Confluence of Costume, Cartography and Early Modern European Chorography

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Introduction

The early modern era is a rich point of entry for questions regarding how Europeans understood a world affected by increased global travel and trade, an expansion that began in earnest during the sixteenth century.1 Costume imagery and maps provided key lenses through which information about the foreign and unfamiliar was telegraphed to European audiences. A central aspect of costume studies focus on how clothing is understood as a cultural construct representative of people, and also of place. Many, if not most early modern maps prominently incorporated examples of figures in regional costume around the borders of the map, or even superimposed over the territory in question. Costume imagery’s origins as part of maps gave costume power as a representation of physical place, as well as a way to give form to the intangible qualities of culture, manners and customs. Altogether, maps and costume description allowed the early modern viewer to cobble together an understanding of place, however fragmentary.2

Scholars have widely discussed the presence of costume studies on early maps, but these interrelated sources of costume imagery and cartography are usually studied as distinct visual phenomena. Most explorations of costume have focused on the contributions of costume books, predominately through ethnographic, gendered and class contexts, rather than through the specific relationship to their cartographic origins.3 This study argues for a re-examination of

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1 An earlier form of this essay was delivered at the Association of Art Historians annual meeting on March 29, 2012. I would like to thank Sandra Cardarelli and Jill Harrison for including me in their dynamic session on the ‘travelling artist’. I am also grateful Joanne Anderson and members of the audience for their helpful feedback.


3 Costume study has long been a part of anthropological enquiry, and some scholars suggest that early costume books, were, in fact, burgeoning ethnographies. See, for example, Daniel Defert, ‘Un genre ethnographique profane au XVIe: les livres d’habits jessai d’ethno-iconographie’, in Histoires de l’anthropologie (XVIe-XIXe siècles, Britta Rupp-Eisenreich, ed., Paris: Klincksieck, 1984, 25-41; also cited in Ann Roslind Jones, ‘Habits, Holdings, Heterologies: Populations in Print in a 1562 Costume Book’. 
the links between early cartography and costume studies as dialogic in meaning; due to their common origins and goals as ways to define place, early modern costume imagery and maps visually and conceptually overlap in ways that suggest they shared responsibility as corollary ciphers of meaning. In other words, rather than subordinate costume imagery to the map on which it appears, it can be instead regarded as a significant partner in conveying cartographic information about place. In order to explore the intersecting relationship between costume and cartography more closely, this essay will approach these descriptions of place through their participation in the emerging field of chorography.

Chorography appeared in early modern Europe as a broad strategy for world knowledge-seeking that gestured not only to physical descriptions of place, it combined for the first time in formal discourse, maps, costume descriptions, histories, chronologies and a host of other descriptors that aimed to frame the identity of place. While maps and textual descriptions of location have long been recognized as an essential part of chorographic studies, I suggest that costume must also be given its due as an important part of conveying this information within the chorographic framework. Costume is readily recognized as a way of communicating information, but it has been so far omitted from conversations about the overlapping, diverse kinds of information that constitute chorographic study. It is costume’s complex, dual relationship with maps, as well as its perceived symbolism of a people’s character and habits that makes it a consistently included yet overlooked facet of these new epistemologies that searched for ways to understand the difference of place. A central goal of this study is to broadly locate visual costume studies and textual costume description within the chorographic tradition, as one cipher of place in a semiotic aggregate of ciphers that grew to include maps and comparable data. To this end, case studies of Albrecht Dürer and Wenceslas Hollar will highlight the contributions of selected artists whose far-ranging travels put them in a unique position to observe and collect records of contemporary costume as a way to establish an identity of place throughout the regions they visited, demonstrating their overlapping interests in cartography and costume. Because of the inseparable nature of costume, cartography and chorography, the complex identity of costume studies and costume books may themselves be positioned as nascent examples of chorography.


