



## Story of a Mapping Process. The Origin, Design and Afterlives of the *Street Geography* Map

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### Abstract

This article focuses on the map drawn for *Street Geography. Drawing Cities for a Sustainable Future* (SG), a geo-artistic project realised in Padua in September 2018. The article reads maps from a processual perspective and focuses on the SG map as both a cartographic object and a set of related ongoing practices, further presenting the scope, themes and main actors of the SG project to explore the reasons for the realisation and use of a map in this specific creative context. The first part of the paper starts with the use of the word *mapping* in contemporary cartographic theories, shifting attention from data-driven cartography to emergent and cultural cartography. The second part of the paper explores the origin, design and afterlives of the SG map from an emergent perspective by retracing the different phases of the mapping process, from map-making to map-use. Not only mapping practices but even stories, memories and emotions continuously unfold from maps. Therefore, the second part of the paper recounts the story of the SG map from an internal, autoethnographic perspective that explores the issues of intersubjective collaboration and authorship, production, dissemination and reception that are connected to this cartographic object. This paper aims “to capture *how* maps emerge” (Dodge et al., 2009, p. 231), to explore more thoroughly not only the performative, participatory and political nature of the SG map but also its affective understandings.

**Keywords:** Art and Geography, Autoethnography, Cultural Cartography, Graphic Design, Mapping, Street Geography

### 1. Introduction

This article focusses on the map created and distributed in the city of Padua in September 2018

to promote the geo-artistic project entitled *Street Geography. Drawing Cities for a Sustainable Future* (SG), launched on the occasion of the Giornate della Geografia 2018<sup>1</sup>. More

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specifically, this article is an attempt to explore the manifold set of *mapping* practices connected to this single map, from the map-making process that comprised its ideation and design to the map-using practices and its manifold afterlives (Boria and Rossetto, 2017). One year later, there are several reasons for coming back to this project, especially to its cartographic product, interpreted here as both a single map and a set of multiple mapping practices, not least the fact that the Giornate della Geografia 2019, titled *Repowering Geography*, have been devoted to “new challenges for territorial analysis and mapping”. As witnessed by the many recently published volumes and articles as well as by the conference in Bergamo, mapping with its manifold meanings, interpretations and implications (technological, social, spatial and historical and even economic and ethical ones) seems to be one of the issues at the centre of both Italian and international geographical as well as cartographic debates (see the special issue “Geografia e Digital Technologies”, *Semestrale*, 1, 2017; Casti, 2019; Kent and Vujakovic, 2017). The first part of the article proposes a *cultural mapping* perspective, considering contemporary theories in post-representational cartography to shift from a representational to a processional perspective (Dodge et al., 2009, p. 230), and examines the SG map as both a cartographic object and an ongoing, intersubjective and collaborative process. The second part tells the story of the mapping process, from the origin and ideation of the map to its design and manifold afterlives, from an immersive and internal point of view; in fact, the account in the second part is often provided in first person, from an autoethnographic perspective (Butz and Besio, 2009; Ellis et al., 2011), and is further enriched by a set of photographs and visual materials collected during the different phases of the mapping process<sup>2</sup>.

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Figure 1. The cover image of the *Street Geography*. *Drawing Cities for a Sustainable Future* project. Source: *Street Geography* map, by Andrea Lejeune.

## 2. For a “cultural mapping” perspective

Shifts in contemporary cartographic theory have involved the use of Big Data for “data-driven cartography”, a paradigmatic example of how technological innovation is able to pose new epistemological challenges for the ways in which we think and use maps (Kitchin, 2014, p. 10). Moreover, many changes have come from the birth of what Denis Cosgrove has called “cultural cartography” (2008), a new interest in maps that originates from the prolific contaminations between traditional cartographic theory and cultural and creative approaches in the interdisciplinary field of map studies. Recent years have also witnessed a growing interest from a cultural (geographical) perspective not only in maps as cultural products and artefacts but also in mapping as a set of disparate cultural practices for new meanings, narratives, emotions and ideas to emerge. With a declared interest in a single cartographic product, namely the SG map, as much as in the process of its realisation and use, namely the SG mapping practices, this paper follows contemporary cartographic theory “moving from a niche-based study of maps as objects to a more comprehensive (and potentially interdisciplinary) study of mapping as practice, the knowledges it deploys, and the political field of its operations” (Crampton, 2009, p. 840). Thus, I will think about mapping following Dodge et al.’s seminal edited volume *Rethinking Maps* (2009): focusing on mapping *modes, methods* and

<sup>2</sup> A downloadable version of the map is available at: [https://musei.unipd.it/sites/musei.unipd.it/files/flyer\\_girato\\_fr.pdf](https://musei.unipd.it/sites/musei.unipd.it/files/flyer_girato_fr.pdf).

