

“She is Spherical, like a Globe”: Mapping the Theatre, Mapping the Body

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I was directing a scene from *Antony and Cleopatra* in Colorado a number of years ago, and I had a tremendously difficult time with a small but significant part of the Messenger. As you will recall he returns to Alexandria from Rome and has the unenviable task of telling Cleopatra that Antony is married. When he delivers the bad news she becomes furious and gives him the ‘Spartan messenger’ treatment by beating him up. The problem was that however much I berated or cajoled him, the actor would simply stub his cigarette out on the wings, slouch onto stage and deliver his lines in a rather monotonous manner: “Madam, he’s married to Octavia” (2.5.60).

In order to overcome his bad acting, I pointed out that the Messenger does not give Cleopatra a written message, but must deliver it verbally. To help the actor get a better idea of the given circumstances of his situation, we looked at a map of the Roman Empire. What we discovered is that it would have taken twenty-three days of hard riding to travel from Rome to Alexandria, or twenty-three days for the Messenger to consider exactly how he was going to deliver his bad tidings. I pointed out that the character has to tell the most hot-blooded, powerful, and jealous woman in the world that her husband, and father of her children, is now married to someone else. The next time that we rehearsed the scene, instead of going through his previous ritual, he changed: he still stubbed his cigarette out on the wings, and he still slouched onto stage; but before delivering his lines he actually took a moment to think about what he was saying – and then delivered them in the same monotonous manner: “Madam, he’s married to Octavia.” My approach failed spectacularly, but my tactic of using the map sparked something in the actor. It also sparked an idea in me: I wondered if Shakespeare ever used maps; if so, how did he use them? And how important were they? Let me tease you with a small taster of what I mean.

In *The Comedy of Errors* Dromio of Syracuse is constantly mistaken for his identical twin brother. The brothers are in fact so alike that Nell, the hugely fat kitchen wench, cannot tell them apart. Consequently she persistently attempts to make love to Dromio (of Syracuse), whether he likes it or not. Intrigued, his master, Antipholus asks

Antipholus: What’s her name?

Dromio: Nell, sir. But her name – and three quarters, (that’s an ell and three quarters), will not measure her from hip to hip.

Antipholus: Then she bears some breadth?

Dromio: No longer from head to foot than from hip to hip; she is spherical, like a globe; I could find out countries in her.

(3.2.108-113)

Shakespeare’s description of Nell was not simply a funny quip; nor was it aberration. Rather it was an exploration in a particular time and a particular place, of a particularly new conceit: “the mapping of the body.”

Before venturing any farther into the drama, I shall present some background on the new cartographic culture that made possible the appearance of maps onstage. This will provide a broad cultural framework within which I shall discuss the plays of Shakespeare and some of his contemporaries. How did mapping the body become important? In Shakespeare’s England, interest in maps of the world, and in particular Britain, burgeoned at an exponential rate. In the latter half of the fifteenth century only a dozen maps of England existed; by the first half of the

sixteenth century the number had grown to two hundred, while in the second part of the sixteenth century – in other words when Shakespeare was alive – there was an increase to nearly eight hundred maps of Britain and its various parts.¹ The explosive development in cartography stemmed from a wider cultural wonder of the Renaissance, the printing press. With its ability to regularly print 1,000 to 1,500 copies at a time, printing meant that a wider dissemination and more extensive use of maps were made feasible.

This unprecedented rise in map production heralded a new cartographic awareness. Two sets of maps in particular proved to be highly influential: one was Christopher Saxton's *Counties of England and Wales*, which was an atlas published in 1579, when Shakespeare was fifteen years old. The book not only contained separate county maps, but also contained a map of the whole of Britain or *Anglia*. The map of *Anglia* was significant because prior to this,



Saxton's *Anglia*

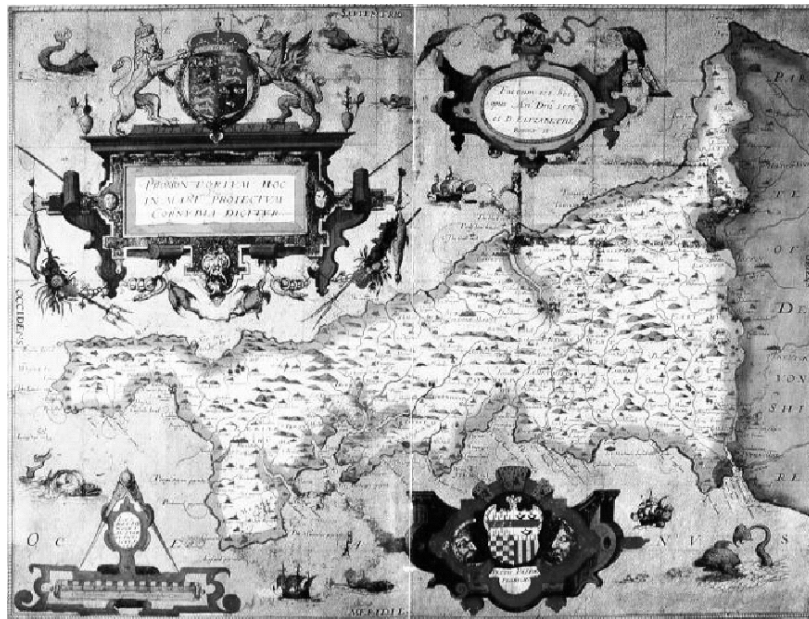
no comprehensive survey of Britain *in toto* had been undertaken, and no surveys had been produced that had received such a high level of official patronage. Why is that important? Prior to the publication of *Anglia*, few people had any idea what England looked like, and more

