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"The Map-makers' Colors": Maps in Twentieth-Century American Poetry in English

Adele J. Haft

> When a region is strange, a man explores it, comes to know its lengths and heights, its depths and riches and dangers. The time comes when he draws a map of it, not so much for later travelers in more of a hurry as for his own satisfaction in reducing time and space to the size of a sheet of paper. Sometimes this map is a novel, sometimes an essay, a building, a poem, or a portrait. Literature has been called an extension of experience, and few examples of graphic art so stretch and speed experience as a map.
> John Holmes, *Map of My Country*

Introduction

1 The map as a literary metaphor or object of discussion is not unique to the twentieth century.[1] At the dawn of Western literature, Homer imagined the god Hephaestus creating a shield that resembles archaic models of the cosmos for the magnificent, but short-lived Achilles (8th century BCE: *Iliad* 18.478–609; see Aujac, Harley, and Woodward, 1987, 131–132). Since then, maps have been regarded as authoritative mirrors of the world or as arbitrary social constructs; as symbols of clarification, guidance, and transformation or of obfuscation, coercion, and constraint; as representative of civilization's progress or of its biases and perils; as analogues of the human face or body; as seductive or coolly removed (Muehrcke and Muehrcke, 1974; Zanger, 1982; Wood and Fels, 1992, 1–27; Huggan, 1994, 21–33). Yet when it comes to twentieth-century literature in English, literary cartographers[2] tend to focus almost exclusively

on prose fiction. Poetry remains, for the most part, a *terra incognita.* And this despite the fact that the same conditions contributed to the century's explosion of map-related poems as to its novels and short stories: two World Wars, astounding scientific and technological advances, decreasing production costs, the rise of geography and creative writing programs, progress in civil rights, and (as yet) unparalleled access to education, art, travel, and information. These factors and more made the century *unique* in the number, range, and accuracy of maps on all scales, *and* in the extraordinary quantity and wealth ofliterature devoted to maps (Haft, forthcoming, 2014).

2 In verse composed in English, twentieth-century American poets are among the most map-obsessed of all time. "Among" because British poets continued to use the map as a prominent metaphor centuries after their ancestors settled in Jamestown, Virginia; while poets in other former British colonies like Canada and Australia found new ways to integrate maps into their work. Neither Emily Dickinson nor Walt Whitman, the two prodigious and canonical American poets prior to the twentieth century, had much to say about maps — except that we mortals have no chart of heaven (Dickinson, ["I never saw a moor"]; Whitman, "Darest Thou Now O Soul") or that maps have "blanks to be fill'd" (Whitman, "Passage to India"). In fact, the American map-poem, like American poetry generally, didn't enter the modern era until after World War I — only after several early modernist poets (like Robert Frost) and their countrymen in the service confronted European culture on European soil, thus "bridg[ing] the gap between American and European culture, and...prepar[ing] the ground for an international modernism in which America would play a crucial part" (Beach, 2003, 2). Over the eighty years that followed, American poets — those born or living in the United States[3] — have become increasingly diverse in terms of background and geography, with the result that "the map of North America, once so empty of poetry except in the East, begins to be filled in" (Vendler, [1986] 2003, 14). Four generations of poets combined their familiarity with maps — as practical guides, works of art, and metaphors — with their personal experiences, including the places they called home, and with their collective perspectives not only as Americans but as global citizens.

3 My article presents a narrative catalogue of twentieth-century American poetry in English. To my knowledge, no one has attempted to gather, order, and comment on such a vast body of map-fixated poems and collections. On the other hand, the constraints of time and space mean that fine poems are missing, especially those that elude easy categories, and analysis of individual works along the lines suggested by Huggan (above, note 2) must await other opportunities. Concentrating on such an artificially "narrow" topic makes twentieth-century American poetry appear isolated like an island — separated from continents of earlier literature (Aristophanes, Shakespeare, Donne, Scudéry, Stevenson) and other influences (art, old maps) as well as emerging continents of subsequent literature (even by the same poet); from countries of contemporary prose[4] (Conrad, Joyce, Tolkien, Borges, Pynchon, Calvino, Benet, Bâ) and of poetry not in English (Kamenskii, Mendes, Piñera, Césaire, Gomringer: Haft, 2000, 71–73);from neighboring islands of English-language poetry (Reed, Birney, Lindop, Slessor: Haft, 2001c, Haft, 2002, Haft, 2003a, Haft, forthcoming, 2012, respectively); and even from native islands of poetry in languages other than English in the United States (e.g., Spanish, Native American languages). What follows, then, is an abbreviated and provisional chart of twentieth-century American poetry about maps —

one that offers excerpts[5] from a selection of notable American map-poems and grapples with their place in a century unique for the number, range, and quality of such poems.

Influential Beginnings: 1920–c.1960

4 Perhaps the first luminary to publish a poem featuring maps was Robert Frost, whose nostalgic "A Brook in the City" (1921) laments a brook imprisoned in a "sewer dungeon under stone." Although its "immortal force" may "keep / this new-built city from both work and sleep," only the poet and "ancient maps" recall its existence (Frost, 1923, 98).[6] Soon after, Thomas Hornsby Ferril's "Old Maps to Oregon," from his award-winning collection *High Passage*, imagines pioneer wives bemused by the "high deceit" of maps with "names stretching two hundred miles or more" "toward some empty place that had a name" (Ferril, 1926, 12). Surprisingly, both Frost and Ferril were preceded by a child prodigy. In "Geography," nine-year-old Hilda Conkling reveals her dissatisfaction with maps as dry collections of place-names. Instead, Conkling insists that she "can study [...] geography from chickens / named for Plymouth Rock and Rhode Island," though she prefers to "make a new geography" in which trees rather than countries are the focus of her map (Conkling, 1920, 75). And in "The Map Makers," ten-year-old Nathalia Crane compares a friend's sketch of a Brooklyn boulevard with a state-of-the-art celestial chart that "took twenty years" to create (Crane, 1924, 42).[7]