*moments*, this manifesto for map studies “traces routes and methods that might help people to do mapping differently and more productively, in ways that might be more efficient, democratic, sustainable, ethical or even more fun” (Dodge et al., 2009, p. 220). Interestingly, this manifesto is not simply about how to analyse but also about how we could actually *do* mapping differently.

In the final chapter of their volume, Dodge et al. provide readers with an idea of the large number of perspectives that can be opened up by an *emergent* approach to cartographic theory, which affirms that maps and mapping practices cannot be separated from one another. These manifold lines of research for rethinking maps as mappings include the study of interfaces and technological practices in the creation and the use of maps; the consideration of the new potentialities for the visualisation of spatial data; the observation of the ways in which the long-lasting relationship between maps and visual culture has been recently renovated, also because of the expansion of the use of GIS. All this might also suggest a reflection on the issues of authorship in contemporary maps and map-making processes; an observation of the increasing engagement of map-users as *active readers* (and, therefore, as authors themselves) of maps as texts; a critical study of mapping infrastructures, especially in everyday life; a reflection on the materiality and physicality of maps; and a questioning of the political economy of mapping (Dodge et al., 2009, pp. 221-230). The authors further suggest directing attention towards both the affective understandings of maps, which, we are told, seeks deeper ethnographic research, and more nuanced means of evaluation “to capture *how* maps emerge” (Dodge et al., 2009, p. 231). What comes out from this agenda is a whole set of possibilities, an arena of potential lines of research that help us read maps as lively objects of analysis or even as living subjects and practices themselves. As we will see in the next paragraphs, there are not only rhythms that influence the way mappings happen (and replicate) in time and space but also moments of failure, change and decision making connected to maps: these processes happen when we create maps, especially as products of collective and transsubjective endeavours, and when we use them to orientate ourselves or to

help other people navigate spaces. Dodge et al. also remind us that maps have not only the ability to recall memories of past mapping practices or to foresee potential future mappings but also to help us in mapping ourselves both as geographers, in our academic praxis and the use of maps, and as individuals, in our affective, emotional, intimate and private uses of maps beyond academia (Dodge et al., 2009, p. 238). This suggests embracing, especially in the second part of the paper, an openly subjective and autoethnographic perspective to account for the SG mapping process; in fact, recent experimentations with auto-ethnography in geographical research have tried to collapse the conventional dichotomy between the subject and the object of research, to make deliberate use of the researcher’s situatedness and subjective gaze as epistemological resources (Butz and Besio, 2009, p. 1662). A declared self-reflexive point of view has been already used for the composition of *auto-geographic* accounts (Sullivan, 2015); for reflective narrations on the relationship between the landscape and the researcher-I, understood as a “creative subject posited as a changeable possibility” (Wylie, 2011, p. 105); and for *auto-cartographic* perspectives on the composition of carto-fictional stories that bring with them the burden of personal experiences, bibliographical references and research practices (Peterle, 2018). The SG map, if observed today, almost one year later, and from a self-reflexive point of view, still has many stories to tell; there are memories connected to it, which allow a contradictory sense of both satisfaction and failure emerge, stimulating a conflicting need for mirroring but also distancing ourselves from that cartographic object. The will to focus on the mapping process is seen here as an opportunity to let some of these stories unfold.

Therefore, the present article follows the life and imagines the potential afterlives of a cartographic object (Oliver, 2016) by retracing the different phases of the *mapping process*, from the ideation of the map as an accessible and attractive handout for the SG project (3. Origin), to the design of its visual appearance and contents (4. Design), to the distribution and use of the cartographic artefact among different institutional, local, academic and non-specialist audiences (5. Afterlives). As Rossetto recently

demonstrated in her *Object-Oriented Cartography: Maps as Things* (2019), maps have stories to tell and even auto-biographical accounts to disclose, which we should be listening to; as she affirms, “beyond an archival interest in the mere dating of maps, this attitude could evoke the idea of attending to the ‘biographical qualities of maps’ or following cartographic artefacts through history, analysing their social lives and ‘complicated afterlives’” (2019, pp. 125-126). Thus, the present paper follows Kitchin and Dodge’s suggestion to move from ontology to ontogenesis in cartographic theory, to focus attention on how maps become, as processes, rather than on how they are, as objects (Kitchin and Dodge, 2007, p. 335). In other words, the cartographic object itself is observed here as a storytelling device to let stories and practices unfold in an ongoing, performative process of emergence, re-signification and recollection.