Cartography, Costume, and the Chorographic Revival

In order to examine costume description as a mode of chorographic information, it is useful to establish some background on chorography in order to more closely define it for the framework of this study. Chorography developed in the ancient world, found in or referenced by many august classical texts by the likes of Pliny the Elder, Herodotus and Ptolemy, among others. Although the practice was lost after the fall of the Western Roman Empire, it re-emerged with the dispersal of classical texts during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. The term ‘chorography’ (choros and graphia) itself literally translated to ‘writing about a place,’ but this practice typically evokes more complex associations between place and location that go beyond traveller’s descriptions. Darrell Rohl expanded the definition of chorography to accommodate the more broadly conceived idea of a ‘representation of space or place’ that accounts for the fluid combination of information put in the service of constructing an idea of place. Rohl’s definition serves the present study well, as it takes into account the tendency of chorography to take a ‘multi-media approach, including written description, multiple modes of, visualization and performance.’ As an epistemological approach rather than a strictly defined genre, chorography includes descriptions of topography but also incorporates local history, sometimes genealogy, chronology, customs, and anecdotal material in different measures. Its merging of different ways of understanding location has led to chorography widely described by scholars as the most flexible and ‘wide ranging’ of the collective disciplines within the study of geography. Because chorographic studies included a broad range of material, the consistent presence of costume necessarily became part of the knowledge that was incorporated into these descriptive profiles. As one example, William Camden’s Britannia: Or a Chorographical Description of Great Britain and Ireland first published in 1586, often used brief descriptions of costume as indicator of character to supplement the historical background of his region-by-region overview. In his historical accounts of the early Saxons he discourses at length about their bodies, armour, hair and clothes, noting that they could be identified by a particular type of ‘loose

8 This essay is strongly grounded in Rohl’s more nuanced understanding of chorography, see ‘The Chorographic Tradition and Seventeenth- and Eighteenth-Century Scottish Antiquaries,’ 1, 4.
9 Rohl, 6.
11 Cormack, 642-43.
clothes]...of linen such as the English-Saxons use; the trimming broad and of several colours."\textsuperscript{12} While costume informed the revival of the chorographic model in early modern Europe, it seems that the synchronous rise of sixteenth-century costume books and costume studies on maps all evidence a chorographic character because they follow similar aims and employ similar ideological methods: to give an identity to place that was as specific as possible by associating cartographic meaning, with the clothes, manners and mores of the people they represent. Exploring the specific links between costume and cartography can illuminate how early modern costume imagery, from its inception as part of maps and then as costume books, was adaptable to and compatible with chorographic studies.

Maps and Costume Imagery

New lands and their inhabitants provided the impetus for these new modes of information and significantly, chorography’s early modern re-emergence after a millennia-long absence took place alongside the growth of maps and costume studies that attended international travel at its critical point of expansion. A brief examination of the conceptual nature of maps will underscore how costume absorbed cartographic meaning, and further, how the flexibility of these ciphers promoted a vibrant exchange in meaning between cartography, costume and chorography. In other words, a key reason that costume becomes a part of chorography is because of first, its interrelationship with maps to the point that costume itself became a mode of conceptual cartography, and second, its well-established use as indicative of the mores and habits of a people, an idea contextualized later in this study with the rise of costume books. Before the advent of increasingly sophisticated and much more scientifically accurate techniques of mapmaking were achieved by the Dutch in the seventeenth century, even early cartographic depictions of land were accompanied by illustrated figures, ornamentation, and text that served to broker an unfamiliar idea of cartography to the viewer.\textsuperscript{13} Grounded in medieval representations of land, pictures commonly punctuated or encircled depictions of terrain, acting as essential intermediaries that explicated the complex meanings embodied by an otherwise abstracted land mass.\textsuperscript{14}

\textsuperscript{12} This example is from the 1722 edition translated from the original Latin, Britannia: or a Chorographical Description of Great Britain and Ireland Together with the Adjacent Islands, London, 1722, clxii.


\textsuperscript{14} Rather than maps made strictly for guidance in navigation or for practical use in identifying territories, these nascent visual representations of geography in mappaemundi like the thirteenth century Map Psalter located Jerusalem at the very centre of the known world presided over by Christ and angels (figure 1). Evelyn Edson, The World Map, 1300-1492: The Persistence of Tradition and
Instead of objectively depicting territory, maps were instead consciously fashioned to promote a particular worldview, theological position, or political agenda.\textsuperscript{15} Examples like that of the large \textit{Hereford Map} from c. 1300, depict territories known and imagined, but typically orient them within a broader ontological scheme.\textsuperscript{16} The shift from maps produced as medieval illuminations to early modern printing did little initially to change this fundamentally conceptual approach to mapmaking.\textsuperscript{17} For centuries, early modern printed maps continued to picture conceptual rather than documentary representations of the world.\textsuperscript{18} Rooted in earlier \textit{mappaemundi}, early modern maps continued to promote, as Michael Fox observed, representations of the world ‘not as precisely in terms of how it looked but what it meant.’\textsuperscript{19} The myriad ways in which early maps absorbed all kinds of iconography and forms acts as a testament to the wider cultural understanding of them as images that readily exchanged meaning with hosts of attendant symbols. As part of a tendency to ideological abstraction, the visual contours of maps further strayed from the terrain of objective record by absorbing the corporeal features of bodies. As land is so often evoked in the literary tradition as a body, mapmakers envisioned topography as a physical body manifested in a multitude of ways; frequently as a specifically clothed body.\textsuperscript{20} For example, Sebastian Münster’s \textit{Cosmographia}, first published in 1544, pictures \textit{Europa as Queen of the World} in the form of a human regent (figure 1).\textsuperscript{21} It was the corporeal aspect of land as a metaphoric and literal...
body that made the use of costume iconography an especially powerful image to reinforce place on a map. A central way in lines were blurred between costume, cartography and chorography was in the way that maps often transformed an abstract ‘body’ of land into the shape of a recognizable human body, providing a point of entry that allowed the non-specialist viewer to glean an essential level of information from the image. Conceptual linkages between geography and national or civic garb are witnessed by a plethora of examples in which maps display or even become costumed figures, like Münster’s Queen. Maps that took these approaches undoubtedly had two simultaneous aims; they tried to envision abstract topography while also evoking the interiority that characterized its culture, a nuanced collision of meanings that could not be reconciled by purely documentary maps. This

