



Learning and teaching with outdoor cartographic displays: a visual approach

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Abstract

This article examines the intersection of visual studies and map studies within the academic didactics of cultural geography. In particular, it suggests that the practice of photographing outdoor cartographic signs emerging from the ordinary urbanscape might provide teachers with a playful way to introduce their students to theoretical speculation on the ontology and the practice of maps. Photographic portraits of public maps stationed in specific contexts could also be used to teach about cultural and social representations of places and landscapes.

Keywords: Geosemiotics, Geovisuality, Post-Representational Cartography, Street Photography, Wall Maps, Outdoor Maps

1. Cultural geographies going on around us: appreciating maps within streetscapes

As a teacher of Cultural Geography, one of my main aims is to encourage my students to take seriously the exhortation so efficaciously expressed by Cloke, Crang and Goodwin in the *Postscript* to their volume *Introducing Human Geographies* (2012, pp. 602-603): “We would urge you to be much more sensitive to the human geographies going on around you. [...] Be aware of the human geographies wrapped up in and represented by the food you eat, the news you read, the films you watch, the music you listen to, the television you gaze at. Be aware

of the places you live in, or travel to, or see images of”.

One of the innumerable applications emerging from this typically geographical teaching attitude is the reading of signs in streetscapes. Since my audience at the University of Padua is mainly made up of foreign language students attending the second-cycle degree in European and American Modern Languages and Literature, a particular object of interest for them are the written signs found in public spaces, such as visible multilingual phenomena displayed in multicultural cityscapes, which have become the focus of so-called “linguistic landscape” studies. Recent implementation of research

on linguistic landscapes, which goes under the term “geosemiotics” (Scollon and Scollon, 2003), has developed a more materialistic and ethnographic approach, stressing the need to consider signs as multimodal objects rather than strictly linguistic ones, and focusing attention on the specific spatiality of them (Blommaert and Huang, 2010). Urban public multimodal signs, it is argued, communicate to differentiated audiences depending on a myriad of spatial, material, contingent, lived aspects of their particular placement. Studies on the spatiality of public signs use photography to document signs and their locations (see, among others, Chmielewska, 2005 and Lou, 2007). Yet, little attention is paid to the photographic *re*-presentation of those emplaced signs (an exception being Cronin, 2010, for instance).

Maps are objects that take part in the ordinary visual environment in which we are immersed. In the present article I deal with outdoor cartographic displays and their photographic representation conceived as generative tools for the teaching of cultural geography. Maps displayed in school rooms are easily associated with the traditional imagery of elementary education, but by now, in an era of pervasive digital mapping, many of us do not take notice of the old wall maps still hanging without any evident function (not even decorative) in our academic lecture rooms (Figure 1). Wall maps in classrooms, regarded in the past for their efficacy or inefficacy (Renner, 1941), are now frequently considered residual historical entities, whose purpose “to reinforce accepted orthodoxies, whether religious, national or racial” or support “overt political propaganda” (Barber and Harper, 2010, pp. 146-147) has to be criticised, often by using classroom map portraits in paintings, photographs or films to illustrate this critique. Maps in classrooms as emblems of authoritarian education are, indeed, a frequent subject of art works. This attitude towards maps displayed on walls is not restricted to classroom wall maps. Cartographic public displays placed in typical indoor contexts, in fact, are normally studied

for their ideological content and cultural power, which are conveyed through their location in distinctive spaces such as palace galleries, government offices and police departments.

Moving from the appreciation of indoor maps and their iconography, a less considered way of involving display maps in higher education is to go into the open in search of maps. More precisely, I used to involve my students in a selective reading of the urban visual environment aimed at collecting outdoor cartographic signs, mainly on city walls. Of course, widespread mobile mapping technologies as well as pervasive digital displays have already drawn our attention to the presence of maps “in the open” in many different ways. Here, however, I am instead concerned with more conventional forms of map displaying. Outdoor maps, indeed, have received scholarly attention mainly when they appear as “magnificent” works of public art (Barber and Harper, 2010, pp. 160-161; Minor, 1999), but the presence of more ordinary cartographic signs on urban surfaces still remains understudied (Rossetto, 2013).