The paper further starts from the “restatement of critical cartography that recognises that being and becoming are not inseparable (part of our being *is* becoming)” (Crampton, 2009, p. 845). Thus, here the SG map is read both representationally and processually (Dodge et al., 2009, p. 230), as a verbo-visual object of cartographic design and as a set of different processes. These include the participatory process, through which the map was realised involving different academic and non-academic actors; the performative process, namely the different ways and spatio-temporal contexts in which the map was read and used after its distribution; and, finally, the political process, which interprets the SG map as a tool at the hand of the citizens of Padua to stimulate their individual counter-mapping practices aimed at re-drawing and re-writing the city map according to their own vision. As we know, “maps are not merely representations of the world, but propositions with the power to alter it” (Ceshire, 2011, p. 940), and following their lives as ongoing mapping processes represents an extremely prolific opportunity to both de-construct their narratives and constantly re-construct new meanings. As we will see in the next paragraphs, the SG map revealed its “performative, participatory and political” nature (Crampton, 2009, p. 840) by involving different

authors with disparate competencies for its ideation and realisation, by engaging various audiences and actors in its dissemination and stimulating multiple practices once circulated and engaged with.

### 3. Origin: drawing a map for a geo-artistic project in Padua

Before focusing on the SG map and on the account of the different stages of the practice of map-making (Boria and Rossetto, 2017), let me briefly introduce the project for which it was imagined. The project *Street Geography. Drawing Cities for a Sustainable Future* stems from a collaboration between three geographers – namely Giada Peterle, Tania Rossetto and Mauro Varotto – at the Department of Historical and Geographic Sciences and the Ancient World (DiSSGeA) at the University of Padua and the Progetto Giovani Office – Cabinet of the Mayor of the Municipality of Padua, and aimed at encouraging dialogue between scientific research and art-practice. The close collaboration between the University and the Municipality was a significant attempt to bring geographical knowledge beyond the academic boundaries to engage the citizens of Padua in a process of spatial thinking. Indeed, at the foundation of the project, conceived in late 2017 and officially launched one year later, lies the idea that academic knowledge should contribute to the conceptualisation and realisation of more meaningful and sustainable cities, becoming a conceptual and practical tool available to academics, students and especially to citizens. For this reason, SG could be listed among the Third Mission projects of the University of Padua that, beyond research and teaching, place the dissemination of scientific knowledge and the involvement of non-academic local audiences at the centre of their agenda. In this process of “re-drawing” Padua’s map to imagine a sustainable urban future, many actors played a central role, from academics to institutional actors, from young to elderly inhabitants, from shopkeepers to representatives of citizen committees and local associations: all of them were the ideal audience for the project and the potential users of the SG map.

With these ideas in mind, the scientific committee selected three keywords that should be at the centre of the project and of its artistic outputs and, consequently, of the SG map: namely *neighbourhoods*, *mobility* and *waterways*. These are central geographical concepts for discussing many of the most significant contemporary urban phenomena and dynamics at both the local and the global level; they functioned also as bridges to invite our audience to link the city of Padua to many other national and even international case studies. Due to SG, neighbourhoods, mobility and waterways also became the key concepts around which three young artists, selected because of their long-lasting interest in landscape, urban space, place making and storytelling in their artistic practices, developed their site-specific installations to compose the SG art exhibition. Indeed, the three installations were meant to create a public art exhibition that crossed the city of Padua from the north to the south: the exhibition itinerary was developed along the tramline's route to encourage all three installations being visited through the use of public transportation and sustainable mobility.

With the curators at the Progetto Giovani Office playing the role of mediators, each artist collaborated with a geographer, who provided reflections on the key concept and the associated site to which the artistic installation had to be anchored. Engaged in this partnership, the three artist-geographer pairs developed their own site-specific explorations and narrations: Fabio Roncato and Giada Peterle worked on the Arcella neighbourhood, focusing on the composition of counter-narratives in the area via bottom-up processes of resignification; Mónica Bellido Mora and Tania Rossetto worked on the railway station area, focusing on mobilities intended as both means of transportation and practices of movement; finally, Caterina Rossato and Mauro Varotto worked on the Scaricatore Canal at Bassanello, interpreting it as a living waterway with its own narrative and affective and emotional burden. Spontaneously, all the three works of art focused on the idea of *distance*. In Roncato's work, distance was interpreted not simply as a geographical and spatial stretch but also as a perceived linguistic, cultural, economic and religious separation that can make us feel

apart from our neighbours even if we live spatially close to each other. In Bellido Mora's story, a set of different distances in space and time became a set of stories coexisting in the train station, which was interpreted not just as a building but as a node, a relational place where narrative, existential and mobile routes cross. Finally, in Rossato's installation, the historical process of distancing the river from the city centre – as it happened in the city of Padua from the Middle Ages until the fifties – recalled an affective and emotional distance; in this way, the waterway came back to the heart of the citizen's perspective as it could be interpreted as a narrative and an intimate line that ties us to our origins.