5 Whether or not a little girl actually came up with the first map-poem in twentieth-century America, there is no doubt that female poets, so sparsely represented in earlier centuries, crafted some of the earliest and most influential. Four years after women won the right to vote, Marianne Moore published "Sea Unicorns and Land Unicorns," which explores personal relationships by celebrating the mythical beasts "described by the cartographers of 1539" (Moore, 1924, 91–93). A lover of animals and the arts, Moore alludes here to the *Carta Marina* (1539), a profusely ornamented map of Scandinavia by Swedish mapmaker/historian Olaus Magnus (Haft, 2003b). Old maps inspire adventure. In her title poem "The Venture," it's the lure of the "unknown" — "Oh, that they never knew / I would be knowing" — that attracts armchair explorer Jean Kenyon MacKenzie to old maps (MacKenzie, 1925, 3). In "Maps" (1935), a Depression-era poem for elementary schoolchildren, Dorothy Brown Thompson extends the fun to all sorts of maps before concluding "maps are really / magic wands / for home-staying / vagabonds!" (Brewton and Brewton, 1949, 6). Eunice Tietjens, who also wrote exclusively for children, complains in "Old Maps" (1936) about the "dull," overly "finished" products prominent "in school." Instead she relishes the "queer mistakes" and "empty spaces," the dragons and monstrous hybrids enlivening medieval and early modern maps (Brewton and Brewton, 1949, 47). Laura Riding, on the other hand, ended her much-reprinted "The Map of Places" in despair a year before her attempted suicide. Unable to find excitement or solace in old maps' vicarious journeys or promises of discovery, Riding concluded that they speak only of the past: "All is known, all is found. / Death meets itself everywhere. / Holes in maps look through to nowhere" (Riding, 1928, 1).

6 In terms of quality *and* lasting influence, however, Elizabeth Bishop and Louise Bogan produced (what I consider to be) the most seminal *and* compact of the American map-poems.

7 On New Year's Eve of 1934, the twenty-three-year-old Bishop — recently orphaned and sick with the flu — created her breakthrough poem "The Map" (Kalstone, 1989, 40). Inspired by an unidentified map's depiction of the North Atlantic, Bishop's exquisite poem alludes, in part, to the "seashore towns" and coastal waters of Nova Scotia, where she lived as a child and later summered with her maternal grandparents. From the opening of her three-stanza meditation — "Land lies in water; it is shadowed green." — Bishop juxtaposes the conflicting realities of map image and actual geography even as she transforms both by repeated changes of perspective. The static map comes alive as coastal "profiles investigate the sea" and "mapped waters are more quiet than the land is." Playing with color and scale, Bishop suggests that the convention of running names across mountains and seas indicates "— the printer [is] here experiencing the same excitement / as when emotion too far exceeds its cause." What made the poem so revolutionary was its bridging of artificial divides between poetry and cartography: "Topography displays no favorites; North's as near as West. / More delicate than the historians' are the map-makers' colors."Bishop recognized that poets and mapmakers are kindred spirits in creating selective, generalized, and simplified views of the world (Haft, 2001b, 37–54). As poet/critic Lloyd Frankenberg argued in his review of "The Map":

> The exact craft of the cartographer is perhaps least associated, customarily, with our ideas of poetry. By showing us how human the map-maker's decisions have to be, and how imaginative our reading of a literal map, the poem prepares us for poetry's exactitudes. It demolishes prejudice without alluding to it. (Frankenberg, 1949, 333)

8 "The Map" appeared originally in a collection introduced by Bishop's friend and mentor Marianne Moore (Winslow, 1935, 78–79), but Bishop later used it to open several of her own collections, including *Poems: North & South — A Cold Spring* (Bishop, 1955). Bishop would return to the map as metaphor in several poems, including "Song for the Rainy Season" (1960: see Haft 2001b, 42), and continued to share her experience of geographic space in *Questions of Travel* (Bishop, 1965) and *Geography III* (Bishop, 1976) — whose cartographic epigraph comes from James Monteith's textbook *First Lessons in Geography* (Monteith, 1884). And as she did in "The Map," Bishop consistently emphasized places and objects rather than people and relationships in order to deflect the emotional and confessional nature of her poetry (Millier, 1993, 77; Beach, 2003, 172).

9 Three years after Bishop's poem first appeared, Louise Bogan composed "Cartography" about her sleeping lover. In sixteen lines (Bogan, 1938, 15) she described the arteries and veins of his hand as

> Mapped like the great
> Rivers that rise
> Beyond our fate
> And distant from our eyes.

10 Inspired by the metaphysical poets and their era's obsession with both anatomical and geographical explorations, "Cartography" is perhaps the first body-as-map poem published in the twentieth-century.[8] Although the name of Bogan's lover is lost, he inspired a *female* poet to imagine the *male* body as a map of the earth, and the earth as an imperfect reflection of a realm beyond our knowledge. Yet Bogan's love-poem offers no hint of gender. For all its debt to John Donne's erotic association of body and map ("Love's Progress," "To His Mistress Going to Bed": Donne, 1971, 122–126),

"Cartography" contains neither possessiveness nor desire to master the beloved (Frank, 1985, 311). Bogan mutes and transforms the explicit sexuality of Donne's early poetry into a sensuality that embraces all nature and, like Donne's later "Hymn[e] to God My God, in My Sickness[e]," comes to terms with death as part of life's recurring cycles (Donne, 1971, 347–348; Haft, 2009).

11 Just in time for World War II, Theodore Spencer's allegorical poem "The Inflatable Globe" challenges abuse of power and glorification of war. Taking his title from a fifty-cent item in an educational map catalog, Spencer shows how a "stupid trick" can "squash" the "life" out of the globe (Spencer 1941, n.p.). The renowned poet/critic Randall Jarrell, while teaching flight instruction and celestial navigation to pilots, produced some of the most devastating American cartographic war poems, including "90 North" (1941) and "Losses" (1944). "90 North" opens with Jarrell as a child dreaming he'd "sailed all night" to the North Pole "up the globe's impossible sides." Once at "the actual pole of [his] existence," however, the mature Jarrell realizes that his "knowledge" is "meaningless," that "wisdom" "is pain" (Jarrell, 1942, 6–7).In "Losses" a dead pilot recalls: "They said, 'Here are the maps'"; and "we burned the cities" "we had learned about in school" (Jarrell, 1945, 15–16). Yet neither the pilot nor the personified cities understand *why* they died. Perhaps most notably, the Navy adopted John Holmes' *Map of My Country* (Holmes, 1943; see Holmes, 1999) for the "libraries of its ships and stations" (Eyges, 2007, 117). The first of several American collections dominated by map metaphors, *Map of My Country* opens with a sprawling twelve-part poem (3–34), an autobiography so expansive that it not only pays homage to the American people and places that enriched Holmes' life, but also charts his generation and the literature that molded those who lived through two World Wars. The most obviously cartographic section is Part I, which he had published separately four years earlier (Holmes, 1939) and clearly envisioned as an alternative map:

