Cartography in the Social Media Era: A New Balance and Synthesis

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Abstract:

Recognizing that, in this rapidly evolving age of social media, accessible digital technology and storytelling, the public at large are now routinely accessing social media sites (Google Maps, Google Street View, Google Earth, Open Street Map) for locational information, this paper argues for a new thematic approach to cartography, seeking a revitalized balance and synthesis on important social issues: i. e. an approach that comprises new application areas, theory and practice.

This paper will explore a new synthesis between Cybercartography, Photo Atlassing, SuAVE Semiotic photo atlas analysis, and on-line Social Media Cybernetic Cartography materialized in Canoe motif. Cybercartography is a complex, holistic, user-centered process which applies location-based technologies to the analysis of topics of interest to society, and the presentation of the results in innovative ways through cybercartographic atlases. A cybercartographic atlas includes both qualitative and qualitative information of many types linked by location and displayed in innovative, interactive, multimodal, and multisensory formats. These atlases permit users to create and tell their own stories. Both mapping and storytelling are basic human instincts and are a central part of the holistic nature of Cybercartography.

Photo Atlassing (https://atlas-semiotics.jimdofree.com/bild-atlantothek/) includes the creation, analysis and portrayal of various storytelling atlases as new communication and knowledge models. Atlassing (with two "s") is a new interdisciplinary trend of the 21st century in Europe involved in the creation, research, and collection of various e-atlases in semiotic and geo-sciences in multiple Atlas formats i) three generation groups (print atlases, digital atlas information systems / interactive web atlases and ubiquitous atlases / mini-atlases for smart phones and tablets); ii) semiotic classification groups (map atlases, photo atlases, text atlases and mixatlases); iii) cartographic and non-cartographic traditions; and iv) atlases for mass users and for experts. Atlasing (with one "s") is a way to refer to an activity where people produce and use digital atlases for the specific task of integrating neuroanatomic images and delineations with gene expression data and other signals.

SuAVE (Survey Analysis via Visual Exploration, http://suave.sdsc.edu/) application for semiotic analysis, annotation, and sharing of thematic photo-atlases and their collections: this is a platform that has been used for analysis of surveys and image collection across several disciplines and can help to answer research questions related to atlas semiotics by organizing atlas documents as different data views, providing ways to compare the atlases and visualize them in different contexts of legacy and new data. The paper will examine a pilot project started in 2019 with 100 photo-atlases, that, like any collection of information products and as one of the types of digital media, can take their rightful place in online libraries, and can be created by professionals or layman.

Circle of All Nations is an informal global eco peace community founded by North American Indigenous Elder William Commanda, now animated extensively on Social Media, including via Facebook live interactive video events, integrating multi-dimensional semiotic storytelling and animative mapping as a digital global village in times of Covid isolation (https://www.facebook.com/circleofallnations). An example of contemporary cartography underpinned by spatial and temporal referential imaging, the Canoe motif, representative of William Commanda's cognitive mapping, that underlies this approach will be examined from multiple angles: i) cybernetic motional navigation, ii) ancient technology re-presented via interactive learning and film/video technology, iii) iconic affective enviro-art- cartography, and iv) ephemeral performance mapping.

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