Figure 2. The symbols used to represent the three geographical keywords and areas of the project. Source: *Street Geography* map, by Andrea Lejeune.

The SG project was certainly stimulated by what is called a *creative (re)turn* in geography (Eshun and Madge, 2016), a restored stimulus to engage with art and artistic products not simply as objects of geographical research but also as tools at our disposal to disclose geographical discourses, even beyond academic boundaries. As geography-art engagements are proliferating (Hawkins, 2012, p. 53), our goal was to realise a project that could speak in an equally effective manner to both a specialist audience and a wider non-academic public. In fact, as the topic at the centre of the Giornate della Geografia was “public geography”, and specifically the role and forms through which the discipline should act and interact, communicate and work beyond academic boundaries (see *Rivista Geografica Italiana*, 2/2019, pp. 121-158), the SG map can be interpreted as an attempt to reflect on the

public role of cartographic products produced within academic boundaries but devoted to wider audiences. In this sense, the present paper starts from the idea that it is not possible to separate critical from creative research on mapping; rather, it is important to go on exploring the critical potentialities of creative uses of maps and of the mapping practices they stimulate. As Lo Presti observes, “map-making has started to be distanced from its authoritative, political, ideological, technicist and representational attributes”, and we are witnessing “a new creative and regenerative stimulus that is informing the world of mapping” (Lo Presti, 2018, p. 106). This reasoning certainly echoes the already-mentioned article by Denis Cosgrove, “Cultural Cartography: Maps and Mapping in Cultural Geography” (2008), especially when he affirms that mapping as a specialised scientific activity seems to be giving way to mapping as “a creative, participatory activity [that is] no longer the preserve of professional cartographers and geographers” (p. 162). In fact, even if the SG map was not aimed to become an artwork in itself, it was designed to be “a site specific and performative work intended as direct intervention to the everyday (if temporarily disrupted and uncanny) life of the city” (Cosgrove, 2008, p. 160). Its realisation was an intersubjective process involving not simply geographers or cartographers but other experts whose cartographic imaginaries were contaminated with other languages, such as communication, advertising and contemporary visual art languages.

As Reddleman affirms, “the map is an outcome of processes, and it generates further processes through its circulation and reception in the world” (2018, p. 7), namely its afterlives, its impact and reinterpretation (Oliver, 2016; Rossetto, 2019). In our specific case, the mapping process started with the decision to involve an external graphic designer, Andrea Lejeune, in order to collaborate with the scientific committee of the project (the geographers) and the Progetto

Giovani curators. It was the geographers’ idea to realise the map as a flyer for the promotion of the event: this gave us the opportunity to merge several functions in a single object, such as the advertisement and promotion of the event as well as the spread of information and the presentation of geographical contents. The map also needed to play a more strictly cartographic role, namely, to become an orientation tool to help map-users navigate the SG *diffused exhibition* in the urban space of Padua, moving from the north to the south in search of the three site-specific installations. Thus, in terms of authorship, whereas the SG map was technically designed by the graphic designer, the SG map-making process was a collective endeavour that involved experts from different fields, like geography and graphic design, advertising and communication as well as experts in the organisation of artistic exhibitions and events (Figure 3). We all converged on the fact that the map was the most suitable printed product to communicate, make public and promote SG as a geo-artistic project. We considered the map as an object that is widely recognised to be geographic and that could, therefore, become an especially efficient tool to involve and address a non-specialist audience in geographical thinking. As the scientific committee, we also defined the contents that needed to be embedded on the back of the map, while curators helped the artists in translating the reasoning and concepts at the basis of their artworks into short, dense and communicative texts. The need to be incisive and concise asked for a huge effort from both geographers and artists, who had to arrive at the essential meaning they gave to the single keywords and artworks in order to produce very short texts that could be quickly read, easily understood and shared with a wide audience. These did not need to be exhaustive as much as to be invitations for citizens to go and see the exhibition, adding their personal reflections, experiences and emotions to the site-specific meanings of the installations.



Figure 3. The process of map-making, from its first steps and sketches (on the left) to its final adjustments (on the right). Top left (from left to right): Caterina Benvegnù (Progetto Giovani), Giada Peterle (DiSSGeA), Guido Ostanel (BeccoGiallo), Mauro Varotto (DiSSGeA). Source: photos by Tania Rossetto.