particularly, they had no concept of Britain as a cartographic entity. The other set of maps is Ortelius' *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum*, which was published in forty-five successive editions between 1570 and 1624. Extrapolating from these numbers, we can see that tens of thousands of copies for each map were produced, which became so accessible that they started to pervade all aspects of society. They were such ubiquitous objects that they became essential tools of government: whether used for local administration or to shape national consciousness, maps were now a mainstay of late Tudor and early Stuart Britain.



Saxton's frontispiece

If we look at Saxton's maps, one of the first things to notice is that there were no roads on them. This indicates that they were obviously not meant for getting from one location to another, which in turn begs the question: why were they made? On looking at all of the county maps, an interesting feature starts to emerge: there is a recurrent, even systematic, presence of Queen Elizabeth. The first place that Elizabeth's image dominates is at the very beginning of the atlas on the frontispiece. Secondly, we see that symbols of her presence govern each individual map.



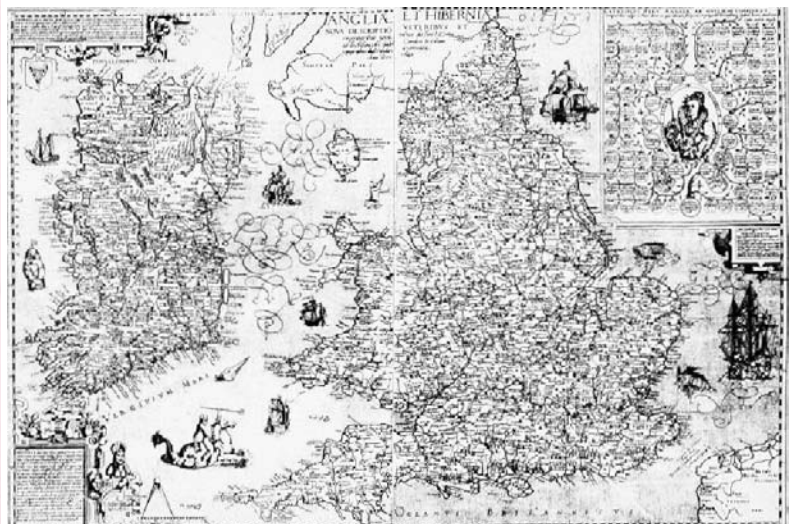
Saxton's Cornwall

Nearly every county promoted her royal hegemony: for example if we look at Cornwall, her Royal Coat of arms is both large and prominent, and therefore a strong assertion that the land is hers and hers alone. Within a short time span, evidence shows that other maps propagated Elizabeth's image as the one and only ruler. For example, John Case's image of Elizabeth embracing the "sphere of the state" in 1588, shows how a celestial map could be used as an allegory of the benefits of the queen's rule, and even her godlike aspirations.²

Although celestial maps are not central to my argument, Case's image highlights the importance of the allegorical maps by symbolizing her dominion over the kingdom, since each sign of the zodiac is related to a quality found in the Queen's leadership. The concentric spheres have symbols on one side, and a related quality on the other. The centre is the "justitia Immobilis"; the first circle contains "ubertas rerum"; the second "Facundia"; the third "Clementia"; the fourth "Religio"; the fifth "Fortitudo"; the sixth Prudentia"; the seventh "Maiestas". All this is encircled by a dominant motto "ELISABETHA • D • G • ANGLIAE • FRANCIAE • ET • HIBERNIAE • REGINA • FIDEI • DEFENSATRIX." Two years later the cartographer Hondius produced his *Angliae et Hiberniae* which prominently displayed a genealogical table and a portrait of Elizabeth.