This interest in outdoor maps should be compared with the growing popularity of maps in our society as well as with the growing importance of maps in education (Wiegand, 2006, p. 1). However, while map and geo-information science pedagogy is often concerned with the development of technical map skills, the involvement of cartography in the teaching of cultural geography requires a consideration of maps in terms of ontology. Cultural geographers usually educate their students following a critical, “representational thinking” (Cadman, 2009) of maps. They teach them that maps are cultural, symbolic and ideological products imbued with power, and that the task of cultural geographers (and cultural geography students) is to critically deconstruct these representations, unmasking their presumed truthfulness. A mix of technical and critical map literacy, for example, can be found in the concise handbook by Spada (2007). Notwithstanding the prominence of the critical,

representational cartographic approach within cultural geography, as we will see in what follows, the appreciation of outdoor maps in their spatial contexts provides good opportunities to introduce students to the

recent advancement of cartographic theory towards a post-representational approach (Kitchin, 2010; Dodge et al., 2009; Rossetto, 2012).



Figure 1. Wall map hanging in a geography lecture room at the University of Padua (2013).
Photo: Tania Rossetto.

2. Intersecting map studies with visual studies: portraits of maps

Excluding the long collaboration between art and map historians, the relationship between map studies and visual studies has been deficient in reciprocal communication. Talking about the “visual” often means talking about photography, television, film, video or painting. “Visual media” is an expression that has been contested following the idea that “all media are mixed media” (Mitchell, 2005, p. 350), but a further problematic aspect of the expression “visual media” is that it is scarcely directed towards cartography. Cartography is basically understood as a static text-image object, but nowadays we experience cartography in very hybrid, dynamic, multimodal forms.

With Mitchell, again, we could say that the repeated narrative of the visual turn as unique to our time is a fallacy (Mitchell, 2005, p. 348). It is indisputable, however, that our time is marked by an unprecedented repositioning of the status of maps and geovisualisation. The new status and appeal of maps and geovisualisation in our society, made possible by the ubiquity of digital cartography and the incorporation of maps in our everyday practices as well as within art, design, communication and many other fields, requires a new, complex appreciation of the “visual” with regard to maps as well as of the fluid relationship between the visual and the cartographic within digital devices. Considering the geoweb as visual practice, for example, Elwood (2011) calls for the application of visual methodologies to virtual globe imagery.

There are many different ways in which map studies should intersect with visual studies. Maps are visual objects of different sizes, materials and forms that are visually used in various kinds of indoor/outdoor, private/public spaces by individuals, groups and communities. The famous distinction introduced by Hall Fosters (Mirzoeff, 2006) between *vision* (sight as a physical process) and *visuality* (sight as a social fact), I suggest, could be profitably applied to cartography, thus promoting research on “geovisuality” rather than the strictly “geovisual” in cartography. The visual intersects with the cartographic also through the flourishing field of cartographic design (where cartographers and graphic designers converge) as well as the study of the aesthetic language of contemporary cartography (see the special issue *Aesthetics in Mapping of Cartographic Perspectives*, 2012).

One of the multiple possible intersections between map studies and visual studies is the depiction of maps. Maps, indeed, appear in works of art of different types. The emerging field of contemporary “map art” (Watson, 2009) surely implies forms of map visualisation. However, while the appearance of maps in films (Conley, 2007) and literary works (Rossetto, forthcoming) has recently gained a great deal of attention, the representations of maps in figurative paintings (see Welu, 1975 and Harley, 1988, pp. 295-296) and above all in photography remains understudied.