> I have come a long way using other men's maps for the turnings.
> I have a long way to go.
> It is time I drew the map again,
> Spread with the broad colors of life, and words of my own
> [...]
> All that I remember happened to me here.
> This is the known world.
> I shall make a star here for a man who died too young.
> Here, and here, in gold, I shall mark two towns
> Famous for nothing, except that I have been happy in them. (Part I, 3–5)

12 In one particularly poignant line, Holmes recalls how his college class was reassured at commencement that their year — 1929 — was "the greatest, / opening out like a broad road up the map / from youth to yonder, to heaven, to anywhere" (Part VII, 12). Before returning to his opening refrain, "I have come a long way using other men's maps" (Part I, 3; Part XII, 32), Holmes mingles map metaphors from Shakespeare, Donne, Bunyan, and Stevenson with cartographic vocabulary and details from school maps of the United States. On his "own map of [his] own country" (Part I, 4), however, he eschews war, normally a popular subject for mapping, and argues that one can *write (but not draw)* a map of a person's life with its multilayered memory-collage of color, smell, sound, and texture. Humanizing mapped space, he writes: "Home is the compass-star in the nearest lowest corner; / the scale is the distance a voice travels from room to room, / the distance a word moves from page to heart" (Part XII, 29). Yet just when "my country" seems to have shrunk to the size of his house, Holmes throws open the

doors. In his final stanza, "our country" is "our seven rooms" — the earth's seven continents. "People like us hear the world's wars, but think / beyond. What we want, and always wanted, is peace" (Part XII, 34).

13 In 1956 Elizabeth Bishop's *Poems: North & South — A Cold Spring* won the Pulitzer Prize. Not surprisingly, its opening poem, "The Map," inspired others to critique the ways that maps represent space. In "The Cloud-Mobile" (1957), Bishop's friend May Swenson suggests that clouds and sky form "a map of change" reflecting the slower transformations of the continents and ocean they resemble (Swenson, 1958, 28). Reprinted for children in *Poems to Solve* (Swenson, 1966, 29)and *The Complete Poems to Solve* (Swenson, 1993, 41), "The Cloud-Mobile" is a riddle-poem ideal for introducing young people to mapping conventions and scientific hypotheses like continental drift and the fractal landscapes of chaos theory (Haft, 1999, 36–38). Other poets also share Bishop's understanding of the map-maker's art — its imaginative power and limitations, its technical achievement and arbitrary nature. Gloria Oden's "A Private Letter to Brazil" (1957) refers to the country where Bishop, her unexpected mentor, was currently living (Hughes, 1964, 91). Its poignancy comes from the attempt by the isolated African-American poet to use acontemporary National Geographic world map to connect her — emotionally, artistically, and geographically — to Bishop (Haft, 2008, 10–15, 72): "The map shows me where it is you are. I [...]" (Hughes, 1964, 91). Howard Nemerov in "The Map-Maker on His Art" (1957: Nemerov, 1958, 85) assumes the mantle of a scientist transforming white paper into a unique creation that delimits and orders the world it reflects. But Nemerov's map-maker is also a poet/artist, who with his "fluent" pen wryly "translates" the thoughts of a "bronzed, heroic traveler" into his own "native tongue" and "writes the running river a rich blue" (see Haft, 2001b, 49–54). Mark Strand's "The Map" (1960: Strand, 1964, 19–20) contrasts the world beyond his window with the unified, unchanging, idealized version of his map and, as his final lines make clear:

14 Because nothing
Happens where definition is
Its own excuse
For being, the map is as it was:
A diagram
Of how the world might look could we
Maintain a lasting,
Perfect distance from what it is. (20)

15 From Nemerov, Strand borrows both map and window as frames for perception; and from Bishop, not only his title and vagueness about the map, but also its animation and his meditation on its relation to the world. In Strand's case, however, it is not the mapped land that appears animated, but the map itself: the map "draws," "outlines" and "waits," as if that "composed" object were creating itself — Escher-like — without the aid of map-maker or poet. Strand's inwardness, his concern for "the interior universe," distinguishes his map from Bishop's insistent focus on the "external environment" (see Haft 2001b, 54–58). Gloria Oden's second homage to Bishop, "The Map" (c.1961), exposes the political and racial ideologies underlying the popular mid-1950s Rand McNally *Cosmopolitan World Map* "soldiering the white wall / there behind" her living room couch (Hughes, 1964, 47–49). Oden's title, like those of Bishop

and Strand, is itself a paradox: far from mirroring "reality," *the* map is only one of countless interpretations of it (see Haft 2008, 15–31, 73–74).

Explosion: c.1960-2000

16 From this point on, poets write about maps with such increasing frequency that their work will be presented thematically.

17 Around 1960 poets began creating poems *shaped like* regional maps (Haft, 2000). Charles Olson's "Letter, May 2, 1959," in volume I (1960) of Olson's ambitious ode to place, *The Maximus Poems*, begins with "a totally visual representation" of the old Meeting House Plain in Gloucester, Massachusetts (Tselentis-Apostolidis, 1993, 131), and ends with another "letter-map" (Moraru, 1998, 260) of "the depths of [Gloucester Harbor] channel" (Olson, 1983, 150 [I.145], 156 [I.151]). Concrete poetry, an international movement of visual poetry influenced by the graphic arts, produced several map-poems (Haft, 2000). A jig-saw puzzle that John Hollander had as a child inspired "A State of Nature," a poem that looks like a map of New York State (Hollander, 1969, 24). The words that define its borders recall the Iroquois who roamed the area before European settlers imposed the political boundaries that we now recognize as "real." Hollander contrasts the natives' "state of nature" with our western artifice, their physical world with our intellectual forms, their "descriptive" language with the name we've given so unimaginatively to both city and state. Richard Kostelanetz's "The East Village" (1970–1971) provides alternative maps to a vibrant time in his neighborhood's radical history (Kostelanetz,1974, [63–73]). The visual appearance of his hand-written and variously oriented verses allows us to enter vicariously into the space and time Kostelanetz has mapped, while his language and poetry remind us to hear, smell, and even taste these blocks of New York City. After the demise of the concrete "movement" in the 1970s and the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, poets continued making visual poems of American locales. Irish-born Paul Muldoon immigrated to the United States three years before including his concrete map-poem "[Ptolemy]" in *Madoc: a Mystery* (Muldoon, 1990, 46). A dying man's mental map, "[Ptolemy]" shows the Nile-like — and penis-shaped (Murphy, 1998-1999, 107–108) — convergence of the Chemung and the Susquehanna rivers near the New York/Pennsylvania border. Part of a mystery examining Britain's conflicts with the Native Americans and the Irish, Muldoon's map-poem and its town names ("Ulster," "Athens") embody the work's central question: who'd be victimizing whom if the English poets Coleridge and Robert Southey *had* established in 1795 their utopian community advocating "equal rights to all" on the banks of the Susquehanna? Finally, only four years before 9/11 tore the twenty-first century adrift from the twentieth, "Manhattan" by (bio)geographer/poet Howard Horowitz appeared in the August 30, 1997 Op-Art section of *The New York Times*. Concerned with a particular "bioregion," Horowitz's concrete map-poem is also a delightful advertisement. And like the borough it mimics, it packs too much into too little space.