creative compromise resulted in the spectrum of early modern maps that were more often conceptual than accurate, like Georg Braun and Frans Hogenberg’s woodcuts of world cities from the *Civitates orbis terrarium* (1572-1618) (figure 2).²³ Braun and Hogenberg’s plate of Nuremberg requires the viewer to linger over a large number of variously costumed figures in the fore and middle ground before moving beyond them to see the topography of the city, a visual structure that alludes to a distinctly comparative arrangement between costume and land.²⁴ Costumes with maps, descriptions of costumes, mapping, and geography helped to round out the survey of a place that chorography was intended to shape and survey.²⁵

Figure 2 Georg Braun and Frans Hogenberg, *Civitates orbis terrarium*, 1572-1618.

Clothed bodies in the margins of maps or in the topography have been regarded primarily as ornament that has no bearing on the meaning and


significance of the map itself. Pieter van den Keere’s large wall map of the world from 1611, follows a visual format with costumed figures that form a border around the entire map (figure 3). The costumes, typically regarded as separate from the map, and thus merely decorative, must be understood instead as an essential feature of the map, intended to amplify and clarify the information contained within. The costume aspect of cartography assumed importance for viewers for key reasons related to the complicated kind of information trafficked by cartographic maps. For one, the national borders on maps were constantly shifting. Mapmakers did not often delineate them on early maps for this reason, so costume provided one relatively more constant marker for geographic identity. In this way, chorography as a descriptive source that marshalled information about regions could draw some kind of convincing narrative boundaries where maps themselves fell short. Costume

Figure 3 Pieter van den Keere, Map of the World, 1611.

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27 Traub noted the tendency to describe costume on maps as a mode of picturing driven by an impulse to classify place according to ‘ethnographic and gendered imperatives’, 57; As Richard Unger has shown, maps that were constructed as sea charts came to picture different types of ships on the map itself. See Unger, 11-16.
studies and descriptions, on the other had, served as legible forms that may have been easier to relate to than the non-figural contours of land and sea. Even as maps reached an expanded audience during the sixteenth century, they remained in a complicated position relative to their audience because very few people knew how to actually read them. Therefore, a map would mean little in the technical sense to all but the very elite trained to read these highly specialized images, while costume and chorography translated the territory of cartography into a common visual and textual language that was more accessible to most any viewer or reader. Adapting information between these formats resulted in some consistency in the illustrations, for example, the title pages of chorographies like Camden’s Britannia includes a map and is otherwise comparable to the designs of title pages from atlases and some costume books like Giacomo Franco’s Habits of the Men and Women of Venice c. 1591-1609 (figure 4 and figure 5). Franco’s costume book is in some ways indistinguishable in content from typical chorographic studies, as it includes maps, aspects of daily life and local customs of the Venetians as well as costume imagery.

These broadly descriptive compendia of cartography, costume, and other information thus had a similar goal in that they took a specific region and tried to make it as concrete as possible for the reader by including detail and historical/
cultural context. Indeed, some early encyclopedic books that included cartography and costume, like Münster’s imposing *Cosmographia* (1544) already promote this far-ranging informational structure. In fact, Strauss suggests that the *Cosmographia* has some of the same structure and implicit goals as a chorography, ‘…[describing] the whole known world, country by country and region by region…’ indicating that lines between early cartography and emerging chorography were at some junctures quite indistinct. Costume provided a key to comprehend the map, and a people, as a whole, a function witnessed by publisher Caspar Rutz’s preface to Jean Jacques Boissard’s 1581 costume book *Habitus variorum orbis genitum* (Various Costume of the Peoples of the World) with seventy plates of illustrations. Rutz draws very direct parallels between costume and geography as a way to explain the abstract in a descriptive manner that also captures the flavor of cultural difference:

