

4. quali applicazioni può avere un GIS in ambito umanistico?

16. quali sono i principali ambiti applicativi delle digital humanities?

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expeditions (discussed further below). The focus of the image reproduced in Fig. 5.1 is Noel himself, the apparently nonchalant operator of a specially adapted Newman Sinclair camera, with telephoto lens, at what was then a record altitude. This photograph was widely reproduced, appearing, for example, in the program for the 1922 expedition film (*Mount Everest Committee, 1922*), in contemporary advertising for the camera, and also in a fundraising exhibition of Everest photographs and paintings held at the Alpine Club in the spring of 1923. The portrait continues to be produced as an iconic portrait and is often attributed to Noel himself (Davis, 2011; Noel, 2003). This aspect of the afterlife of the image is itself highly significant and a reminder that the visual archive, far from being simply an unmediated record of experience, is often a site for the accumulation of value.

In the context of the exhibition, however, the viewer was encouraged to look more closely at the picture itself. Behind the film camera, literally in the shadows, is a partially visible Sherpa steadying the tripod, one of no less than eight men who were deputed to carry all the equipment up and down the mountain. The idea of partial visibility was here used to tell a larger story and in this case could be amplified by asking the viewer to consider how Noel actually obtained the photograph of himself apparently in the act of filming. With no sign of any remotely activated device by which he himself could have taken the picture (a theoretical possibility), further research in the Everest archive at the RGS-IBG was required. Evidence was eventually found, in the form of the catalogue to the Alpine Club exhibition (*Mount Everest Committee, 1923*), to support the claim that the photograph was almost certainly taken by one of the Sherpas at Noel's behest. Of all the photographs detailed in the catalogue, this was the only one without an attribution to a named photographer: every one of the others is recorded as having been the work of Noel or his British colleagues. The absence speaks volumes. It seems highly likely that the camera was operated by an unnamed Sherpa.

Identifying a presence is an important step; going further than this and naming individuals depends to a large extent on the survival of evidence, which is often difficult to locate or is suggestive rather than definitive, as the above example shows. In the case of the early Everest expeditions, the names of individual Sherpas were almost invisible in the official records, except for rare receipt books showing payments to their families and including their wives' thumbprints as signatures (an example of which was included in the exhibition). Seven of the porters died on the 1922 expedition, killed by an avalanche while attempting to reach the summit led by George Mallory (who survived on this occasion). But they were not named or even mentioned in the film, though Noel reportedly photographed the climbing party half an hour before the accident and filmed the track of the avalanche. There are various accounts of the accident in the RGS-IBG collections, including two by Mallory, who blamed himself for an error of judgment (a conclusion he was not alone in reaching).⁶ But among the vast archive of paperwork there is nothing to tell us about the Sherpa community's view of the event, apart from a single document

⁶G. Mallory to G. Young, 11 June 1922, RGS-IBG Everest Expedition archives, EE/3/5/11. See also the typescript account in EE/3/5/13.

5. cosa si intende per archiviazione in cloud?

12. quali vantaggi ha la comunicazione accademica online rispetto alla comunicazione offline?

The origins and ethos of the *Hidden Histories* exhibition were reflected in its physical manifestation at the RGS-IBG, across two distinct spaces: the Society's Pavilion Gallery at street level (where most of the panels and copy prints were on public display, along with some video and audio material) and the Foyle Reading Room at basement level (where original materials including oil paintings, books, sketches, and artifacts were housed). Although this arrangement was to some extent dictated by pragmatic considerations, including conservation requirements, it also helped to embed the links between exhibition and research in the spatial organization of the display. In principle, visitors were encouraged to move from the story to the sources. In crossing the threshold of a formerly inaccessible research facility they were invited to become active participants in the making of new knowledge rather than simply its passive spectators. In this respect, the spatial arrangement of the exhibition was reinforced by a program of associated events, from "hands on" showcases to community engagement workshops, designed to promote the use of the collections.