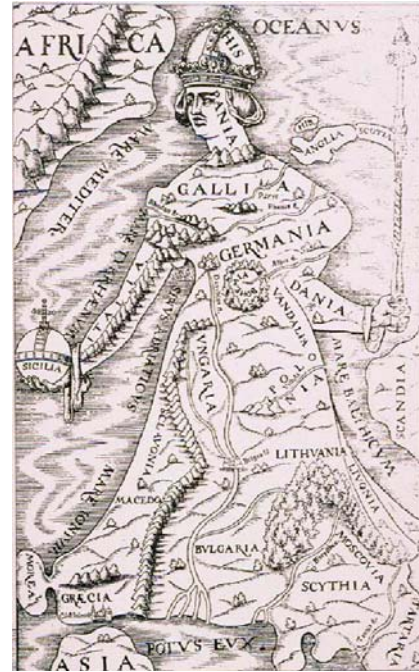
John Case's Sphaera Civitatis



Hondius' Angliae et Hiberniae



Hondius' *Typus Angliae*



Munster's *Cosmography*

The correlation of the Queen and her descent from William the Conqueror is visible in the top right of the frame, which reflects Elizabeth's strong assertion of her long-standing claim to the throne. Her ostentatious alignment with William the Conqueror suggests that she was unsure of her right to the monarchy; another map by Hondius was entitled *Typus Angliae* (1592), also depicted a strong central image of Queen Elizabeth.³ Her conspicuous placement over Scotland is a clear indicator of her questionable claims to the country north of the border. What we are witnessing is a nascent fusion in imagery between woman and cartography, or in simpler terms, the combination of 'woman appearing in a map.' This particular fusion finds its iconographic relevance, when we notice that the same merging proliferates in Europe, at exactly the same time.⁴

The woman-as-map appears many times in quick succession from Heinrich Bunting's *Europa Prima Pars Terrae in Forma Virginis* in 1581, to the image from Munster's *Cosmography* in 1588, and Jacobus Francus's *Het Spaens Europa* in 1598. Although each representation is simply a variation on the same theme, the correlation of the map and the Queen has taken a leap from the English counterparts. The difference with the continental examples is twofold: first,

where the English models merely suggest a link between woman and maps, the European versions explicitly personify the map as a woman. Secondly, the map renders Europe in the form of a virgin. Earlier I mentioned that the two most prolific and highly influential maps of their day were Saxton and Ortelius. Where the English Saxton depicts a picture of the virgin Queen on the frontispiece of his map book, Ortelius makes the decision to depict personifications of all four continents as virgins on the frontispiece of his *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum*. Europa is given the most prominent



Ortelius' frontispiece to *Theatrum Orbis Terrarum*



Mercator's *Atlas Sive Cosmographicae*

position looking down from her pedestal; Africa on the right and Asia on the left are presenting tributes to her, while America reclines below. The same concept of depicting female virgin personifications also occurs in Mercator’s popular *Atlas Sive Cosmographicae*. Two points emerge from these images: the first is that there is a discernible movement from rendering the Queen *and* her country, to the Queen *as* her country. The second point that all these examples clearly illustrate is how much maps of the period exhibit a strong bias, as feminized landscape.

Soon a parallel enterprise developed in the world of art: as well as having strong iconic images of the Queen-on-a-map, we start to have maps on the queen appearing in paintings. In particular there are three portraits of Elizabeth that are iconographically very revealing. The first is Ketel’s so-called “Sieve” portrait, which was painted only one year after Saxton’s maps were published.⁵ Situated behind the dominant image of the Queen, is a globe of the world. Eight years later the “Armada” portrait was painted.⁶ This sets Queen Elizabeth in front of two paintings within the composition. The first has the Spanish Armada being repelled by English fire ships, while the second has the Armada leaving, broken and defeated, in a storm-tossed sea. What is relevant for our purposes is the foreground of the painting. Here the Queen sits crowned on a throne with her hand on a globe, which conveys that the crown, the Queen, and her throne have repelled the invading Spanish. Of most interest to us, is that the Queen’s touch lends greater prominence, and therefore greater iconographic value to the cartographic image. Even more important is that her hand is resting on the globe, thereby signifying that she is holding the whole world, as if it is now hers to own.⁷

Finally, Gheeraerts the Younger painted the “Ditchley” portrait from 1590-2; this positions Queen Elizabeth as standing on a globe of the world, and more particularly on a map of England.⁸ It is apparent that the map is no longer a peripheral signifier, but has become the central image in the picture. If we view the three portraits in chronological order, we can see that there is a discernible movement of the cartographic image from the background to the foreground. Equally, the idea of maps is advancing to the forefront of people’s consciousness, and Elizabeth’s arsenal of political pre-eminence. Arguably Elizabeth created a fashion for pictures containing maps – albeit a minor one. Nicholas Hilliard has two portraits incorporating cartographic imagery: George Clifford, 3rd Earl of Cumberland, as the Knight of Pendragon Castle (c.1590) in the National Maritime Museum, and the other in the collection of the Duke of Buccleuch (London) has what looks like an indistinct globe on his shield; similarly the reclining portrait of Henry Percy, 9th Earl of Northumberland (c.1590-95) in the Rijksmuseum (Amsterdam) depicts a globe hanging in a tree ‘balancing’ a feather.⁹ The anonymous *Life and Death*