As many books are written and illustrated with copper plates that portray the various regions and the towns of the different regions for the use of those who have to learn about the world by studying these maps, I am convinced that this book is also a useful work…whereas these maps of the regions represent the oceans and seas…together with their fish, ships, mountains and woods as well as with different animals, this book shows human dress according to the usage of the individual people and in that way…it can be easily seen how one region differs from the other…

According to Rutz, ‘for the use of those who have to learn about the world by studying these maps, I am convinced that this [costume] book is also a useful work…’ and so for the casual viewer, looking at differences in native costume was a practice that the commentator clearly linked to looking at depictions of geographic territory.

30 Strauss, 100.
Costume and Chorographic Contexts

Exchanges between chorography and other sources of information are articulated through the work of early modern artists who travelled internationally. These artists were in a position to record foreign costume as part of a first-hand account of their experience, thus adding an important component to the store of knowledge about the representation of place. Gentile Bellini’s paintings and drawings of Turkish costume and peoples from his visit to Istanbul in 1479 provide a variety of often cited and excellent examples of this privileged position in terms of East-West contact, but Albrecht Dürer is another artist who also allowed a glimpse into other worlds within Europe. Dürer made three transnational trips from his home in Nuremberg over the course of his life, spending time in Italy from 1494 to 1495, and again from 1505 to 1507. He later traveled through the Low Countries from 1520-21. Dürer’s journals from these trips are often overlooked in the contexts of his travels, particularly his interest in costumes like the ones recorded while visiting the Netherlands, and they therefore provide a rich and lesser explored venue for costume as a facet of chorography. That Bellini and Dürer both executed costume studies as part of a broader profile of information about place reflects the chorographic impulse and indeed, Dürer’s records detail his numerous descriptions of place, extraordinary sights, prices, and anecdotes about local peoples, all accompanied by detailed studies of costume in the places he visited. The journal’s narrative is buttressed by the large number of drawings of costume, accompanied by scribbles noting the location, and sometimes references about people. His carefully wrought costumes are divorced from literal representations of geography, but through the artist’s interests in concepts of place, these images of costume act as markers of place, and important for implications of chorography, as markers of people and their customs as well.

Dürer’s costume studies form an iconographic vocabulary that closely associated with the growing field of cartography because of associations between

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36 For example, Strauss, vol. 4, 1521/35, p 2062-63; Albert Dürer aux Pays-Bas: son voyage, son influence, cat. 68.
costumes and location. For Dürer it hardly seems to be a coincidence that an abiding interest in costume supported their interest in maps and mapmaking, occupations themselves that were dependent upon their travel experiences. Dürer’s home of Nuremberg was very fertile ground for the expansion of a growing interest in promoting collected knowledge, and as a result it was a center for the arts, publishing, and printing. Early illustrated books like Hartmann Schedel’s universal history the Nuremberg Chronicle (Liber Chronicarum) in 1493 were also part of this wider artistic output tied to maps. Dürer was both a consumer and a producer in this emerging world of information. Dürer was an apprentice in the studio of Michael Wolgemut, the Chronicle’s woodcut illustrator, when it made the ambitious world map included in the book. After he became an independent artist, his personal collection included a copy of the large-scale world map by Greininger made in Strasbourg, 1507.

Besides collecting maps Dürer was interested enough in the picturing of place to produce some maps on his own, notably three maps of the earth and a celestial maps of the northern and southern skies (1515) that, of course, used figural iconography to represent the positions of the constellations. Dürer even tried his hand at the new trend of making globes, and left instructions in the manual Albertus Dürerus Nurembergensis pictor huius aetatis celeberrimus (1535) for drawing gores. Another illustration from this same manuscript also visualizes the process of surveying a city for mapmaking using the grid that also informed his technical method of drawing and painting, a method also demonstrated in several illustrations in his earlier Painter’s Manual (1525). Connections between the artist

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37 For the centuries of printmaking and maps in Woodward (1975 that are synchronous with those discussed in this article, see especially 1-24 and 51-75. Indeed, graphic artists were at the center of networks that dealt with an increasing body of early modern knowledge: cartographers, scholars, publishers, printers, and illustrators.