Figure 4. The *Street Geography* map. Source: Andrea Lejeune.



Figure 5. Details from the *Street Geography* map. Source: Andrea Lejeune.



Figure 6a. The press conference with the presence of the Deputy Mayor, Prof. Arturo Lorenzoni and the delegate for the Institutional Communication Project at the University of Padua, Prof. Telmo Pievani, Prof. Mauro Varotto and Giada Peterle (in order from right to left). Source: photo by Guido Ostanel.



Figure 6b. The afterlives of the map in the hands of shopkeepers and map-users in the Arcella neighbourhood. Source: Author's photos.





Figure 7a. Mapping practices during the guided tours organised along the exhibition. Source: Author's photos, and photos by Giovanni Donadelli.

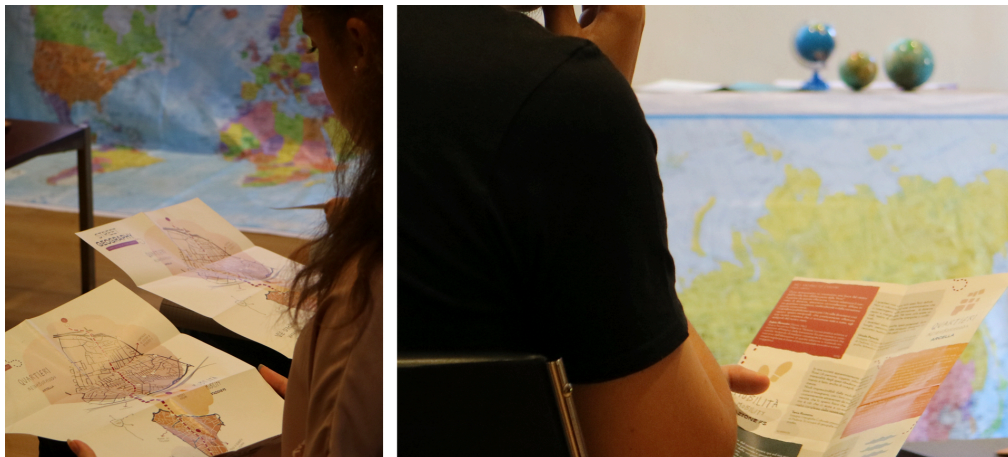


Figure 7b. Cartographic surfaces at the Museum of Geography of the University of Padua: students unfolding their SG maps during educational laboratories on geography and art. Source: photos by Giovanni Donadelli.

#### 4. Design: oh my goodness, this map is out of scale!

The map was designed not only as a cognitive tool, to orient and to inform, but also as a verbo-visual object that had to have its own aesthetic value. In fact, since the beginning we wanted the map to become a poster, maybe to be hung on the walls of private houses once the exhibition was over, its original orientational function being exhausted and the site-specific installations dismantled. For all these functional and aesthetic reasons, the map needed to be a creative object in itself to convey to a larger public a different idea of what geographical knowledge and maps themselves can be: not simply graphic reproductions of urban spaces on different scales

but dialogical invitations to read, interpret and re-signify represented spaces as lived places.

When we designed the SG map, it was important for us to remember the long-lasting relationship between creativity and maps through the link between cartography and art as it has been variously explored (Caquard et al., 2009) from the ancient times to the Middle Ages and the Renaissance to the twentieth century (Cosgrove, 2005; Krygier, 1995). As Ronald Rees observed in a seminal paper on the “Historical Links between Cartography and Art”, “maps have served esthetic as well as utilitarian ends, having been used as floor mosaics, frescoes, and wall hangings since earliest times” (1980, p. 60). The artistry in maps is part of their essence and communicative capacity as “the effective use of

line, color, and symbol can transform maps that might otherwise be dull, mechanical records into dynamic complexes charged with meaning” (Rees, 1980, p. 63). Nevertheless, as Claire Reddeman reminds us in her recent volume *Cartographic Abstraction in Contemporary Art: Seeing with Maps*, “the necessary selectivity of the mapmaking process is no longer regarded as unproblematic or apolitical” (2018, p. 6). Indeed, as she further contends, “selection functions at every stage of production, from the choice to survey and produce a map in the first place, as opposed to another form of account, depiction or record, to the choice as to what will appear, what will not and what forms those appearances and non-appearances will take” (Reddeman, 2018, p. 6). For all these reasons, I will “shift attention away from the map itself and towards the process of mapping”, trying to consider the specific way in which the SG map was graphically designed and deployed in our geo-artistic project (Cosgrove, 2005, p. 51).