I am here suggesting that photographing maps in the open could be a playful way to teach and learn about the life of public maps. Photos here bring into view maps as objects, i.e. as cartographic images together with the material support in or on which they appear. Maps, moreover, are caught by the photographic camera in their material and contingent spatial contexts. The focus is not, or not only, on the visual content of the map, but on the spatiality of the map-object. Therefore, maps do not cover the entire frame of the photographic image and are not reproduced, as usually happens, with particular attention to the problems derived from distortion. Instead, maps are intentionally distorted to be grasped

“in action”. This photographic practice could be used to emphasise the powerful discourse of a map stationing in a peculiar site, but, as we will see, a more nuanced attitude is suggested here in the appreciation and representation of outdoor maps.

We may include this use of the camera among educational applications of visual methodologies, and “photo-documentation” of the field in particular (Bignante, 2011, pp. 76-79; Sidaway, 2002). This activity, moreover, brings together two forms of the city-image relationship which have been classified by Tormey (2013, pp. 79-81) as “images IN the cities” on the one hand and “images OF the city” on the other. Here, in fact, the photographic documentation *of* the city involves an exploration of images which takes part *in* the fabric of the city. Furthermore, this kind of focus on urban signs typically requires a style of urban photo documentation that deliberately operates in allegorical, metonymical or metaphorical ways to present ideas beyond the subjects depicted (Tormey, 2013, p. 81). The practice of photographing urban *objects* such as street furniture or street advertising has its own tradition, dating back to the modernist photography of architecture of the 1930s, “conceptual photography” of the late 1960s, as well as the *Townscape* visual movement, emerging with the *Architectural Review*’s photographic campaigns from the 1930s to the 1970s (Aitchison, 2012). This last experience, in particular, was aimed at “re-alerting the eye” to the visual significance of *things* found in the urban scene by means of a selection of them “for deliberate display” (De Wolfe, 2013, pp. 111-112). In this sense, the device of juxtaposition, through which photographers make “telling points through the inclusion of discordant or empathetic elements within the frame” (Elwall, 2012, p. 679) is crucial.

At this level, one could see visual education intersecting with educational cartography. Maps are treated as experienced, material objects, rather than mere images. They are used, mobilised, animated, re-opened in their meanings, perceived within contingent atmospheres. Nonetheless, this activity involves a reflection on images, an

understanding of what a visual mediation of map-objects through a picture may communicate. Map-objects are “deliberately placed before us” (Mitchell, 2005, p. 125) by photographs. It seems to me that treating maps in this manner may correspond to the idea of researching (learning and teaching with) pictures as living beings, rather than mere instruments of power, as Mitchell (2005) suggested. He called for a “poetics of pictures” (2005, p. 15) which studies “the lives of images”, thus challenging the critical attitude inherent in much of visual culture studies.

3. Geographers picturing maps: lessons from the urban visual environment

In the following part of the article, I will display a number of photographs of outdoor cartographic displays to show different ways in which they have been or could be creatively employed in the teaching of cultural geography, with connections to landscape, visual and map education. The act of photographing maps proves to be a profitable way of interrogating maps’ meaning and power in a more dynamic and complex way than a simple close reading of those maps allows. If “vision is never a one-way street” (Mitchell, 2005, p. 352), neither is the appreciation of maps.

Maps prominently displayed in power-related contexts are typically used to provide evidence of the power inherent in maps (Barber and Harper, 2010). As for the Italian case, a major example is the fixed or movable maps displayed during the Fascist period. The most famous case of monumental cartography found in the open is the series of four map tablets showing the expansion of the ancient Roman Empire installed in 1934 on the outer wall of the Basilica of Maxentius overlooking the former Via dell’Impero (now Via dei Fori Imperiali) in Rome. A fifth lapidary map depicting Italy’s African possessions (the Fascist new empire) was attached in October 1936 to celebrate the conquest of Ethiopia and commemorate the fallen in the military campaigns. This fifth colonial map was removed in 1945 (Minor, 1999).

