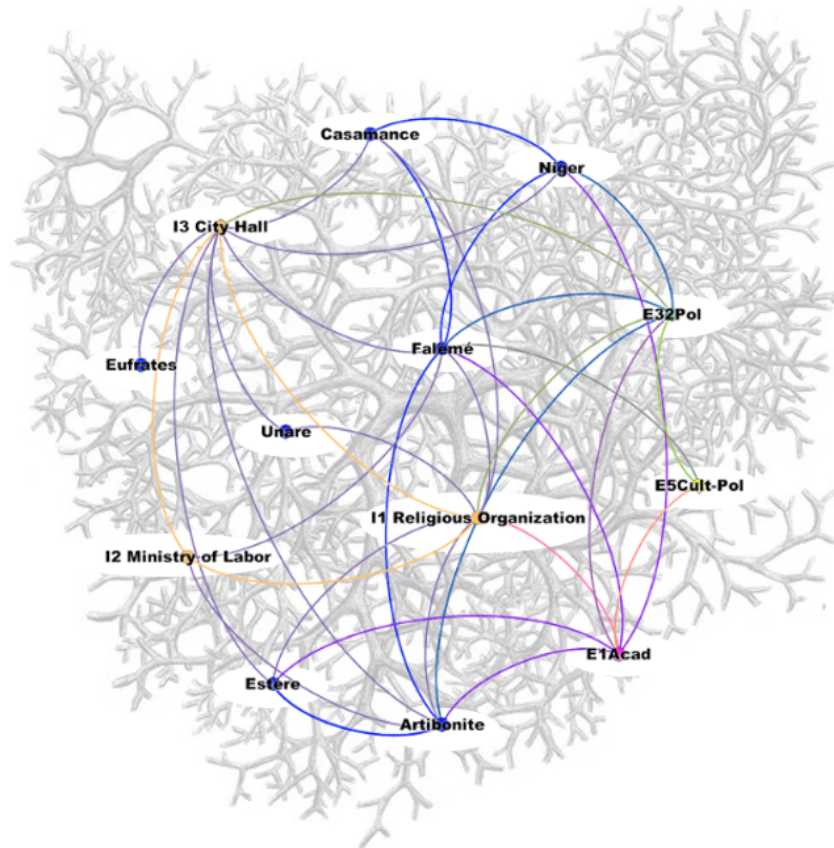
Note. Source: Elaborated by the author.

Based on the participants I identified during my trajectory as a *flâneur*-cartographer, I created a map of the researched territory. Figure 1 is an example of the map and it was built with the data presented in this article. The relationships between the three events-activities (E1, E5, E32), the three key informants (orange dots), and the seven migrant-participants and refugee-participants (blue dots) can be observed based on the lines that configure a territory-rhizome. They indicate

the formation of cooperation networks, a characteristic embodied in immaterial labor, in the trajectories of migrants and refugees. It should be noted that the plot of the lines is more closed around the key informants and the migrant Falémé due to their active participation in the events-activities and their agency relationship with most migrants and refugees. The image of a rhizome is presented in the background of Figure 1 to bring the idea that interactions are not limited to the lines presented —

as they are open and connectable in the rhizomatic logic — highlighting other possible connections, heterogeneities, and multiplicities. In the empirical study, it was possible to notice that cooperation networks form flows and

open paths to a movement of singularization through immaterial labor, which multiplies work opportunities in events, festivals, fairs, and face-to-face and online partnerships.



**Figure 1.** Illustration of the mapped research territory-rhizome.

Source: Elaborated by the author.

**Ethical aspects** – I emphasize that finding migrants or refugees who would allow me to interview them and tell their stories was not an easy task. Many do not want to expose themselves for fear of involving themselves or their families in risky situations. An example that served as a thermometer was the episode at an event organized by CIBAI Migrações (E14). Here is an excerpt from the logbook narrating this occasion: “I was talking to so-and-so, my student who is a refugee, and in the middle of the conversation, the opportunity arose to tell him about my research and invite him to participate. He is a cheerful, outgoing, and participative student in classes, but he completely changed his facial and body expression when I invited him. His face paled, and his body became agitated. In a trembling voice, he told me that once a journalist had put his data on the internet, but he couldn’t appear, so he had to insist that she delete what she had published. I

explained that, unlike the previous situation, this would be academic research that would value the confidentiality of the interviewees’ identities. But he showed fear. Even so, he touched my shoulder and said that, if it was confidential, he would do the interview, that we could arrange another day via WhatsApp, and he left the place where we were. After a few days, I contacted him, and he replied that he was sick. I understood that he could not go beyond his limits” (Logbook, E14).

In this sense, I sought the well-being of the interviewees, acting in a way that made them feel comfortable so that they could share what they deemed convenient. I observed ethical aspects, such as the participant’s consent by signing a document that explains the objectives of the study, the dynamics of performance, and the possibility of terminating the interview at any time, if so desired.

It is important to emphasize the inseparability between the ethical and methodological aspects and the ethos of trust necessary in cartography. It is necessary to manage the links in the research process in a contracting system that allows for engaged and effective participation, so the participants feel the uniqueness of their participation (Sade, Ferraz, & Rocha, 2013). I can say that this regime was facilitated by my presence in the events-activities, as the Haitian Artibonite pointed out during the public hearing on migration (E24). “I was at the front door when Artibonite arrived and saw me. With surprised features, he exclaimed: ‘You here again?! You are really everywhere (laughs)’” (Logbook, E24). What could initially generate distrust was later turned into a closer bond: “Are you enjoying the event? I have a few more people to recommend for your research” (Artibonite, Logbook, E35). This shows the perceived importance of their participation in the research and their trust in me as a cartographer. Thus, I was able to verify that, following Sade, Ferraz and Rocha (2013), “cartographic research operates relying on the power of the meetings established in the research process” (Sade et al., 2013, p. 294) and that the trust between researcher-participant and other participants contributes to engagement in research and highlights the ethical-political aspect of the practice of cartography.