Ketel’s “Sieve” portrait



The “Armada” portrait



Gheeraerts’s “Ditchley” portrait

of *Sir Henry Unton* (c.1596) provides another link between maps and art, since it is a narrative portrait, which shows scenes from Unton's life and death, painted like a map. One needs to read the portrait and follow the journey of his life, in a particular way. For example it starts in Ascott-Under-Wychwood, moves to Oriel College, then shows Unton's journey across the Alps to Venice and Padua. The section dealing with travelling in Europe is geographically incorrect (empirically speaking); however, it serves the larger function of telling the narrative as clearly as possible. The painting goes on to show various other episodes in Unton's life, such as serving with Leicester in the Low Countries, going to Coucy La Fère in France on an embassy to Henry IV, and eventually dying. The remaining five scenes visually depict Unton travelling back to Wadley House in Faringdon, some retrospective scenes of life in Wadley, and finally Unton's funeral on the 8 July 1596. There is clear compression of time and distance, but all for the sake of narrative.¹⁰

What has this to do with the plays, you may well ask? Contemporary writers rapidly recognised the innate potential of the figurative aspect of mapping. One only has to think of Shakespeare's descriptions of Romans to realise that he might well have had the Ditchley portrait in mind when writing certain texts. In *Julius Caesar* Caesar, "doth bestride the narrow world / Like a colossus" (1.2.134-5), while in *Antony and Cleopatra*, "His legs [Antony's] bestrid the ocean" (5.2.81). John Webster in his play *Appius and Virginia* utilises the same image that Shakespeare acquired from looking at the Ditchley portrait: he calls Appius "The high Colossus that bestrides us all" (3.1.84). These writers understood that the images presented in maps did not simply conjure up a three-dimensional image of the world. Instead the map could represent a credo that cartographers and painters had already begun to employ: maps represented powerful tools of authority and land ownership.

The most theatrically conspicuous connection between maps, metaphor, and mankind occurs in an obscure play by Barten Holyday entitled *Technogamia*. Before any words are spoken, the characters materialize on Oxford's Christ Church stage costumed very specifically. The first is "Geographus" who appears

In a white Beauer, with a white and greene Feather, a little Band, a light-colour'd Sattin suite, imbrodered Gloues, red-silke Stockings, blue Garters and Roses, white Pumps, a Cloke whereon was describ'd the terrestriall Globe in two Hemispheares, and on the Cape the two Poles [my italics].¹¹

Critically this character appears onstage wearing a map. The overt display of mapping on the clothes would have a great impact on students, who were newly versed in matters cartographical;



Plancius' *Orbis Terrarum*

but we must remember that Holyday's production was made possible in a way that could not have been imagined prior to the popular dissemination of cartography. He is clearly influenced by two cartographic images: the less important image is "the terrestriall Globe in two Hemispheares" which is taken straight from one of many double hemisphere maps, such as one by Plancius. The other image is the figurative frontispiece to

Drayton’s *Poly Olbion*, which was published only six years prior to the play’s production. It shows a Goddess-like entity wearing a cloaked map of the country, and clearly inspired what Holyday describes as “a Cloke whereon was describ’d the terrestriall Globe.”¹² Thus far we have seen images of the queen on maps; then images of maps on pictures of the queen; then we have human beings standing on top of maps, and finally figures dressed in maps.

Let us return for a moment to Shakespeare to see what happened next. Earlier I identified the link between maps and mankind in *The Comedy of Errors*: “She is spherical like a globe.” However, if we look closer we notice that Dromio’s description of Nell, the fat kitchen wench, makes the correlation between maps and the female or womankind. The influence of the feminized map is what Shakespeare chooses to highlight. He utilizes the same device in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, when Falstaff describes Mistress Ford as “a region in Guiana, all gold and beauty” (1.3.61-2). The implied merging of maps and womankind is also made explicit in Samuel Brandon’s *The Tragicomoedi of the Vertuous Octauia*, where the character Sylvia says

O if you would but marke the little mappe
Of my poore world, how in times swift careere
I manage fortune . . .¹³

She is saying ‘look at my poor body, which is like a map of the world. In times of poverty I use it to control my fate by sleeping with men to get money to live on.’ This is a very specific mapping of the female body, otherwise known as reification. In this instance the promiscuous Sylvia recommends that women should not be constant to men, but use their sexuality with abandon. In doing so, she invokes her own body as a mappable template to be emulated.

