

## BEYOND DRAGONS

Cartographers of old weren't women,  
and yet it seems we might have been  
at least advisors to the men  
who knew, they said, the edge of things.

"Sail out too far you'll disappear."  
(Do all map designers chart in fear?)  
"The edge is there, your fate is clear."  
(Something it seems compelled the Queen.)

But cartographers of old weren't women,  
so one wonders how things might have been  
if dragons had not frightened men  
who thought in lines and not in rings,

whose visions branded, even burned,  
while women awaiting a ship's return  
dreamed vividly and thus did yearn  
to see beyond the edge of things.

It is not ought beyond the no  
that drives an Isabella so  
to strip her coffers down and know:  
One pays to go beyond, not to.

"Beyond this place will be dragons," she heard  
and watched the cartographer's finger blur  
the line of certain no return,  
and straightway sent forth the female three.

The cartographers of old were dared  
and shook their heads in mild despair,  
but did not hear her whisper there,  
"and well there may be, well may be."

But cartographers of old weren't women  
and did not finger ringless hands, then  
touch their throats where jewels had been  
and think beyond the edge of things.

No, cartographers of old weren't women,  
and yet it seems we might have been  
the ones who asked, not why, but when  
to push beyond the edge of things.

Yes, cartographers of old weren't women,  
and so indeed we might have been  
Mercatored by meridians  
and yet again by parallels.