## ANALYSIS OF DATA PRODUCED

According to Barros and Barros (2013), the analysis in cartographic research focuses on the processes occurring alongside experiences, which are not always obvious or immediately accessible. An increasing degree of contact with experience is needed to find the evidence. Thus, cartography analysis constantly occurs during the research and not only after having the material in hand because “the opening to the multiplicity of meanings cannot be temporally located. Hence, the paradox of analysis, being simultaneously a form of accessing objectivity and a procedure to propagate meanings and singularization” (Barros & Barros, 2013, p. 388).

In this sense, the data produced was treated and prepared for presentation and analysis. The interviews of migrant-participants, refugee-participants, and key informants were transcribed. Together with the logbook notes, this material totaled 434 pages. After the transcripts, audio and text were reviewed and, concomitantly, excerpts of speeches that characterized the paths of migrants and refugees were extracted.

After presenting the cartographic path of the empirical research, it is worth mentioning that the organization of the subjectivation processes in the trajectory of migrants and refugees was presented in analytical dimensions. I went

back and forth examining the data and the theoretical framework for each dimension until landing on passages that engendered a certain theme. My priority was to have an experience, in the words of Barros and Barros (2013), “at the collective level of forces, which is not restricted to the personality domain” (Barros & Barros, 2013, p. 377). I tried to see, feel, and analyze the migration paths from other angles, propagating meanings that are not univocal (Barros & Barros, 2013), I used lenses that offer other forms of viewing the displacements of individuals from countries of the global south. I threw myself into this experience, knowing that “it is necessary to build a way of operating the invention process” (DeLuca, Grisci, & Lazzarotto, 2018, p. 5).

## FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS

This article showed how cartography adopts tracks leading to multiple theoretical-empirical inputs and connections with studies associated with work and subjectivity, also in the field of administration.

The nature of research-participation or investigation-interaction, the data production (instead of data collection), the political role of the researcher-cartographer, and, above all, the trajectory as a *flâneur*-cartographer (emerging as a crosscutting practice) combined with the tracks obtained from the literature on cartography, are the elements characterizing this study. This way of researching made it possible to approach an existential territory that is difficult to access. This territory’s cooperative flows formed a rhizome-territory, considering the dynamics, intensity, and multiplicity of processes in constant transformation — such as monitoring the work of migrant-participants and refugee-participants both in person and through virtual social networks, the establishment of bonds of trust with the participants and their consequent engagement in producing the research, and the active participation, together with key informants, in events-activities in favor of migratory issues.

As for the process of data production, qualitative strategies were prioritized, such as participation in events-activities, interviews, and face-to-face and virtual participant observation. However, it is important to clarify that these are not prerequisites for cartographic practice. They were chosen for the empirical study since their theoretical basis (Barros & Kastrup, 2015; Barros & Passos, 2015; Kastrup, 2015; Tedesco et al., 2013) is aligned with a post-structuralist view and focused on cartographic practice. These techniques allowed the joint construction with migrants and refugees — hence the emphasis on migrant-participants and refugee-participants, in addition to the researcher-participant approach — experiencing and accompanying their processes of production of subjectivity, especially those related to

work. It is worth reinforcing that cartography has no rules. It is open, and the territories are in constant movement, so the techniques for data production must be chosen from the moment the researcher experiences the territory. “The researcher-cartographer will have to invent their own [techniques] as the relationships are established, and [the researcher] becomes part of the research territory” (Costa, 2014, p. 71).

If Kastrup (2015) discusses the importance of ‘landing’ in the territory, it is more assertive in this illustrative empirical study to say that the researcher ‘dived’ in the territory. The trajectory as a *flâneur* made the research-participation possible and opened paths for this article and for the flows of life-work of migrants and refugees. Researcher-participants and other participants produced encounters and were affected by them. Just as the movements of migrants and refugees proved to be affective and political, cartography also worked in this sense, maintaining surveillance of scientific norms. Because it is immersed in the territory, there is involvement and strength in the encounters, differentiating cartographic research from other methods. Thus, cartography presents a social contribution with a touch of welcoming multiplicity, alterity, and mobility, while the cartographer establishes

relationships with participants, helping to understand life in the destination country.

From the presentation of cartography as a method — showing its genesis, theoretical tracks, and the cartographic paths of an empirical study — it was possible to evidence its epistemic-theoretical-methodological potential, hopefully inspiring future studies. Thus, in a context where workers and organizations are required to be flexible, dynamic, mobile, versatile, autonomous, and where borders are increasingly diluted and leading to new forms of living and working, cartography also proves to be fruitful to access territories in their multiplicities in other contexts and through other perspectives.

## NOTE

1. Based on Alvarez and Passos (2015), this study does not follow the academic rule of using the same narrative person throughout the article. Impersonal language was used when building and presenting the theoretical discussion and first-person narrative was used when describing the researcher’s interventions as an active cartographer.

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**1<sup>st</sup> author:** conceptualization (equal), investigation (lead), methodology (equal), project administration (lead), validation (equal), writing – original draft (lead), writing – review & editing (lead).

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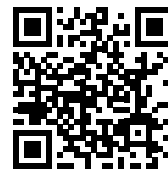
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## Data Availability

The authors claim that all data used in the research have been made publicly available through the Harvard Dataverse platform and can be accessed at:



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