What we see emerging is not simply that there is a link between mapping and the female body onstage, but specifically a sexualized mapping of the female body. If we look back to our paintings, we can see how other feminine images of mapping also propound a nascent sexual element. In the cartographic ‘Sieve’ portrait Queen Elizabeth holds a sieve, which clearly aligns her with Petrarch’s faithful and virginal Tuccia. In the multiple ‘woman as map’ images mentioned earlier, the personification of Europe conjures up the raped Europa, while the newly mapped land in America provocatively announces itself as “Virginia.”

If we return to Shakespeare’s *Comedy of*



Drayton’s *Poly Olbion*



John Smith’s Map of Virginia

Errors for a third time, we see how a sexual reification or ‘cartographizing’ occurs. Let us look at the speech in full:

Dromio: She’s spherical like a Globe; I could find out countries in her.
Antipholus: In what part of her body stands Ireland?
Dromio: Marry sir, in her buttocks; I found it by the bogs.
Antipholus: Where Scotland?
Dromio: I found it by the bareness, hard in the palm of her hand.
Antipholus: Where France?
Dromio: In her forehead, armed and reverted, making war against her heir.
Antipholus: Where England?
Dromio: I looked for the chalky cliffs, but I could find no whiteness in them. But I guess it stood in her chin, by the salt rheum that ran between France and it.
Antipholus: Where Spain?
Dromio: Faith I saw it not but felt it hot in her breath.
Antipholus: Where America, the Indies?
Dromio: O sir, upon her nose, all o’er-embellished with rubies, carbuncles, sapphires, declining their rich aspect to the hot breath of Spain, who sent whole armadoes of carracks to be ballast at her nose.
Antipholus: Where stood Belgia, the Netherlands
Dromio: Oh sir I did not look so low!

(3.2.112-138)

Dromio does not simply associate each part of Nell’s body with a different country, but specifically sexualizes her by punning on the female pudendum: first he says “She is spherical, like a globe; I could find out *cuntries* in her” (112-113). He then jokes about not finding the Netherlands; the sexual element of the reference is still alive today in people who politely refer to genitals as the “nether regions.” This is followed up with a pun on Low Countries and the lower part of the body: he says “I did not look so low” (138).

Shakespeare similarly exploits the notion a number of times in his non-dramatic poems: for example, in *The Rape of Lucrece* he describes “Her breasts, like ivory globes circled with blue, / A pair of maiden worlds unconquered” (407-408); later in the same poem “His hand, . . . marched on to make his stand / On her bare breast, the heart of all her lands” (437-439). In *Venus and Adonis* (229-240) the imagery becomes bawdier –

“Fondling,” she saith, “since I have hemm’d thee here
 Within the circuit of this ivory pale,
 I’ll be a park, and thou shalt be my deer:
 Feed where thou wilt, on mountian or in dale;
 Graze on my lips, or if those hills be dry,
 Stray lower, where the pleasant fountains lie.”

The device is repeated once more in *Romeo and Juliet* where the fanciful Rosaline is anatomized with her “quivering thigh, / And the *demesnes* that there adjacent lie” (2.1.19-20).

Shakespeare seems to have set the scene for other writers also to start making jokes about the female body, maps and sex. John Donne’s *Elegie XIX* perfectly mirrors the idea expressed a few moments go in *The Rape of Lucrece* that women’s bodies are virgin territory waiting to be conquered:

Licence my roving hands, and let them go
 Before, behind, between, above, below.
 O my America, my new found land,
 My kingdom, safest when with one man manned,
 My mine of precious stones, my empery,
 How blessed am I in this discovering thee.¹⁴

Christopher Marlowe and George Chapman’s *Hero and Leander* (1598), Book II, lines 275 to 286 also uses the idea of Leander’s ivory breasts being like a globe waiting to be discovered,

while onstage the same commodification of a mapped woman’s body emerges in a character called Moll in *The Puritan* (1607). She holds her virginity against her suitor, warning him that she will keep her passion in check:

I’ faith you shall staie, [i.e. do not touch me!] for Sir Iohn you must note the nature of the
 Climates. Your Northen Wench in her
 owne Countrie may well hold out till shee be . . . fifteene,
 But if she touch the South once, and come up to *London*,
 Her Chimes go presently after twelve.

(5.59-63 sigs. H2^f, 29-H2^v, 2.)