18 Other poets, like Holmes before them, increasingly resorted to more "conventional" uses of maps to unlock memories of a particular place and time, as well as to explore loss and the limits of control. One of them was Denise Levertov, whose influences included Charles Olson and the Black Mountain poets. A decade after immigrating to the United States, the Essex-born Levertov penned "A Map of the Western Part of the

County of Essex in England" (1960: Levertov, 1961, 19–20). Though as a child she "traced voyages / indelibly all over the atlas," "now in a far country" "an old map / made long before [she] was born" helped her recreate the intimacy of her childhood home against the vast and fragmented backdrop of her "New World" (Haft, 2001a). By contrast, in "The Geographer's Line" (1989), Karl Kirchwey compares his coming-of-age to a map of "the continental United States in 1803" (Kirchwey, 1990, 60). Although a tracing assignment he'd been given at the American School in London during the late 1960s (Kirchwey, e-mails to author, 9 October 2003 and 30 October 2003), Kirchwey's choice of map nevertheless conveys the homesickness of an American boy thrust into a foreign culture as well as his naïve belief that he can control his future — and avoid adulthood's inevitable compromises and "betrayals" — if he can "get those boundaries right somehow" (Haft, 2006). William Stafford's "My Father: October 1942" deals with the death of his father in a car accident (1963: Stafford, 1966, 6): "He picks up what he thinks is / a road map, and it is / his death: he holds it easily, and / nothing can take it from his firm hand. / The pulse in his thumb on the map / says, '1:19 P.M. next Tuesday, at / this intersection.'" Elizabeth Spires, on the other hand, remembers the October day during her early childhood when her father gave her globe-shaped coin bank, then took her for a walk on leaves "like gold paper" ("Globe," 1978): "I touched a globe slotted on top for coins, / my hand shadowing the continents / like a cloud thousands of miles wide. / He put my finger over the state where we lived, / then handed me his loose change to fill the world with" (Spires 1981, 13–14).

19 However, most poetic memoirs of place resemble *Map of My Country* in focusing on what is *not* on the map. Deeply rooted in the American poetic sensibility is the notion of the unmappable place — whether it be heaven (Dickinson, Whitman), the human heart ("Uncharted": Cabell, 1924, 97–98; "A Reply": Teasdale, 1926, 60), the strength of walls on a rural farm ("Uncharted": Frances Frost, 1929, 13), or one's autobiography (Holmes, 1943, 3–34). As poets became more sophisticated in their understanding of different types of maps, the metaphor evolved to consider those aspects that cartographic symbols conceal. The dot on a map that can't embody the pulse of a small town (Ruth DeLong Peterson's "Midwest Town," 1954: Brewton and Brewton, 1968, 219, 267). Or the essentially nameless individuals who work the farm in William Stafford's Kansas poem, "Fiction" (Stafford, 1982, 68), a poem whose title and enormous map recall Jorge Luis Borges's "Of Exactitude in Science" (1946: Borges and Kerrigan, *Ficciones*, 1962): "We would get a map of our farm as big / as our farm [...and] / stick our heads through and sing, 'Barn, be cleaned.' / [...] / But [...], here would come rumpling / along under the map Old Barney, / [...] — he couldn't even / read — going out to slop the hogs." Or the grief of the seafaring community in Brendan Galvin's haunting "Old Map of Barnstable County" (1979): "A red dot for each vessel lost / would turn this map / to a rash like scarlet fever" (Galvin, 1980, 82–83). Allied to these is Mark Strand's disquieting "Black Maps":

20 The present is always dark.
Its maps are black,
rising from nothing,
describing,

21 in their slow ascent
into themselves

their own voyage,
its emptiness,

22 [...].
Your house is not marked
on any of them,
nor are your friends,

23 [...].
Only you are there
[...]. (Strand, 1970, 22–23)

24 Picking up on Strand's black maps, James Galvin ends his own "Cartography" with this image:

25 A man, himself a fascicle of borders, draws a map and can't stop drawing
For fear of bleeding, smudging, disappearance.
When the map is complete the page will be completely
Obscured by detail [...].
Three things about the border are known:
It's real, it doesn't exist, it's on all the black maps. (Galvin, 1988, 18)

26 Jan Vermeer, the seventeenth-century Dutch painter of map-filled interiors, appears in Robert Lowell's poetic epitaph "Epilogue" at the end of his final collection *Day by Day*. Reappraising his own work, Lowell compares his tell-all confessional style to a snapshot ("lurid, rapid, garish") rather than to "the painter's vision." Lowell's reference to Vermeer is a subtle allusion to his long-time friend Elizabeth Bishop:

> Pray for the grace of accuracy
> Vermeer gave to the sun's illumination
> stealing like the tide across a map
> to his girl solid with yearning. (Lowell, 1977, 127)

27 As a poet, Bishop had attempted to emulate Vermeer, who was as famous for his photographic eye as for his penchant for maps. After Randall Jarrell had praised Bishop's *Poems: North & South — A Cold Spring* in his review for *Harper's*, she responded:

> I still, from the bottom of my heart, honestly think I do NOT deserve it -- but it has been one of my dreams that someday someone would think of Vermeer, without my saying it first, so now I think I can die in a fairly peaceful frame of mind any old time, having struck the best critic of poetry going that way [...]. (letter of 26 December 1955: Bishop, 1994, 312)

28 In the face of death, Lowell poignantly embraces the differences between his work and the small but exquisite *oeuvres* of both the painter and his closest friend — who had always known him, and herself, well enough never to become one of his wives (Tóibín, 2009**;** see Travisano and Hamilton, 2008, 219–227, 289–392).