Since the SG map was to represent a geo-artistic project in one mobile object, which was to be distributed and available throughout the city of Padua, we wanted it to be creative and potentially imaginative, even *alternative* in its own right: it needed to be able to establish a *playful* relationship with the more traditional and constitutive verbo-visual elements of cartographic representations, from scale to the legend and the use of colours and symbols (Papotti, 2012, pp. 116-118). Nowadays, there is an extremely varied and eclectic use of maps beyond academic boundaries, and cartographic illustrations have become decorative textures and patterns, printed and replicated on manifold kinds of surfaces, from paper to skin, from textiles to metal, ceramic, plastic, cork and wood, to mention only a few of them. In cartographic patterns, references to existing places and regions are deprived of their spatial informative meaning to become simple graphic elements and fantasies (for example, when toponyms appear on the surface of a skirt, they are not there to say that that skirt belongs or refers to that region, city, etc.). In the same way, the graphic designer working on the SG project decided to use contour lines, a typical visual feature of cartographic representations, as a mere graphic element to constitute the pattern for the cover background of

the SG map (see Figure 1). Moreover, as we all know that distortion has always been a constitutive part of cartographic representation through the use of scale, projection and symbolisation (Reddeman, 2018, p. 6), we wanted this “deformity”, intended as a discrepancy in the actual relation of scale between real spaces and those represented in the SG map, to be explicit: not only is the map deliberately out of scale, it openly declares its status through a handwritten note, posed in a central position on the cartographic surface (see Figures 4 and 5).

Map-users would have noticed this writing when unfolding the map in their hands, maybe even before recognising that the historic city centre of Padua is far smaller in the map than it actually is in reality if compared to the areas of the train station or of the Bassanello. Maps have always lied, and they continue to do so, adapting their ability to both orientate but also mislead, to depict and deform according to the use of new digital and technological innovations (Monmonier, 2018). In our case, this explicitly deforming use of scale was meant both to make map-users aware of being intentionally manipulated from our cartographic projection but also to help them immediately visualise the SG project’s intention to focus on usually secondary and highly neglected areas of Padua; these were just white lies! In fact, whereas Padua’s city maps distributed from touristic offices and information points focus on the representation of the area of the historic city centre, with its monuments and touristic points of interest, the SG map wanted to pay attention to all those areas that are usually kept apart from mainstream cartographic representations of the city. Moreover, a dotted red line, representing the tramline and changing thickness according to the variations of scale, had the role of reconnecting all the different areas of interest in the city, suggesting a movement of urban exploration from the north to the south, or viceversa. The same dotted red line returned as a pure graphic element on the cover as well as on the back of the map (here repeated in Figure 2 and 3). Actually, it was used as a kind of logo of the project and as a symbol for a provisory (thus dotted) path to follow (see on the cover in Figure 1). It represented a route which asked to be followed and traced in space through individual

crossings and personal walking and mapping practices.

As explained in the map legend, each area-keyword was highlighted with a different colour: pink for the Arcella-neighbourhood area, yellow for the train station–mobility area and blue for the Bassanello-waterways one. This same use of colours was replicated on the back of the map to help map-users rapidly find the explanatory texts related to every single area of interest and presenting both the artist and the concept of their site-specific installation as well as the geographer and their short definition of the geographical concept connected to that specific site.

Finally, before focusing on the mapping practices connected to the various uses made of the SG map, there was another visual feature that was a significant aesthetic and even conceptual choice made during the map-making process: namely the use of a font that resembles real handwriting. As displayed with detail in Figure 5, this handwriting was not merely used to write the three keywords of the project and to connect them to each area on the map; it was also used to insert some curiosities about the areas, such as the precise geographical coordinates of the spatial centre, or centroid, of the Arcella neighbourhood, the reference to the Museum of Geography of the University of Padua, the railway, the Bacchiglione canal and the line of the railway as well as the train station square. Beyond the aim to provide map-users with further information, the main goal of these handwritings was to resemble the practice of taking notes on the paper maps we usually carry with us when navigating unexplored cities; in this way, the SG map was meant to appear like an ongoing process of mapping, a very intimate and personal form of orientation involving the practice of moving and taking notes about the places visited and the information gathered about them. Far from being perceived as a finished object, we wanted the SG map to look like an unfolding process of creative urban mapping at the disposal of whoever wanted to take a pencil to write down personal observations and notes, to draw their projection of a sustainable future city. As Papotti reminds us, the irrational and the creative aspects of maps, not reducible to quantitative-numeric parameters, have their roots in the history of cartography (Papotti, 2012, p. 116). Looking back to that

declared partiality, to the recreational and playful nature and to the intrinsic creative essence of maps, the SG map refers to what Papotti calls *alternative* and *imaginary* maps; indeed, even if representing a real city and not completely invented fictional cartographies, the SG map wanted to become not just an orientation tool to move throughout the SG exhibition but also a proposition for complex itineraries of intimate orientation within imaginary urban futures yet to emerge. It wanted to create a potential space for each map-user's urban imagination and creative mapping to disclose, a space for drawing new potential geographies of hope, desire, memory and fantasy in the city of Padua (Papotti, 2012, p. 117-118).