38 For the most direct discussion of this phenomenon, see the introduction to Dackerman; also Pamela H. Smith and Paula Findlen, eds, Merchants and Marvels: Commerce, Science and Art in Early Modern Europe, New York: Routledge, 2002 for the uses of book illustration and printing in economies of information; For an overview of the publishing industry and books, see Adrian Johns, The Nature of the Book: Print and Knowledge in the Making, Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998. Perhaps nowhere is the role of printmaking and book illustration more studied than that concerning medical knowledge. A sampling of approaches in this area can be found in Elizabeth Lane Furdell, ed, Printing and Medicine in Early Modern England, New York: University of Rochester Press, 2002.


41 For the Albertus Dürerus Nuremburgensis pictor huius aetatis celeberrimus see the collection of the Dibner Library for the History of Science and Technology, Smithsonian Institution Libraries, Washington DC; Short explains the skill and expense involved in globe-making, see, 2004, 29-30.
and major cartographers are not limited to his own professional networks, some scholars have proposed that Dürer’s work influenced Abraham Ortelius, the author of the first world atlas.\textsuperscript{43} By the time Dürer and later artists were engaged in mapping costumes, the tradition of identifying place through costume was established. Moreover, as chorography made its reappearance, Conrad Celtis, a prominent scholar in Dürer’s humanist circles was planning an epic German study, the \textit{Germania Illustrata} that was never completed.\textsuperscript{44}

In examining Dürer’s approach in recording place and costume, it seems that the way he thought about representations of a place lent itself to a chorographic intent. For example, he almost always noted sketches of costume in geographic terms, writing that on Dec 8, 1520 ‘On Saturday, we reached Ter Goes, where I sketched a maiden in her [regional] costume.’\textsuperscript{45} The visual marker for Ter Goes was this especially complex costume, coupled with the simpler one as a cartographic statement for Bergen, sketched in 1520 (figure 6). Dürer always noted where he was

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{figure6.png}
\caption{Albrecht Dürer, \textit{Maiden from Ter Goes}, 1520, drawing.}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{42} Short perceptively notes that Dürer’s emphasis on the use of the grid in painting and drawing ‘…was equally suitable to surveying and mapmaking’. 68-9; Dürer’s use of the grid in his drawing and painting appears in a number of book illustrations and engravings where the process is in use, for example, \textit{Artist Drawing a Nude with a Perspective Device} from \textit{The Painter’s Manual}, 1525.

\textsuperscript{43} Fox and Reimer, 119; For Schedel’s \textit{World Map} as ethnographic document, see Leitch, 17-36. Scholars have made claims that the most important mapmaker of the early sixteenth century, Abraham Ortelius, was strongly influenced by Dürer’s work. Ian Buchanan, ‘Dürer and Ortelius’, \textit{The Burlington Magazine}, 124, 1982: 734-41.

\textsuperscript{44} Stan Mendyk, ‘Early British Chorography,’ \textit{The Sixteenth Century Journal} 17 (1986): 474;

\textsuperscript{45} Strauss, vol. 4, 1520-1528 and 1520/32.
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and what kind of garb he depicted, and also distinguished between a local costume and any he designed for royal pageants.\footnote{Strauss, vol. 4; Dürer’s association with Celtis raises the question as to whether he was aware of the chorographic project in progress, see Dieter Wuttke, ‘Humanismus als integrative Kraft: die Philosophie des deutschen ‘Erzhumanisten’ Conrad Celtis; eine ikonologische Studie zu programmatischer Graphik Dürers und Burgkmairs.’ \textit{Artibus et Historiae} v.6 no. 11 (1985): 65-99.} Costume carefully marked location for Dürer, and on his trip to the Low Countries he evoked references to costume as a signifier of place time and again. During his visit to Antwerp in 1621, his journals note the local celebration of the feast of the Assumption, and particularly noticed that ‘There also rode in the procession many pretty and richly dressed boys and girls in the costumes of many lands representing various saints.’\footnote{Dürer’s Record of Journeys through Venice and the Low Countries, 44.} Moreover, he remarked during a side trip to Brussels about the marvels of costume, among other exotic goods:

\begin{quote}
[Among things] brought to the King from the new land of gold:...extraordinary clothing... I have seen nothing that reaches my heart so much as these [items], for among them I have seen wonderfully artistic things and have admired the subtle ingenuity of men in foreign lands; indeed, I don’t know how to express what I found there.\footnote{Dürer’s Record of Journeys through Venice and the Low Countries, 48.}
\end{quote}