29 The body-as-map metaphor has flourished since the 1960s, thanks to the sexual revolution combined (I like to think) with the popularity of Donne's erotic poems and Bogan's often reprinted "Cartography," most notably in *The Blue Estuaries* (Bogan, 1968, 107). Jack Marshall's "Bearings" (1967) sees the earth and our bodies as the same map: "That map / I crayoned over and over as a boy / trying to get it right the greens and blues / then having to slog through on foot / was my body" (Marshall, 1969, 68). Ruth Stone's bawdy title poem "Topography" ends a collection about her husband's suicide (Stone, 1971, 116). She is not only the product and recipient of global lovemaking, but the earth covered by her lover sky and maps made by explorers: "Yes, I remember the

turning and holding, / the heavy geography; but map me again, Columbus." In "Geography," Dennis Schmitz maps the body in a distinctly American landscape. A cosmetics salesman, far from home, becomes a frustrated cartographer fantasizing about his wife's body (Schmitz, 1975, 37): "He takes a lipstick / to plan a local version / of her body / as big as the motel bed. / On it he thrashes all night, / misinformed by the old maps." David Citino's "Map Reading" (1979) compares his lover's body to a road map of Ohio, then follows his finger south along her highways. Although nothing about the shape of Ohio appears remotely feminine, Citino turns Cleveland and Toledo into her irregular breasts, and Columbus into her private parts (Pater, 1981, 70–71). Sharon Olds' wildly patriotic "Topography" imagines *both* lovers as maps fused by lovemaking (Olds, 1987, 58): "After we flew across the country we / got in bed, laid our bodies / delicately together, *like maps laid / face to face*, East to West, my / San Francisco against your New York [...]" (emphasis added). Another gem is "what the mirror said" (1978), in which African-American poet Lucille Clifton praises her own generous proportions: "listen, / somebody need a map / to understand you. / somebody need directions / to move around you" (Clifton, 1980, 7).

30 In "The Map," Gloria Oden recognized that Europe had foisted its own political divisions onto maps of Africa. By the early 1960s her hope was that the color green — representing former French African colonies on maps in Rand McNally's *Cosmopolitan World Atlas* — might represent the "spring" of independence, a "fever of / the mind [...] which in its / course will blaze the length of continent as / now it fires breadth" (see Haft, 2008, 23–26). Following Oden's deconstruction of Rand McNally's popular *Cosmopolitan Map of the World*, other prominent African-American poets offered their own startling images. While contemplating the sorry state of the world at the time of Malcolm X's death, Audre Lorde wrote: "As I read his words the dark mangled children / come streaming out of the atlas / Hanoi Angola Guinea-Bissau Mozambique Pnam-Phen / merged with Bedford-Stuyvesant and Hazelhurst Mississippi" ("Equinox": Lorde, 1973, 12). And Alice Walker, with her Cherokee roots as well, protests in "We Have a Map of the World" against "the old men / who ejaculate / plutonium" as they rape the earth (Walker, 1991, 436-441). Her poem's epigraph declares: "'We have a map of the world showing how all nuclear tests have been conducted on the territory of Native peoples.' — Raymond Yowell, Western Shoshone National Council, Las Vegas, Nevada, October 21, 1988" (436).

31 As for Native American poets, Janice Gould (Konkow Maidu) says: "Native women's literary maps are constructs that symbolically provide direction or describe a known, remembered, imagined, or longed-for terrain" (Gould, 2003, 22; see Gould, 1996, viii, and 21–22: "Alphabet"). For instance, "Map" by Linda Hogan (Chickasaw) begins "This is the world / so vast and lonely / without end" (Hogan, 1993, 37–38), suggesting that "reduced to an artifact — a map — the earth is abstracted into the 'world,' a charted realm that can be named after the men who claim her" (Gould, 2003, 27). Deborah Miranda (Esselen and Chumash/European Jew) attempts to mitigate physical and cultural displacement in the title poem of her *Indian Cartography*. Her father's "open[ing] a map of California" connects Miranda with her ancestors' lost lands, especially a valley "drowned by a displaced river" (Miranda, 1999, 76). But when in dreams her father swims this river, he "floats on his face / with eyes open, looks down into lands not drawn / on any map. Maybe he sees shadows / a people who are fluid" (76–77). Here Miranda is alluding to "both the returning fish and the humans — who linger and hang around a place they cannot leave" (Gould, 2003, 26). The cover of *A Map*

to the Next World by Joy Harjo (Muscogee) pictures Linda Lomaheftewa's painting "Four Directions," one of several maps gracing the covers of recent poetry collections. The title poem of Harjo's collection begins with her wish "to makea map for those who would climb through the hole in the sky" into the next, possibly higher realm of existence, where welcoming ancestors — now "abandoned [...] to science" — dwell in peace (Harjo, 2000, 19–20). Yet, after describing the legends and monsters on her "imperfect" sand map, Harjo ends by advising: "Crucial to finding the way is this: There is no beginning or end. / You must make your own map" (21). Andlest it seem that only Native *women* deal with maps,Janet McAdams' *This Blood is a Map: Voice and Cartography in Contemporary Native American Poetry* (1996) details how Carter Revard/Nom-Peh-Wah-The (Osage) uses the map as a metaphor in his poetry.

32 Immigrants and their children have equally ambivalent relationships to maps, especially those encountered in the classroom. When he was only eight, Gregory Djanikian was taken by his Armenian parents from Alexandria, Egypt to the United States. In "In the Elementary School Choir," Djanikian recalls:

33 [...] a problem [...] had dogged me
For a few years, this confusion of places,
And when in 5th grade geography I had pronounced
"Des Moines" as though it were a village in France,
Mr. Kephart led me to the map on the front wall,
And so I'd know where I was,
Pressed my forehead squarely against Iowa.
Des Moines, he'd said. Rhymes with coins. (1989: Gillan and Gillan, 1994, 216)

34 In the central verses of "For Talking," Denise Nico Leto, whose family hails from Sicily and southern Italy, connects cartographic and ethnic stereotypes:

35 Sister James Marie
giving a geography lesson
I am day dreaming
am jarred to attention when I hear
"Mediterranean" & "the boot"
she points to Sandy Seavello & me
ushers us to the front of the class
"Italy," she says, "that's where
the olive skinned people live. Like Denise & Sandy.
See how dirty they look?" (1994: Gillan and Gillan, 1994, 164)

36 And in "The Geography Lesson" (1998), Chitra Banerjee Divakaruni recounts the nuns' cold cruelty to a student who accidentally tipped a world globe off its stand. Punished repeatedly, the girl never returned to class, and now the youthful Divakaruni can think of nothing else as she outlines the planets named for cruel, distant gods: "red Mars, ringed Saturn, the far cold gleam / of Uranus" (Banerjee, Kaipa, Sundaralingam, 2010, 58). Her poem ends: "Tomorrow we will be tested / on the various properties of the heavenly bodies, / their distance, in light years, from the sun" (ibid.). On the other hand, Beatriz Badikian, a Chicago poet originally from Buenos Aires, echoes Bishop when she writes: "I am Eratosthenes' heir — the librarian / who measured earth [...]. / A cartographer of sorts — I measure / earth with words" (Badikian, 1994, 10; Badikian, 1999, 2). The cover of Badikian's *Mapmaker Revisited* shows her upper body embraced by

maps: behind her those of Paris, Roma, and Mexico; projected on her right hand, one of Buenos Aires (Badikian, 1999).