## 5. Afterlives: mapping practices of circulation, dissemination and use

As there are many different cultures and networks of map use practices, which, as Perkins affirms, “depend upon relations between many different artefacts, technologies, institutions, environments, abilities, affects, and individuals”, in the same way “the democratisation of cartography, taking place as a result of scientific progress and technological change”, is fuelling calls for plural ways of understanding map use (Perkins, 2008, p. 157). For the SG map we did not use any kind of survey methods, such as interviews or questionnaires, to register and collect information about how the map was not just distributed but also perceived by its users. Therefore, my account of the afterlives of the SG map will focus mainly on the mapping practices as well as on the multiple social, cultural, educational, political and institutional contexts of its use (Duggan, 2019) in which I directly took part or that I personally witnessed in the time frame from September 2018 until today.

To be honest, as I will try to recount in this final section devoted to the map's afterlives, the distribution of the SG map was partially planned according to the goals and targets of the project and partially a consequence of merely extemporary opportunities deriving from unpredicted routes that the project and the map itself took over the last year. As shown in Figure 6a, the first public appearance and use of the SG

map took place during the press conference hosted at the Town Hall of Padua, with the presence of the Deputy Mayor, Prof. Arturo Lorenzoni and the delegate for the Institutional Communication Project at the University of Padua, Prof. Telmo Pievani. Here, together with Prof. Mauro Varotto and Caterina Benvegnù and Stefania Schiavon (Progetto Giovani), we introduced the representatives of the main institutional actors of the project, namely the Municipality and the University of Padua, to the scope of SG, using the map as a cognitive tool to orient them through the structure and contents of the project and the times and sites of the diffused artistic exhibition. Unfolded at the centre of the table, the map was used as an efficacious verbo-visual résumé of the project, which also easily became the centre of the journalist and media reports on SG, being replicated in local newspapers and TV news. The map was starting to disclose its communicative potential and public role, going far beyond our expectations. Nevertheless, the institutional actors were not the main audience we wanted to address with our map. Indeed, after the press conference we started to distribute the map throughout the city, spreading its copies from the north to the south, in very different contexts and spaces, such as study rooms and libraries of the University of Padua, schools, cultural centres, shops, restaurants, bars, offices of local associations, public transportation means and stations and touristic information points, especially if located in the areas that were closer to the site-specific installations. All this was to reach both key local actors, such as shopkeepers, restaurateurs and associations working in the areas focalised by the geo-artistic project, and the wider audiences and citizens of different ages. For example, Figure 6b shows the map in the hands of the owner of Ruvido, a barbershop that is called “rock” because of the rock concerts that it hosts after closing time, as witnessed by the guitar and drums at the back (on the top of Figure 6b). Figure 6b further shows the map in the hands of Grazia, one of the two owners of a small bookshop called Limerick that sells books and illustrated prints but also runs many writing and artistic laboratories and small cultural events in the area (Figure 6b, lower left). Both these shops represent points of reference in the Arcella neighbourhood, and it was as strategic to have the

SG map at the disposal of their customers as it was to leave many copies of the map on the bar counter of the Gasoline Road Bar, one of the most popular pubs in Arcella and, perhaps, in the whole city of Padua. Whereas the customers of the Limerick bookshop are mostly families with their children living in the neighbourhood, in the Gasoline Road Bar the map could reach groups of young citizens coming from different areas in the city and even from other smaller towns in the province of Padua (Figure 6b, lower right).

As previously mentioned, there were many guided tours organised to visit the SG diffused exhibition, which were meant not only for academics and geographers but also for university and secondary school students of Padua as well as for private citizens. In fact, the SG map was distributed to all the participants at the conference and to the international guests of the *Giornate della Geografia 2018*, such as the representatives from the Centre for the GeoHumanities of the Royal Holloway University of London and Prof. Joe Smith, Director of the Royal Geographical Society. Furthermore, the map was given to the international students of the Master in Sustainable Territorial Development (STeDe) at the University of Padua (Figure 7a, lower left and right), to all the students and teachers of the secondary schools of Padua that took part in the didactics laboratories (Figure 7b), and to the private citizens (Figure 7a, top) who participated in the free guided tours organised between September and October 2018. During these tours the map functioned as an informative support to help participants locate the exhibition in the urban space of Padua. Moreover, we used the map to stimulate participants’ mapping practices and cartographic imaginations, stressing the possibility of drawing, writing down notes and mapping their personal emotions, memories, affective relations and critical considerations on it. Finally, the SG map was a kind of souvenir they could bring back home to keep their creative mapping going on once the tour, and the exhibition itself, were over.