Dürer’s practice of charting his movements by sketching costume reflects broader cultural imperatives that used garb to visualize and evoke its unseen place of origin. Dürer’s drawings of costume from his own travels anticipated the forthcoming explosion of costume books during this age of exploration: about fifteen such books were published throughout Europe midway through the sixteenth-century, and twenty were available by century’s end.\footnote{Ilg, 29-30.} The appearance of numerous books devoted to clothing studies signaled the initial decoupling of costume from maps. Nevertheless, texts associated with maps and descriptions in costume books continue to suggest that national and civic garb, even pictured separately from maps, remained freighted with cartographic meaning. Giulio Balino’s introduction to maps that gave a general description of Venice, for example, mentions clothing and language as ways to distinguish the region of origin among the tangle of cosmopolitan visitors seen in the city: ‘[Venice is] inhabited by an infinite multitude of people who come together for commerce from various nations, in fact from all over the world. They use all languages and are dressed in different
Clothing is allied with place to the extent that Marsilio della Croce’s 1574 Venetian chronicle of the European travels of Henry III is able to describe the origins of every item the king wears:

…on Sunday morning…his Majesty appeared in public dressed entirely in…silk from Flanders, with a hat on his head in the Italian style with his veil, and a long cloak to his feet…and on his feet, shoes and slippers according to the French usage.

The degree to which Dürer generally associated costume from his travels with cartographic concepts is made clear in his letters as well as two more drawings of his wife Agnes from his journals in the Low Countries. In one of many letters Dürer sent home to his friend the humanist intellectual Willibald Pirckheimer, he closes one from 1506 with references to the new, cosmopolitan clothes he bought while in Italy: ‘My French mantle, my Hungarian hussek and my brown coat send you a hearty greeting.’ In his later journals he mentioned buying a Dutch costume for his wife in December, 1520: ‘At Bergen op Zoom I bought a Netherlandish thin kerchief for my wife, to be worn on the head.’ He drew her wearing the accessory two times in 1521, and the first drawing is accompanied by his entry: ‘This was drawn by Albrecht Dürer after his wife. Portrayed in Netherlandish attire in the year 1521 after twenty-seven [?] years of marriage.’ The second drawing pictures Agnes in her Netherlandish cover (figure 7). Alongside his wife he made a sketch of a young girl in costume with a complicated hair cover that he notes as an example of ‘Cologne ribbonry.’ That Dürer went to the effort of buying a local costume to keep after his journey, and depicted his German wife wearing it twice while she accompanied him abroad suggests that in wearing it, the headdress bestowed on her some aura of Netherlandish identity, accomplished by its value as an object that represented and recalled the Netherlands. Heavy with meaning of place, Dürer’s use of costume for himself, his wife, and as subject in his sketches, speaks to its

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52 Letter VIII. Translated and transcribed in its entirety in Hutchinson, 94.
53 Strauss, vol. 4, 1998 from Verth and Muller 1918, 37; Ru.I/163.
54 Dürer made a rather long note about the geographic origins if her head garment. Strauss, vol. 4, 1521/1, 1988.
55 Strauss, vol. 4 1521/57, 2096-97; For the way this image is generally interpreted, see Anderson and Silver, 30.
foundations in cartography and suggests that literal maps were but one way to cite location and its cultural implications for the sixteenth-century viewer.

Figure 7 Albrecht Dürer, *Agnes Dürer and a Girl from Cologne*, 1521, drawing.

**Cartography, Chorography and ‘Habit’**

Dürer is one example that illustrates the vigorousness with which these various types of descriptive communications about place suddenly flourished in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. Maps, costume imagery and chorography went hand in hand as ways to come to grips with an increasingly global world; the prevalence and variety of this information became vehicles for the new early modern concept of *habit*. The etymology of ‘habit’ traces a relationship to clothing evident in the term’s inclusion in many sixteenth-century costume books, such as the often cited early costume book by Jean Jacques Boissard, *Habitus variorum orbis genitum* (Various Costume of the Peoples of the World, 1581); also in Wenceslas Hollar’s title pages for his costume books the *Ornatus Muliebris Anglicanus* (The Several Habits of Englishwomen, 1638-40) and his *Theatrum mulierum* (European Women in Costume, 1643). In such usage, *Habitus* derived from the Latin
encompassing meanings of ‘holding, having, dwelling,’ and the term was meant to give not only a sense of place, but also an impression of the morals and character as well as customs of a people, an endeavor described by Daniel Defert as a ‘proto-ethnography.’ Habit also became an essential term in corresponding chorographies of the era, as a way to describe the appearance of a people that also revealed their character and mores; in this way costume studies and those of other artists addressed here might themselves be considered evocative of chorography. As habitus connected clothes, terrain, and character were similarly drawn out even in different regions, for example, in Florence, the Palazzo Vecchio’s map room later known as the Salle delle carta geographiche, was more officially identified in the sixteenth century as the ‘Guardaroba’ or ‘closet’.