37 As Americans themselves increasingly took to the roads and skies on voyages of self-discovery from the late 1950s on, the map became a major metaphor in the work of several poets. Robert Frost had done something similar, of course, in 1911, when he left New Hampshire for England. And Elizabeth Bishop, a Northerner raised in Massachusetts and Nova Scotia, had used her inheritance to travel and ultimately find homes in the "South" — Florida in 1938, Brazil in 1951 — thus giving rise to her aptly named collections *North & South* (Bishop, 1946; Bishop, 1955). As Helen Vendler has observed:

38 The staking out of an imaginative claim is the single most interesting act by each powerful poet. Elizabeth Bishop...staked out travel, in all its symbolic reaches of pilgrimage, exile, homelessness, exploration, exhaustion, colonializing, mapping, and being lost. Travel is not an unusual topic — but because it had been considered a Byronic narrative subject rather than a lyrical one, Bishop had a free hand and an open field. (Vendler, [1986] 2003, 5)

39 Other poets, like Howard McCord and Richard Hugo, served in wars whose distant lands became familiar through maps. A Korean-War vet and mountain climber, McCord grabs our attention with the opening words of *Longjaunes His Periplus* about traveling in Asia: "A chest of maps / is a greater legacy / than a case of whiskey. / My father left me both" (McCord, 1968, n.p.). His *Maps: Poems Toward an Iconography of the West* (McCord, 1971)may be the first since *Map of My Country* (Holmes, 1943) to feature the word "map" as the title of a poetry *collection*, a trend that accelerates — with related titles like "atlas" or "cartography" — toward the millennium's end. Inside McCord's collection, "Listening to Maps" contains lines like "What the maps don't tell me / I discover from my wife," and "Some maps can be rolled like waves, / while others have to be folded at the joints, / bent like canal locks, or opened up, / like shy girls' thighs." McCord concludes with what maps mean to him:

40 There is no way to satirize a map.
It keeps telling you where you are.
And if you're not there,
you're lost. Everything is reduced
to meaning.

41 A map may lie, but it never jokes.

42 We are sitting here, you and I,
in a place on a map.
We know this.
Yet we are not on the map.

43 We are looking for ourselves.
This is the rustle of leaves
that you hear,
the crackle of folding paper,
the sound of old maps. (McCord, 1971, 9-10: see Muehrcke and Muehrcke, 1974, 327, 329)

44 "Map" is a signature title motif for Montana poet of place and memory, Richard Hugo, beginning with "A Map of the Peninsula" — in which a map's "cheap dye" represent the

ephemerality of the landscape and its inhabitants"(Hugo, 1961, 30). A bombardier during World War II, Hugo composed "A Map of Montana in Italy"(1969) upon his return to Italy. Here he acts as poetic tour-guide, comparing the violence of American westerns and the failed Montana towns — "On this map white. A state thick as a fist / or blunt instrument. Long roads weave and cross / red veins of rage" — with Italian bars that now sell pastry in stark contrast to the war-torn landscape of his memory (Hugo, 1973, 75–76: see Allen, 1982, 36; Pinsker, 1987, 76). These, along with three other important poems — "Old Map of Uhlerstown"(Hugo, 1973), "Topographical Map" (1973: Hugo,1975), and "A Map of Skye" (1978: Hugo, 1980) — appear together in *Making Certain It Goes On: The Collected Poems of Richard Hugo*,published two years after his death (Hugo, 1984).

45 By then, Debora Greger had produced *Cartography*, a hand-printed limited edition with printer Bonnie O'Connell's map-like "Water Features in Blue" on its title page (Greger, 1980a). Greger's map-related poems of intimacy from *Cartography* ("Natural Forces," Crossing the Plains," and "Bearings") join others like "The Coloring of Experience," "From This Angle," "Sleeping Beauty," and "Patches of Sky" in *Moveable Islands* (Greger, 1980b), a collection named for "a place not marked on the map," which nevertheless transforms into "a movable island of joy / a reason to go on" ("Crossing the Plains": ibid., 58). Greger's collections — as well as her commute between Florida and Cambridge, England with her life-partner and fellow map-poet, William Logan ("Cartography": Logan, 1984) — resonate with the sentiment expressed by Pablo Neruda in the epigraph that opens her poem "Bearings": "I am going to school myself so well in things that, when I try to explain my problems, I shall speak, not of self, but of geography" (Greger, 1980b, 60).

46 Elizabeth Bishop's influence is equally undeniable, not only in Greger's *Cartography* and *Movable Islands* but also in other geographically and cartographically fixated collections that have been on the rise since Bishop's *Geography III* (Bishop, 1976) and her death in 1979 sealed her place in the canon of the twentieth-century masters. One of these is Maura Stanton's *Cries of Swimmers*, in which Stanton travels through space and time while "brood[ing] over maps" ("Song [After Shakespeare]," Stanton, 1984, 44). "At the Cochise Tourist Pavilion" finds Stanton peering through a glass display at a chart of an ancient lake, whose mirage "dotted with sails / with houses on the far shore" had appeared during her drive there through the desert basin. Consulting her road map, she'd found "only the black words 'Bombing Range' / cross[ing] the white space beside the highway" and imagined Coronado "cross[ing] the ghost water, / the waves turning to sand around his ankles, / the first of his seven golden cities vanishing" (3). Returning home, she saw the lake again and "gasped / thinking I felt a breeze heard cries of swimmers" (5). In "Waveless Bay," a map of Atlantis suddenly materializes when her husband holds their map of the Aegean up to the window: "I saw the streets of the city on the other side, / visible through the blue water, as if the empty / boulevards and the submerged parks of Atlantis / only waited for us to discover the way down" (20). "Driving the Coronado Trail" is Stanton's recollection of how, as a child, she longed "to travel far / across the mysterious gridwork of the maps" to cities of gold — like those in Coronado's tale — and "to view the world from the perspective of her future" (61–62). In "Biography" she muses: "Perhaps biography is the flat map / abstracted from the globe of someone's life: / we are interested in the routes and detours" (60). And in

"Outline," while blowing an ant off the tattered map of a city she never anticipated staying in, Stanton acknowledges that she too will grow old and disappear (69).