It was particularly intriguing to challenge students’ ideas of what maps should or could do during didactics laboratories. Whereas for the international STeDe students the SG map was presumably one of the first (if not the first) geo-

visualisations of the city of Padua they could hold in their hands to start mapping the city that would host them for one semester, for the students of the secondary schools of Padua it was a completely different mapping experience. In fact, the SG map with its playful and colourful design, with its handwriting font and alluring appearance, was an object that also captured the young students' attention and stimulated their curiosity. In this way, the map easily became a useful trigger to start questioning their preconceived ideas about geography as an impersonal and aseptic description of space and about cartography as a geometrical depiction of it. As shown in Figure 7b, the didactical tours began in the main room of the Museum of Geography, with more traditional cartographic projections hanging on the walls and many maps and globes and cartographic objects spread all over the place, functioning as potential references to start multiplying students' ideas of what counts as a map and what mapping practices every cartographic object can disclose. After leaving the Museum to begin the tour, the map continued to play an orientational role in two very different senses: the first, a more traditional one, was to actually help them know what our next stop was, what the sites of the artistic installations were and, of course, what the stops where we had to take/leave the tramline to proceed visiting the exhibition on foot were; the second role was a more cognitive and conceptually orientated one, whereby the map would give the students a sense of the scope and contents of the entire project and become a stimulus to start their creative mapping and inventive spatial thinking. Unlike the STeDe students, who actually needed a map to start imagining the city of Padua as an actual urban space, the high school students needed to deconstruct their cartographic visualisations of the city in order to start visualising new centralities and new potential crossing routes to redraw and resignify ordinary urban landscapes; to feel free to start mapping according to their own interests, emotions, hopes and aims; and to start thinking of geography as a creative way to describe and imagine spaces, as well as of cartography as a flexible and extremely creative language not only for representing existing spaces but also projecting possible futures.

## 6. Conclusions

As I have demonstrated using the SG map as an example, “maps and mappings are emergent processes and performances” (Gerlach, 2014, p. 22; Gerlach, 2017), and cartographic objects themselves stimulate practices that are context dependent and often influenced by unpredicted factors. Contemporary cartographic theories suggest not only rethinking maps from a processual perspective but also focusing on the affective understandings of maps through deeper ethnographic research and more nuanced means of evaluation to capture the different ways in which maps emerge (Dodge et al., 2009, p. 231). Maps, therefore, have their own stories to tell and encourage the emergence of narratives about how they came to be and how they were understood and used after being ideated and designed. Furthermore, their stories are connected with others' stories as their lives and afterlives entangle with many existential routes and emotions and their cartographic accounts are often connected to our own trajectories as researchers. Thus, they work as narrative triggers, as condensed archives collecting memories, collaborations, encounters and emotions, from both an intersubjective and autoethnographic perspective. In fact, as Dodge et al. contend, “as an introspective moment, map studies could explore how academics, including geographers, deploy maps in their everyday praxis, in university laboratories, their offices and lecture halls” (Dodge et al., 2009, p. 238): the SG map functioned here as a storytelling device for stories, which took place both within and outside the academia, to emerge.

The SG map certainly became a space of encounters and mediations to present geography as a public knowledge and to bring the University, and especially the geographers of the Department of Historical and Geographic Sciences and the Ancient World, into conversation with the institutional actors from the Municipality of Padua around central contemporary geographical issues. The map was a bridge to visually connect art and geography, as well as geographers' research methods with artists' creative practices, which in a common sense are usually perceived as separated domains. Mapping practices also created an opportunity for

the dissemination of geographical knowledge beyond academic boundaries, representing one of the many ways and projects by which geography can pursue its Third Mission to popularise and circulate geographical knowledge and stimulate spatial awareness, thus demonstrating its central role in contemporary debates around public and urban spaces. Creative projects and alternative languages to present research results represent important occasions not only to mediate geographical knowledge among wider audiences but also to help us rethink our own role in the interpretation, shape and construction of urban spaces (Memoli and Governa, 2018). This account gives you an idea of “the politics and performances of emergent, everyday mapping practices” (Gerlach, 2014, p. 35) that are connected to each single cartographic object, from its origin to its multifaceted afterlives.

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