This passage is not as obscure as it first appears, since it simply echoes the previous notion that her body is a map, and that the “South” – or the nether regions – is somewhere hot and dangerous and not to be touched under any circumstances. If her “South” is touched, her metaphorical bells will start ringing despite only being twelve years old. Thomas Middleton and Thomas Dekker’s sexual equitation of Moll with Marybone Park in *The Roaring Girl* (London, 1611) [3.1.3-5], assumes that the audience would understand that a park is analogous to a female.

Jonson uses the same trope in *Cynthia’s Revels*, where he makes a joke out of a virgin’s mapped body: “By the white valley that lies between the Alpine hills of your bosom, I protest” (2.2.23-4). In another play by S.S. called *The Honest Lawyer* (1616) similar humour abounds. The oxymoronic name of the play “The Honest Lawyer” clearly indicates the sort of comedy the audience should expect. One of the main characters is the bawd of the brothel, who is appropriately named Marmayde or “Mar-mayde.” Marmayde tries to persuade a customer to take possession of a whore. When she describes the girl in question, Marmayde uses language that equates a woman’s body to the land:

Cry you mercie,
 Land-lord: if you’l haue any sport, walke in, walke in. You shall
 take out your rent here, Land-lord.

(2.412)

The exact same situation occurs in John Fletcher’s *The Loyal Subject* (performed c.1618) where a character called Theodore acts as pander for two girls of suspect morals:

Does your Lordship like ‘em?
 They are my sisters sir; good lusty Lasses,
 They’ll doe their labour well, I warrant yee
 You’ll finde no bed-straw here sir
 Let’s start first, & have fair play: . . . what would ye give now
 To turne the *globe up*, and finde the rich Moluccas?
 To passe the *straights*? here (doe ye itch) by St. Nicholas,
 Here’s that will make ye scratch and claw . . .¹⁵

Let us cease concerning ourselves with women, maps and sex, and look at men. Are they ever reified as maps, or are maps ever personified as men? The short answer is “very rarely.” The reason is probably that we see a fundamental shift in the way in which maps are depicted after Elizabeth dies. Where there was a glut of images that closely tied women and maps during Elizabeth’s reign, after the accession of James in 1603 the same enthusiasm for male mapping did not continue. One would expect James to follow Elizabeth’s lead, which he initially does. On ascending the throne James appropriated the same iconography in his opening parliamentary speech on 19th. March 1604 by specifically linking himself to the land: “What God hath conjoined let no man separate. I am the Husband, and all the whole Isle is my lawfull Wife; I am the Head, and it is my Body.”¹⁶ This quote not only aligns James with the country in a cartographic manner but also indicates that he is the one who will unite England and Scotland. Soon the map-makers mirrored James’ preoccupation of cartographically associating himself

with the land: the introduction to John Speed's *Theatre of the Empire of Great Britaine* (1611) [sig. A6^v], claims

The state of euery Kingdome well managed by prudent Gouernment, seemes to mee to represent a Humane Body . . . And here first we will . . . propose to view the whole Body & Monarchy intire.

Speed appropriates James' polemic by explicitly aligning England with the body of the monarch.

In the first year of James' reign the iconography in other maps also mirrored the same conceit: William Kip's map of Britain shows a vast genealogical tree depicting James at the top and tracing his lineage back to William the Conqueror. Like Elizabeth, this was drawn in order to assert his prerogative to the English throne.¹⁷ However, the instance of royal-imagery-in-maps and conversely, maps-in-royal-imagery decreases rapidly thereafter. In fact there are only three instances of maps in paintings in the whole of James' reign. John de Critz made a portrait of James I with an iconic jewel prominently displayed on his headdress. At first the painting does not seem remotely cartographic until one realises that the jewel was known as "the Mirror of Great Britain." It was designed to celebrate the joining of England and Scotland in a symbolic way, and its three parts represent England, Scotland, and Ireland. Although not explicitly cartographic, its name "the Mirror of Great Britain" and its composition emphasise the close association between cartography and royal imagery in art. After this the question of Britain's monarchy seems to have stabilized, and the vogue of putting maps in paintings almost disappears completely. The last vestiges occur in the 1620's with Sir Nathaniel Bacon's self portrait, while the final map in a painting can be seen in the 1636 portrait of William Style of Langley, which has him pointing down to a tiny globe.



John de Critz's portrait of King James



Sir Nathaniel Bacon's self portrait



William Style of Langley

Taken as a whole, we are seeing a distinct regression of cartographic imagery in art. During Elizabeth’s reign the map increased in size and importance, as fears about the country’s future loomed larger; in James’s reign map imagery decreased as questions about succession and division receded. Nevertheless, even in its reduced state, the map retained its distinctive role as a tool of power and cohesion.