In England, the word ‘fashion’ derived from ‘fassion,’ a term that also indicated the form of topography, encompassing territory of both earth and sky. Another travelling artist who produced a number of costume studies and costume books in the seventeenth century is Wenceslas Hollar, thus tracing the continued arc of chorographic impulse in costume imagery and cartography before it began to wane in the eighteenth century. Hollar’s highly polished prints for intended for commercial, public consumption provide thoughtful counterpoints to Albrecht Dürer’s personal sketchbook drawings in regards to costume as chorographic data. These two examples also give a sense of how each artist idiosyncratically addressed costume iconography through his own experiences with maps. In terms of travel, Hollar was far more wide-ranging in comparison with Dürer’s. Hollar spent almost half his career in London, but was born and trained in Prague. He also studied in Germany, traveled to the Low Countries in 1635, was exiled in Flanders during the Civil War, and was sent by Charles II on assignment to Tangiers. Hollar took up residence in London through the 1640s.

Over the course of his career, Hollar produced a massive commercial corpus of almost 3,000 prints

57 Jones, 93; Traub, 51; Mendyk, 459, 463. For Defert and ethnography, see 25-41.
60 Rohl, 3.
61 Pennington, xlv-xivii; A source for Hollar’s work categorized according to chronology and his travels is Anthony Griffiths and Gabriela Kesnerová, Wenceslas Hollar Prints and Drawings (London: British Museum, 1983.
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depicting a range of subjects from still-lifes, to architectural views, maps, and many depictions of costume.⁶²

Figure 8 Wenceslas Hollar, Winter from Four Seasons, 1643-44, engraving.

Along with costume studies, Hollar also produced numerous and varied kinds of maps. His map-making was the one thing specifically mentioned about the artist in John Aubrey’s biography of Hollar in the Brief Lives from 1669.⁶³ Aubrey goes so far as to root the printmaker’s entire career in mapmaking: ‘He told me that when he was a schoole-boy he tooke a delight in draweing of mapps; which draughts he kept, and they were pretty…So that what he did for his delight and recreation only when a boy, proved to be his livelyhood when a man.’⁶⁴ Hollar’s maps included a range of subjects that reflected his transnational travels: the British Isles, topographical views, and panoramic city views, best illustrated by his well-


⁶³ For a brief but useful critical overview of Hollar’s biographers, see Griffiths and Kesnerová, 2-3.

known map of London after the fire 1666, a subject he repeated in seemingly endless variations. It is worth noting that Hollar’s and Dürer’s detailed depictions of costume can be seen as a reflection of the so-called ‘mapping impulse,’ a term used by Svetlana Alpers to come to grips with the tendency of early modern Northern European art to engage a highly descriptive type of approach to picture-making; they demonstrate a visual precision that she cites as most closely aligned with the production of maps.\textsuperscript{65} Winter from the etched series of the Seasons, 1643-44, demonstrates how Hollar’s technical skills as a printmaker also served his costume studies with painstakingly rendered surfaces that speak to the descriptive features of mapping (figure 8).\textsuperscript{66} Such closely articulated surfaces, according to Alpers, were aimed at constructing knowledge—a visually rich kind of knowledge associated with maps but expressed as information rendered with an emphasis on careful surface detail as a way to represent the visible world. Alpers argues that the close attention paid to surface appearance by artists was itself a critical vehicle for conveying information to the viewer.\textsuperscript{67}

Figure 9 Wenceslas Hollar, ‘A Virginian Woman’ from Theatrum mulierum, 1643, engraving.

\textsuperscript{67} Alpers, 120-25.
At the same time that Hollar was producing maps from around Europe, he also published the *Theatrum mulierum* in 1643, a full-fledged costume book in the manner of some of the earliest costume books of the previous century. Unlike Hollar’s earlier costume book of English fashion, the *Ornatus Muliebris Anglicanus*, 1638-40, the *Theatrum* included a cosmopolitan variety of women’s costumes from throughout Europe and even some examples from the New World like that of a ‘Virginian Woman’ (figure 9). Images of foreign costumes and the peoples who wore them still had consumer appeal in the seventeenth century, and Hollar’s own costume studies, often combined with topographies, descriptions and poetic verse provide a reflection of the kinds of information sought by chorographic studies. The character of Hollar’s work in general was, indeed, so oriented in this direction that a review of Henry Walpole’s life of Hollar from his *Anecdotes of Painting in England* 1828, that was published in the London Literary Gazette that same year noted: ‘He adopted and excelled in a style best suited to chorography, or delineations of cities and places, between mapping and drawing, which was novel and popular.’