Significantly, on the cover of a recent book titled *Carte come armi (Maps as Weapons)* authored by an Italian colleague, Edoardo Boria (2012), the photograph of a movable scenographic public map was chosen. The photograph (Figure 2), dated September 1940, shows a crowd looking up at a big cartographic panel featuring military operations in the African territories during the Second World War. A photo of the same map panel staged in front of the Duomo in Milan is included in Spada’s handbook (2007, pp. 111, 113) to illustrate the notion that “in every map there is a part of persuasion and propaganda. To stay alert is the only way not to be bewitched”. However, if we take note of the way in which this map is represented in the photographs, we can observe that in both those pictures the crowd is portrayed as a whole, with almost all the people looking up together.

On the website of Mediateca Roma¹, however, a different representation of the Roman map at Piazza Colonna can be seen. People are scattered, wandering in front of the map, while some young boys look at the camera facing in the opposite direction from the map. This photograph does not communicate a sense of anxiety as the other ones do, but rather a sense of oddity. What I am arguing is that this is surely a propagandistic map in the intent of its producers, but in the first two cases we are above all in front of a propagandistic *picture* of the map, whose reception among common people should then be carefully studied, without confusing the propaganda with the reception of the propagandistic discourse (Labanca, 2002, pp. 221-222).

¹ Permanent link <http://www.mediatecaroma.it/mediatecaRoma/ricerca.html?show=14&index=7056&jsonVal=&filter=&query=archiveName%3AluceFondoLuceCronologico&id=IL0000014562&refId=12>.



Figure 2. Big map mounted in Piazza Colonna (Rome) to follow ongoing military operations (September 1940). Courtesy of E. Boria.



Figure 3. Stone-marble map of the Italian colonies at Piazza delle Erbe, Padua (2013). Photo: Tania Rossetto.

In Padua, a marble map very similar to the fifth map of Via dei Fori Imperiali was installed in the late 1930s on the façade of the town hall overlooking Piazza delle Erbe. The municipal hall, renovated in the first decades of the twentieth century, was conceived as a big memorial to the Paduans fallen during the major national conflicts of the nineteenth and

twentieth centuries. Among the commemorative stones attached to the town hall, there are two maps: one depicting the bombings of the city of Padua during the First World War and another depicting the Italian colonies (Eritrea, Somalia, Libya, Ethiopia, Albania, the Aegean archipelago of the Dodecanese). The map with the colonies has

never been removed, perhaps because it has not been the object of anti-Fascist sentiment like the Roman fifth map, because it is part of a diachronic series of commemorative stones, or simply because it hangs higher than at eye level. I have used several photographs of this map and the adjacent square to introduce my students to the specificity of the post-colonial debate in Italy, showing how this eloquent map is mostly neglected by the square's users. More recently, I re-photographed the site, noting that a mobile cartographic sign has been integrated

within the semiotic landscape of the square (Figure 3). This photograph is not meant to communicate the power of the colonial map's discourse. The angle chosen for this shot intends to communicate how the map of the colonies is defunctionalised in its rhetoric.

Another outstanding example of an outdoor map provided in Paduan public space is a tile map of Europe incorporated into a fountain situated in Largo Europa (Figure 4).