47 The connection between maps and disappearance also looms large in Pamela Alexander's *Navigable Waterways*, especially in her opening section on Amelia Earhart: "Parts of a Globe" (Alexander, 1985, 3–14). Bishop's poet/cartographer association is evident in a "series of white squares" that represents both the poet's canvas of empty pages and the aviatrix's flight charts: "the last square has / an island in it, but cannot / lead her there" (3–4). *Navigable Waterways* is filled with breathtaking images. "A hat with tea roses" that mice in a children's story "mistook for a chart. / The blooms were bodies of water; / stems, navigable waterways" ("Story with Ornament," 10). When people in the garden "are quiet / their bodies are maps of the cosmos, / hands five-pointed stars" ("The Garden in the Middle," 58). And "she is a planet hung like a lantern in space. / The cords diverge / and line her back with longitude / and latitude, tropical waist / to temperate brain" ("Scherzo," 71).

48 "An Atlas of the Difficult World" is the title and opening poem of Adrienne Rich's 1991 collection (Rich, 1991, 3–26). With its thirteen parts, it rivals Holmes' "Map of My Country" in its length and attempt, fifty years on, to view the United States through the lens of the poet's generation, to find what "b[ound] / the map of this country together" at the end of the Cold War (Part IV, 11). But whereas Holmes' map is autobiographical and nostalgic, Rich's is essayistic and angry. "A patriot is not a weapon," Rich declares. "A patriot is one who wrestles for the / soul of her country / as she wrestles for her own being, for the soul of his country / [...] / as he wrestles for his own being" (Part XI, 23). Focusing on "the wreckage, dreck, and waste" of our lives and society (Part I, 4), Rich memorializes the people and "places where life is cheap poor quick unmonumented" (Part V, 13): the pickers dusted by malathion (I, 3), the "rural working poor" (Part III, 8), the lesbian activist stalked and murdered while "uncovering her country" (Part V, 13–14), the starving poets hoping for refuge from the potato famine (Part VI, 15), New Yorkers' bodies "pressed against other bodies / feeling in them the maps of Brooklyn Queens Manhattan" (Part VII, 16), the lonely white men, and women (Part IX, 19), an old Mexican living across the freeway from prisoners in solitary confinement (Part X, 20–21), a beloved Native American woman (Part XII, 24), her own readers, "stripped as you are" (Part XIII, 25-26). Nowhere is her disillusionment more succinctly expressed than in Part II:

49 Here is a map of our country:
here is the Sea of Indifference, glazed with salt
[...]
This is the desert where missiles are planted like corms
This is the breadbasket of foreclosed farms
[...]
This is the sea-town of myth and story when the fishing fleets
went bankrupt [...]
These are other battlefields Centralia Detroit
[...]
I promised to show you a map you say but this is a mural
then yes let it be these are small distinctions
where do we see it from is the question. (6)

50 In his 1998 collection *Giscome Road*, African-American poet C.S. Giscombe went in search of ancestors and hit pay dirt — John Robert Giscome (1831–1907), a nineteenth-century Jamaican miner/explorer who gave his name not only to a Canadian town innorthernBritish Columbia, but also to the "Giscome Portage route from the Fraser River into the Arctic Watershed" (Giscombe, 1998, n.p.) as well as to the very "real Giscome Road from Old Cariboo Hwy in Prince George to Rte 16 /—fabled Yellowhead Hwy—east of town" (17). Like Olson before him (O'Leary, 1998, 217ff.), Giscombe intertwines his verses with historical details and all sorts of maps: a sketch map (15), a city map (25), an archival map (31), a First Nations map (35). As he hones in on the "sparsely" inhabited places whose names, at least, haven't yet disappeared (47), pieces of a 1986 Geological Survey map become interwoven, like paragraphs or sentences, with his words (45, 48–49). Then, since words are totally inadequate for such a description, a two-page map of the watersheds around Giscome town unfolds after a colon marking the line-end "what's what in the watersheds is this description:" (57). *Giscome Road* is the poet's rejoinder to Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* a century earlier and to the lure of blank spaces on the map. Giscombe uses a river to find "the name of the furthest African arrival heralded in the north" (51), "a faceless heart / a creole heart to say the unhidden gaps in all edges up and down the road" (52). Giscombe concludes his tour de force poetry/map collection by reiterating, "You never know what name the periphery's going to start with" (69, 57: see England, 2000).

51 The title poem of Lucia Maria Perillo's award-winning collection *The Oldest Map with the Name America* contrasts two rare maps by the German cartographer Martin Waldseemüller (Perillo, 1999, 119–126). His landmark 1507 map, featured on the cover of the paperback edition, names America for the first time, and was purchased by the Library of Congress in 2003 after a century of negotiations. Waldseemüller's 1516 map, on the other hand, replaces "the name 'America'" with "'Terra Cannibalor'" (Land of Cannibals: Perillo, [1997–1998] 2010; 1999, 123). Perillo's eight-part sequence alternates between her reflections on the cartographer's endeavor to map "America" — its shape and dimensions, its peoples and customs — and her attempt as a girl to piece together the fragments of what a "weird kid" did to "a little girl" in the woods near their homes, and what he "wrote [...] on her stomach" (Perillo, 1999, 122). Perillo juxtaposes these two pasts, these two meditations on "America," until we catch up to her as an adult — still "charting" the weird kid (125), still protected from the truth by her parents, "if they [even] knew what it was" (126).[9]

52 Finally, Susan Rich's *The Cartographer's Tongue: Poems of the World* (Rich, 2000) ends one millennium and inaugurates the globalization of the next. Rich's poems explore personal travel ("Traveling the Map," 40–41), her involvement with the Peace Corps and Amnesty International as well as her work in Africa, Gaza, and Bosnia. It is not surprising that the cover of *The Cartographer's Tongue* displays a map of the world's physical (rather than political) features. Or that the image chosen — "Map of the Ocean Floor" — is perhaps the most visually and scientifically illuminating of all the maps made by Marie Tharp, the most famous female cartographer/geologist of the twentieth-century, in collaboration with geologist Bruce Heezen and painter Heinrich Berann (1977). Or that Rich's collection, like Tharp's ocean floor map, is the culmination of years of collecting data throughout the world, of "pushing past boundaries — both internal and external — as soon as she maps them" (Legere, 2004). Inside *The Cartographer's Tongue*, the Boston-raised poet describes her childhood class

trip to the Mapparium: a painted-glass globe filling three stories of the Mary Baker Eddy Library on Massachusetts Avenue. Fittingly, "The Mapparium" ends with a prophecy of future travel and poetic exploration: "Feet to Antarctica, arms outstretched / like beacons toward Brazil; I'll take this globe as my own" (Rich, 2000, 18).