The *Four Seasons* are a particularly apt example of the confluence of meaning between costume, cartography and chorography because the female figures are juxtaposed against a city or country scape derived from the same type of panorama he used for in his maps of the city of London. For *Winter* the buildings have been identified as the Royal Exchange and Cornhill, constant landmarks of the city that would seem to have little to do with the specific seasons. Neither is *Winter*, like the rest of the *Seasons*, concerned with picturing actual weather conditions as a way to set the stage for the season. In *Winter* we see no evidence of winter weather, and the only indication we have of cool temperatures come from the smoke rising from chimneys in buildings occupying the background. The focus, however, is on the large costumed figure in the immediate foreground, a woman often interpreted as a personification of the season because she wears garments appropriate to the time of year she represents. Hollar’s etching of *Winter* (as in all the four *Seasons*) depicts not a woman in national costume, but a figure wearing the latest fashion in the form of a fur muff, mask, veil and lace adorned shoes that are revealed by her provocatively raised gown. Joseph Monteyne found that these accessories became

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68 Van Eerde, 22; Pennington, 295.
69 Van Eerde, 22; For references to the *Ornatus*, see Nevinson and Saunders, 7.
72 Winter and other images from the *Seasons* are some of the few images from Hollar’s oeuvre that have been examined in depth within their cultural contexts. For the *Four Seasons*, see Monteyne, 414-443; Pennington, 97-98; John Nevinson and Ann Saunders, *The Four Seasons by Wenceslaus Hollar*, London, 1979, 5-11.
specifically emblematic of high fashion London at this moment during the seventeenth century through their channels of production.  

Winter makes landmarks in the City clear, and places them against a figure wearing fashions that are contemporary, constructing the image as a precise image of London in the 1640s. Hollar’s use of fashion as a measure of the City has mapped something of the vital, changeable, quality of contemporary London, and in doing so he raises the issue of chronology that is part of chorographic studies. The implications of fashion are costume of a current moment, evoking what Rohl terms the spatio-historical nature of chorography, ‘concerned with both place and time, but wherein place is more prominent.’  

The clothes in Winter (and all the seasons in this series) become the chief visual cue by which the viewer understands the time of year pictured in each print. A short verse is inscribed at the bottom of the image, serving primarily to comment on the luxurious fabrics the figure wears: ‘The cold, not cruelty makes her weare/ In Winter, furrs and wild beasts haire/ For a smoother skin at night/ Embraceth her with more delight.’  

With this visual strategy the image brokers a closer relationship between the costume and the background than anything else, in the case of Winter as a woman wearing recognizable, fashionable contemporary garments that identify her as an au courant urban inhabitant.  

She is, however, a denizen of not just any city, she is wearing garments fashionable to contemporary seventeenth-century London. The clothes and the specifically chosen buildings work together to identify place, showing the visual currency of costume in mapping out an image contextualized by time and place.

Conclusion
This paper has argued that the confluence between cartography and costume as way of mapping was culturally pervasive and includes the impulse, if not the approach, of early cartographic studies as new ways to comprehensively define an unfamiliar place. I have attempted to show the confluence between these areas of study, and in particular, to emphasize the contribution of costume studies, descriptions and costume books to the rise in chorography beginning in the fifteenth century.

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73 Monteyne, 419-20.
74 Monteyne, 419.
76 Transcribed in Pennington, 98.
and sixteenth centuries. Because of the interrelated nature of these studies, Albrecht Dürer and Wenceslaus Hollar provide rich and prolific but understudied examples of artists who traveled widely for the time, and due to these movements, fruitfully exploited these exchanges to produce works that have chorographic character. Because early modern viewers understood costume as iconography that coopted meaning associated with maps, costume and cartography became a digressive, but entirely recognizable method of chorography. Carl Sauer defined maps as ‘a common language used by [men of] different races and tongues to express the relationship of their society…to a geographic environment.’ As part of this ‘common language,’ the dressed head and body were integral to concepts of early modern map-making, to the extent that they were an expected feature of early maps. Early modern mapmakers were referred to as ‘world describers,’ a purpose that equally applied to the artist’s use of costume that was also part of these maps. Costume could serve the same function as early maps; it could provide the viewer with a way to grasp a sense of place, and the viewer’s relationship to it. The function of early modern chorography was to ‘survey’ or ‘describe,’ goals that are aligned with place, but just as often, work to illuminate the people who occupy it. Costume books, costume studies and maps have been regarded as important points of access for understanding how a region was understood, but I content that their full potential as agents of information lie in their practical and conceptual uses as chorography.

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78 Helgerson, 67.
80 Alpers, 122.
81 Helgerson, 71.