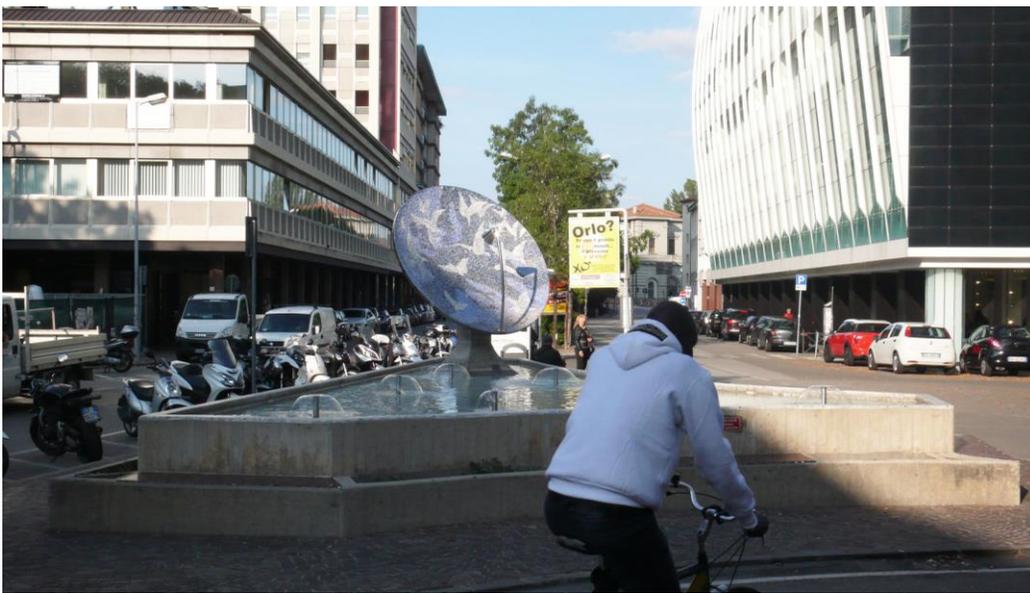


Figure 4. Tile map of Europe at Largo Europa, Padua (2013).
Photo: Tania Rossetto.

I often used this map to introduce my students to issues such as the symbolic policies of the European Union, the role of signs and symbols in the construction of a European identity, and the circulation of different icons and cartographic representations of Europe. Knowing almost nothing about this fountain and its map (the plaque at its base is quite laconic), for years I used to treat it as a rhetorical, institutional commemoration of some important events in the history of the European Union, such as the Maastricht Treaty.

More recently, however, through some interviews with politicians and other persons involved in the construction of this urban object, I found that I was wrong. The initiative came from a Europe enthusiast, who was president of the Northern Paduan Rotary Club in 1997-1998. The fountain is a memorial to the wars that took place within Europe (the conflicts in the former republics of Yugoslavia that so deeply affected Italian public opinion), as well as an exhortation to conceive of the European Union first of all as a potential peacekeeper. The location (Largo Europa) was chosen to enhance this message. Significantly, one of the politicians directly involved in the construction of the fountain told me that it was a monument to the entrance of Italy into the

Eurozone. Nothing could be further from the truth. In fact, the artist who designed the tile map and the overall monument told me that the project, elaborated during a symposium of artists coming mainly from Eastern Europe, deliberately used a geographical rather than political figure of Europe, including doves of peace in a number corresponding to that of the members of the European Union at that time. This public map, indeed, does not take part in what has been addressed as a form of “carto-imperialism” (Foster, 2013) carried out by the European Union through its cartographic representations on mundane objects.

This fountain, which also functions as a traffic divider, has been the object of criticism from city residents. Nowadays it is an unkempt urban object: the cement flower boxes, left desolately empty, seem to confirm that pro-European sentiment is something distant from the everyday life of passers-by. My photographic portrait of the tile map in Largo Europa is meant to put into view the chaotic atmosphere that surrounds this map, which appears somehow “suspended” – just like the authentic European sentiment from which it originated.

Outstanding cartographic works of public art sometimes fail to be intensely felt by common people as well as experts. While I was talking about this article with a colleague (the linguist Franco Benucci), he pointed out the outdoor murals by Fulvio Pendini, an artist who authored many frescoed perspective plans of Padua in public indoor and open spaces throughout the city from the late 1940s to the 1960s (Banzato et al., 2007). In 1952 Pendini painted the so-called *La Città del pensiero* (The thinking city) on the portico overlooking Via San Francesco at the Palazzo Bo, the main historical central building of the University (Figure 5). Although I habitually walk under that map, I have to admit that I simply missed this macroscopic case study. I was well aware of the existence of this fresco, but it is not impressed in my visual memory.



Figure 5. Frescoed map (Fulvio Pendini, *La città del pensiero*) at via San Francesco, Padua (2013). Photo: Tania Rossetto.