53 Mentioning Brazil is only one way that Rich pays tribute to Elizabeth Bishop, who lived there for two decades. The world represented by the Mapparium is frozen at 1934, the year in which construction of the globe began and Bishop composed "The Map."[10] Not long afterward, Bishop "coolly took on a 'man's subject' — exploration and discovery of foreign lands" (Vendler, [1986] 2003,5), thus inspiring Rich's journeys a half century later. "In the Language of Maps" finds Rich returning to Bishop's poetic identification with mapmakers:

54 The cartographer knows
it is her maps which form the images
in everyone else's mind. She knows
the language of maps is constantly changing. (Rich, 2000, 27)

55 And Rich brings my article full circle when, near the end of "How to Read a Map," she echoes Bishop's persistent questions by asking one of her own:

56 *How to construct new cartographies?*
I learn the mapmaker's legend
aware she cannot know
what's been smoothed over,

57 What we leave behind—
Anymore than I. (43)

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NOTES

1. A version of this paper, "Mapping Twentieth-Century American Poetry," was presented at the 2012 annual meeting of the AAG (Association of American Geographers) on 26 February 2012. Portions of this paper were published in *Cartographic Perspectives* (Haft 2000 and Haft 2001b).

2. In his groundbreaking *Territorial Disputes*, Graham Huggan proposes some basic "principles of literary cartography" that are useful in researching maps in literature :

Literary cartography not only examines the function of maps in literary texts [as icons/illustrations, motifs/objects of discussion, and metaphors], but also explores the operations of a series of territorial strategies that are implicitly or explicitly associated with maps [as representational constructs (or models), historical documents, and geopolitical claims]. Some of these strategies are beneficial to their users, as in the attempt to order, direct, and articulate personal, social, or cultural experience ; others involve power relationships that serve to

reinforce existing divisions within society or to exacerbate cultural prejudices, as in the attempt to enclose, restrict or willfully control experiences. The function of maps and mapping strategies in literary texts is therefore frequently ambivalent : maps may be simultaneously perceived as useful tools and as dangerous weapons. (Huggan, 1994, 31)

3. I have omitted American poets who emigrated as well as foreign poets who, however long they may have stayed in the United States, are associated with the literature of their native country (W.H. Auden), or whose map poetry focuses on non-American geographies (Eavan Boland).

4. Including prose autobiographies about maps and mapping by the very poets described in this paper : e.g., Louise Bogan's story *Journey Around My Room* (Bogan 1933) and Audre Lorde's *Zami* (1982, 14).

5. Because many poems are online, only excerpts will be presented here.

6. Regarding dates : if a poem's title is followed by a parenthesized date, that date indicates when the poem was composed or first published in a periodical or magazine ; on the other hand, unless otherwise noted, parenthesized author/date citations indicate the collection or anthology in which a poem was first published.

7. Crane went on to publish poetry as an adult ; Conkling did not.

8. At least one American body-as-map poem preceded "Cartography," but John Dewey's untitled and dreadful poem 25, written between 1910 and 1918, was never meant for public view (Dewey and Boydston, 1977, 18 and xlviii–xlvix).

9. The History of Cartography Project later commissioned Perillo to compose "The Carta Marina (1539)," which subsequently graced the broadsheet celebrating the project's upcoming volumes on Renaissance maps and charts. Though her poem treats the same map that Marianne Moore alluded to in "Sea Unicorns and Land Unicorns" (Moore, 1924), Perillo explicitly contrasts the sixteenth-century with the present, identifying the map's monsters with those "derived from B-movie radiation accidents" (Perillo, 2000). Diagnosed with multiple sclerosis twelve years earlier, the poet knows that for all our scientific and technological advances "the hard facts failed us. Only soft facts could we trust. / Like the corpse off the north coast, being gnawed by three fish. / And say you're that man — what use to you are maps and books ?"

10. In line 14 of the poem, Rich dates the world of the Mapparium to 1932. However, the website of the Mary Baker Eddy Library states that the globe was based on a 1934 Rand McNally world map (Mary Baker Eddy Library, 2012). The Mapparium officially opened in 1935, the year "The Map" was first published.

RÉSUMÉS

This article offers a selection of notable American poems about maps and grapples with their place in a century unique for the number, range, and quality of such poems. Though others preceded her, Elizabeth Bishop takes center-stage for "The Map" (1934; Winslow, 1935, 78–79), which recognizes that poets and cartographers create selective, generalized, and simplified views of the world. As the opening poem of her Pulitzer Prize-winning collection (1955), "The Map" continues to inspire other poets to critique the map's spatial representation in terms of physical geography and intimacy, time and scale, politics and race, as well as science, art, and exploration. "The Map" was soon followed by two influential but very different map-poems: "Cartography" by Louise Bogan (1938) and "Map of My Country" by John Holmes (1939: Part I). In his subsequent collection *Map of My Country* (1943: Parts I–XII), Holmes argued that a poem maps a person's

identity better than its graphic cousins do. Yet other poets found inspiration and an analogue of their experience in a particular map, cartographer, or painter of maps. Since the 1960s, visual poets have shaped poems into maps of American locales, thus complementing more “conventional” uses of maps to trigger poetic memoirs of place. The sexual revolution has popularized the body-as-map metaphor prominent in Bogan’s “Cartography.” Since 1980, map-fixated collections have been on the rise, encouraging poets of the twenty-first century to consider what maps say about place, culture, history, ourselves.

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Keywords : American; Poetry and Maps; Elizabeth Bishop (1911–1979), John Holmes (1904–1962), Louise Bogan (1897–1970), Poetry, Twentieth-Century; Poetry

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