How does this affect the drama, in particular how does it influence Shakespeare’s writing? Let us briefly look at two obscure instances that occur in James’s reign and then focus on a more canonical example. Around 1612 Robert Armin’s *The Valiant Welshman* (London, 1615) was first performed. There is a glancing map reference by the character Cartamanda when he describes the monarch (in this case King Philip of Macedon) in specifically cartographic terms as one

Whose boundlesse minde of soueraigne Maiesty
Was like a Globe, whose body circular
Admits no end.

(sig. H2^r, 4.7.[29-31])

Just as Britian’s monarch has shifted to a male sovereign and the maps appropriate his male image, so the same correlation occurs in the play. Again, the same ideology is reflected in Holyday’s *Technogamia*, when Geographus’ man Phantastes describes a Traveller:

Nay, Sir, the actualitie of the performance puts it
Beyond all contradiction. With his tongue hee’d vowell you
Out as smooth Italian, as any man breathing: with his Eye he
Would sparkle forth the proud Spanish: with his Nose blow
Out most Robustious Dutch: the Creaking of his High-heel’d
Shoo would articulate exact Polonian: The knocking of his
Shinbones Foeminine French: and his Belly would grumble
Most pure and Scholer-like Hungary.

(sig. F2^r, 2.8)

Whereas Shakespeare’s *Comedy of Errors* highlights the female body as being “spherical like a Globe” and a personification of all the countries in the world, by 1618 the male traveller now employs the same attributes. The correlation of the male monarch and map manifests itself most apparently two years after James VI of Scotland became King James I of England, when there were still questions concerning how much the Kingdom of Britain was united. It was in that same year that Shakespeare wrote *King Lear*. At the beginning of the play, Lear proclaims

Give me the *Map* there. Know that we have divided
In three our kingdom; and ‘tis our fast intent
To shake all cares and business from our age, . . .
Conferring them on younger strengths, while we
Unburdened crawl toward death.

(1.1.38-42)

On a fundamental level, Shakespeare has a retiring King calling for a map. He then divides the kingdom neither politically nor verbally, but cartographically. Lear’s decision to divide the kingdom is so “that future strife might be prevented.” Yet his decision is fraught with problems both literally and symbolically, as any cartographically aware Jacobean could tell you. On a prosaic level, instead of uniting the country, the cartographic division becomes the cause of civil war and ultimately Britain’s downfall. Before Lear made his decision there was harmony in the country (albeit a brittle harmony). Afterwards, discord, disunity and dissension become the watchwords.

On a figurative level, the same type of conflict occurs: Lear’s decision to travel between his daughters’ houses by spending six months in each symbolises that he is dividing himself (or

symbolically sharing himself out) in the same way that he shared out the land. The result parallels what happens with the map: just as civil war breaks out in Britain, so a type of civil war breaks out inside Lear. The division of this cartographic personification causes a civil war in his head, and he starts to go mad. Shakespeare regularly indulged in this sort of parallelism: when Lear divides the map, the country goes mad; when he divides himself, his mind goes mad; when his daughters refuse to put him up for the night, the heavens go mad. Shakespeare's main purpose is to show that these are all unnatural and therefore undesirable events.

If we relate what King Lear does to King James, we can see that there is a polemic to the story. Historically the play was written in 1605, or at the same time as James was perpetuating the idea that he personified the unity of Scotland and England. He thus embodied the notion that a united kingdom could not withstand the division that Lear proposed, since a divided king and a divided kingdom contravened everything that James was trying to perpetuate. Of course Shakespeare would probably have been hanged for openly contesting James' propaganda machine, but that is not the point; what is important is how Shakespeare used the maps at his disposal. The now cartographically astute audience would understand that a map designed as a force of unity could become a tool of embitterment, division and destruction. Maps were powerful and iconic tools that should not be trifled with, or anarchy would ensue. When Lear calls for the map to be divided, his audience would understand that he is making a grave mistake. And they would understand it in a way that only now we can appreciate.

NOTES

1. P.D.A. Harvey, *Maps in Tudor England*, (London: Public Record Office and British Library, 1993), 7; R.A. Skelton and P.D.A. Harvey. Eds., *Local Maps and Plans from Medieval England*, (Oxford: Clarendon Press; New York: Oxford University Press, 1986): 3.

2. David Buisseret, ed., *Monarchs, Ministers and Maps: the Emergence of Cartography as a Tool of Government in Early Modern Europe*, (Chicago; London: University of Chicago Press, 1992), 77.

3. Rodney W. Shirley, *Early Printed Maps of the British Isles 1477-1650*, (East Grinstead, 1991), 69-70, 91-92, figs. 63, 82, and 76-77, fig. 67.

4. See also Darby Lewes, 'The Female Landscape', *Mercator's World*, (Eugene, Oregon, Jan / Feb. 1999), Vol. 4, 1, 35-41.