This fact, however, corroborates the idea that outdoor maps are particularly conditioned in their existence and attractiveness by their material location. Pendini’s perspective plan, as a matter of fact, is placed very high under the shadow of the portico, therefore it is unlikely to be glanced at by passers-by. One could present this map as one of the last pieces of the vast work of art commissioned by the University of Padua since the early 1930s to proclaim and celebrate its magnificence. Nonetheless, the presumed eloquence of this map is conditioned by its physical placement. The photograph here forcefully places before its viewers what is normally neglected in the material, bodily, everyday experience of that transit space.



Figure 6. Poster in subway map style at the entrance to the former Faculty of Political Science, University of Padua (2011). Photo: Tania Rossetto.

Urban surfaces do not only host monumental maps. They are full of minor, lay, ephemeral cartographic signs such as those impressed on pieces of paper attached to the city walls, or fixed, ordinary, functional cartographic panels, such as transport maps at bus stops. Figure 6 focuses on the use of the transit network diagram style within a poster addressing students involved in protest movements. Pointing out the choice of this cartographic aesthetics is a good opportunity for introducing geography students to the growing centrality of cartographic language in graphic design and visual communication. The “subway style” of this map recalls the urban dimension of the protest. Moreover, the photo is aimed at questioning the local-global dynamics of those movements. The ubiquity of the transit diagram as a fashionable design form (Booth, 2011), in fact, suggests that the protest is an anti-global phenomenon which adopts global strategies of communication. In addition, the photo shows how the message is both amplified and made local through the linguistic landscape surrounding the poster. On the wallscape, “occupy the streets” is directly connected with “occupy Padova”.

Figure 7 is concerned with a recent trend in map studies, i.e. the ethnographic study of maps as objects around which people interact (Perkins,

2009). The photo here hints at the solitary presence of the map among city users who are strangers to each other, but could be used to stimulate a reflection on the role of maps in activating dialogues between people. Furthermore, the photo could also be used to introduce the issue of contemporary urban relationality, recalling how urban subjects coexist in a shared material space rather than take part in an urban community. If within the city we experience a “mutual exposure to otherness through a shared relation to urban fabric”, then the presence of the transport map of the city among the people emphasises that while using public transport, people do not experience face-to-face relations, but rather share a “surface of contact” (Coward, 2012, pp. 469, 479).

Figure 8 ironically reflects on the defunctionalisation of traditional educational devices such as plastic coated maps, which were frequently used in classrooms until recently. A pile of educational maps have been creatively re-used for purely decorative purposes by the owner of the shop. This photograph is also meant to recall how the consumption of maps (Dillon, 2007) as decorative tools has become a pervasive phenomenon in our societies.



Figure 7. Transport map at the tram stop, Padua (2012).
Photo: Tania Rossetto.



Figure 8. Plastic coated maps folded into the shape of airplanes hanging down in a shop window, Padua (2013).
Photo: Tania Rossetto.

4. Beyond the city: teaching about places and landscapes through outdoor map photographs

While I was writing this article I asked some of my colleagues to think about their own use of photos of outdoor maps in their teaching and to provide telling examples of

this. Taken during research fieldwork in places and landscapes other than the typical urban realm, those pictures are more concerned with teaching something about a place or a landscape, than something about the ontology and practice of maps.

My colleague Federica Letizia Cavallo, a teacher of cultural geography, provided me with a photograph of a “spontaneous” mural map she snapped at a filling station along a street on the Spanish island of Minorca (Figure 9).

The photograph holds such a significance for my colleague that she put it on the cover of her monograph devoted to Minorca (Cavallo, 2007).



Figure 9. Mural map at a filling station in Minorca (2005).
Courtesy of F.L. Cavallo.

The photograph frames the map “besieged” (as Cavallo told me) by a refrigerator of a well-known ice-cream brand and a Coca-Cola vending machine. These objects are strategically included within the frame with the aim of highlighting the touristic commercialisation of the island.

As for the map, the picture intentionally conveys contrasting messages: while the map seems to be aligned with the powerful processes of touristification in showing a public of tourists a selection of main roads and settlements, the airport and the filling station itself, it nevertheless testifies to a naive, genuine, joyful homemade act of mapmaking.

My colleague Benedetta Castiglioni, a teacher of landscape studies, provided me with an interesting photograph of two panels near a construction site at Segusino in the Piave river valley (Figure 10a).

She displayed this photograph during lectures as a means of teaching about conflicting (or potentially conflicting) projects and representations of a place or landscape. The fixed panel on the left (Figure 10b), authored by the “youth group of Segusino”, features a perspective plan of the village at the foothills of the Alps, with a flowering branch in the foreground. The panel welcomes visitors telling them about amenities and local traditions.



Figures 10 a, b, c. Panels near a construction site at Segusino, Treviso (2008).
Courtesy of B. Castiglioni.

The other panel (on the right, Figure 10c) has been temporarily installed by a development company to inform the inhabitants about a project for a “new centre of Segusino”, which combines conservation of local features with modernisation. Significantly, the 3D rendering of the new centre of the village does not include the old-fashioned panel with the bird’s-eye view and leaves us wondering if this fact simply means that the panel will be removed from the new piazza or if it symbolically means that the “old” idea of the village will be replaced by a new project for the community.

Finally, my colleague Mauro Varotto, a teacher of cultural geography and mountain studies, provided me with a portrait of map viewers at Passo Fedaia, at the foot of the Marmolada, the so-called Queen of the Dolomites (Figure 11). As Varotto found out while listening to a conversation taking place in front of the map, the couple rode 300 kilometres to reach this renowned crossing place. Once they arrived, however, the attention of the couple was not directed to the surrounding landscape, but to the pictorial map of the ski slopes.

If the paper pocket map which lies on the bench was used by the bikers as a wayfinding tool, the ski map is here defunctionalised and used as a mere panorama of the mountains. The framing of the photograph is critically aimed at emphasising the virtual consumption of the landscape through the inclusion of a piece of the mountains in the background. The bikers, therefore, are portrayed as evidence of the new and controversial branding of the Dolomites, and Passo Fedaia in particular, as a paradise for bikers.



Figure 11. Map viewers at Passo Fedaiia, Belluno (2012).
Courtesy of M. Varotto.

Since Varotto's research is concerned with a critical appreciation of the tourism and representational practices of the Alps, the photo highlights the coexistence of contrasting urban and traditional imageries, which emerge from the juxtaposition of the welcome panel at the bottom of the map and the design of the wooden window on the right. Curiously, then, my colleague framed the female biker while she was photographing the map. Her picture, which intentionally excludes any disturbing element beyond the edges of the ski map, could be profitably compared with the geographer's one, the former telling of a tourist practice, the latter telling of a complex act of framing and displaying a cartographic object used in a specific situation.

5. Conclusions

In cultural geography, maps are a "popular political antagonist"; yet, following Mitchell's (2005, p. 33) invitation to "scale down the rhetoric of the power of images", we may recognise that we perhaps want maps to be more powerful than they actually are.

The interpretation (semiotics, hermeneutic, rhetoric, discourse analysis) of maps' signs

may not be suspended, but carried out from a different perspective, i.e. one which sees images not as detached "sovereign subjects or disembodied spirits" (Mitchell, 2005, p. 46) but as mundane, vital, relational, complex, living individuals that we encounter in our everyday experience. Mitchell (2005, p. 351) proposes "a more nuanced and balanced approach located in the equivocation between the visual image as instrument and agency: the image as a tool for manipulation on the one hand, and as an apparently autonomous source of its own purposes and meanings on the other". He sees visual images as "go-betweens" or subaltern entities which operate within the realm of "vernacular visibility or everyday seeing" (p. 356).

Photographing maps in the open seems to give paths to this nuanced and balanced approach by revealing the multifaceted, often unpredictable, life of cartographic representations captured in their lived contexts. The pictures displayed with this article are in their turn representations grounded in specific displaying contexts (a book cover, a slide show within a cultural geography lesson), but remain nonetheless open to the multiple interpretations made by viewers encountering them.

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