5. Roy Strong, *The Cult of Elizabeth*, (London, 1977), 11; Strong, *Portraits of Queen Elizabeth I*, (Oxford, 1963), 70; Strong, *The Tudor and Stuart Monarchy: Pageant, Painting, Iconography*, (Woodbridge, 1995-99), Vol. 1, fig. 4; Strong, *The English Icon*, (London; New York, 1969), 157. Maurice Howard attributes the painting to Quentin Metsys the Younger in *The Tudor Image*, (London, 1995), 69.

6. Strong, *The English Icon*, 182.

7. Cesare Ripa's *Iconologia*, (Rome, 1593) explicates how allegorical figures should be interpreted (the 1603 edition is the first with woodcuts depicting the figures; there is no English version until 1709). Ripa's figure of "Anno" asserts that "the man rests his hand on a globe, on a pedestal, symbol of the universe or of perfect continuity," Cesare Ripa, *Baroque and Rococco Pictorial Imagery*, (New York, 1971), 17; see also "In vna mano terrà vn serpe riuolto in giro, che si tengha la coda in bocca, & nell' altra hauerà vn chiodo," Cesare Ripa, *Iconologia*, (Roma, 1603), 20-21. Strong, *Portraits*, 68-68, 74. See E. Pognon, "Les Plus Anciens Plans de Ville Gravés et les événements Militaire" in *Imago Mundi*, Vol. 20 [1968], 13-19, for other paintings which contain maps commemorating battles.

8. The Ditchley portrait currently resides in the National Portrait Gallery (London) or see Strong, *The English Icon*, 289; Strong, *Portraits of Queen I*, 75-6; Strong, *Tudor and Jacobean Portraits*, (London, 1969), Vol. 1, 104-7; Strong, *Tudor and Stuart Monarchy*, Vol. 1, fig. 7.

9. Reproductions in Strong, *Tudor and Stuart Monarchy*, Vol. 1, figs. 101 and 58, respectively.

10. National Portrait Gallery, and reproduced in *Riverside Shakespeare*, (Boston, 1974), 46-47, fig. 4.

11. Barten Holyday, *Technogamia: or The Marriages of the Arts. A Comedie, Written by Barten Holyday, Master of Arts, and Student of Christ-Church in Oxford, and Acted by the Students of the same House before the Vniuersitie, at Shroue-tide*, (London, 1618), sig. A3^r.

12. Michael Drayton, ‘Poly-Olbion’, in *The Complete Works of Michael Drayton*, J. William Hebel, ed., (Oxford, 1961), Vol. 4, interleaves ii-iii. Thomas Tomkis’s *Lingva: Or the Combat of the Tongue, and the Fiue Senses for Superiority. A Pleasant Comoedie*, (London, 1607) is another academic play (performed at Trinity College, Cambridge) which utilized a similar device eleven years prior to *Technogamia*. The drama presents all the characters elaborately costumed, including a personification of the world: “Next a page clad in green with a terrestrial Globe before Terra, in a greene Veluet gowne stucke with branches, and flowers, a Crowne of Turrets vpon her head,” sig. F4^r, 3.6.1[s.d.]. Terra does not say anything, but remain poignantly mute.

13. Samuel Brandon, *The Tragicomoedi of the Vertuous Octauia*, (London, 1598), Act 2, [315-316], sig. C3^r. Not only was the world personified onstage, but in Samuel Daniel’s *Tragedie of Philotas*, (London, 1607) particular countries were personified: the Argument stipulates that “The Chorus consisting of three Graecians (as of the three estates of a Kingdome) and one Persian, representing the multitude and body of a people,” sig. A5^r.

14. John Donne, *Poetical Works*, H.J.C. Grierson, ed., (London, 1912), Vol. 1, 119-120, *Elegie XIX*, 25-29. Grierson conjectures in Vol. 2, 62 that the elegy was probably written c.1593-98.

15. John Fletcher, *The Loyall Subject*, (London, 1647), 37, 3.4.16-19.

16. James I, *The Political Works of James I*, intr. by Charles Howard McIlwain, (New York, 1968), 272; *The Reign of James VI & I*, ed. by A.G.R. Smith, (London, 1973), 166; Richard Helgerson, ‘Ideological Conflict in Early Modern Mapping of England’, *Cartographica*, Vol. 30, 1, 68-74. James repeatedly used the image throughout his reign; see speeches in McIlwain on 278, 279, 282, 287, 307, 343, although he had utilized the body politic / microcosm correspondence as early as 1599 (see 51).

17. During the same year Jodocus Hondius’ map of Britain has a large cartouche flanked by tiny pictures of James I and his wife Anne; Shirley, *Early Printed Maps*, fig. 90, 101-102, and fig. 91, 102-103.

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