Form and Content

The exhibition set out to encourage a more inclusive history of exploration, in which the contributions of a wide range of people were recognized and valued. European explorers in many different parts of the world relied heavily on the physical labor of porters, pilots, guides and translators, as well as various forms of indigenous knowledge, including but not confined to oral testimony (Burnett, 2002; Camerini, 1996; Chrétien, 2005; Fogel-Chance, 2002; Hansen, 1999; Raffles, 2002; Raj, 2006; Simpson, 1975; Wisnicki, 2008). Yet in writing for a metropolitan audience, explorers often failed to acknowledge the extent of their dependence on others in print, with indigenous agency all too often "lost in translation." By looking carefully at the various different forms of evidence across the collections, the aim was to recover some aspects of these hidden histories.

The exhibition was arranged into three thematic sections: "The Work of Exploration" (highlighting the dependence of European explorers on local support, local knowledge, and key intermediaries, including guides and interpreters); "Images of Exploration and Encounter" (presenting aspects of a diverse visual archive of exploration and the presence of indigenous peoples within it); and "Recognition and Responsibility" (reflecting on the extent to which the role of locals and intermediaries was recognized during the nineteenth century). Within each section, individual items were arranged to highlight the role of indigenous people and intermediaries in the history of exploration, using various different kinds of materials from the collections, including manuscript, print, artifact, map, photograph, artwork, and film. The idea of "bringing into visibility" was enriched, and complicated, by the prominent role of visual technologies—including, for example, the sketchbook, the atlas, the lantern slide, and the documentary film—in the history of exploration. The photographic collections of scholarly societies, for example,

8. cosa si intende per web archiving?

1. quale è il ruolo della data visualization nella comunicazione scientifica odierna?

Institutional Context

Questions about the role of indigenous people in the history of exploration may be approached in a variety of ways, via, for example, oral history, archival research, or anthropological fieldwork. The remit of the *Hidden Histories* exhibition project was specifically focused on the potential of archival investigation within major European or North American collections to yield evidence that might qualify or undermine the “heroic” view of exploration. In methodological terms, this was not an unfamiliar challenge, given the recent direction of research in the history of geography and imperial history concerned with the extent to which such archives, established during the colonial era, can be read “against the grain” (Burton, 2011; Pandey, 2000) or, in Ann Stoler’s formulation, “along the grain” (Stoler, 2009). In these terms, the RGS-IBG was a good site to conduct such research, not least because of the extraordinary depth and range of its collections. The idea of acquiring, storing, and circulating geographical information was itself one of the main rationales for the foundation of the Royal Geographical Society in 1830 (Driver, 2001; Jones, 2005). Today, the Society’s collections are said to contain more than two million individual items, including books, manuscripts, maps, photographs, artworks, artifacts, and film, reflecting the wide reach of geographical interest across the world but also extending well beyond the limits of the British Empire.

The idea of mounting an exhibition in a space traditionally associated with the heroic view of exploration evidently required the active support of the Society itself. The Society’s head of research and higher education, Dr. Catherine Souch, was the key point of contact in the planning for the exhibition, though many other members of the professional staff, notably those with responsibility for collections, education, outreach, and public relations, were also involved. In recent years, the RGS-IBG collections have played an important role in extensive outreach and educational initiatives, notably the *Crossing Continents* exhibitions program, led by Vandana Patel and Steve Brace, designed to reach new “publics” among Britain’s black and ethnic minority communities (RGS-IBG, 2009).⁵ This was part of a larger-scale initiative—the “Unlocking the archives” project supported by the United Kingdom’s Heritage Lottery Fund—involving the provision of new facilities for storage, cataloguing, preservation, and visitor access to the collections at the home of the RGS-IBG, including a new display space (the Pavilion) on Exhibition Road, opened in 2004. Although the idea of a research-oriented exhibition at the Society was new, the shift of emphasis in its collections strategy toward greater engagement with more diverse public audiences—as developed in recent years by Alasdair Macleod, head of enterprise and resources—provided an essential precondition for the project discussed in this chapter.

⁵The four *Crossing Continents* exhibitions were: *Bombay Africans, 1850–1910*; *From Kabul to Kandahar, 1833–1933*; *Seeing China: Community Reflections*; and *The Punjab: Moving Journeys*. See Royal Geographical Society (2009), and <http://hiddenhistories.rgs.org/index.php/research/geographical-exhibitions#4>

6. quali sono le potenzialità delle architetture storage&cloud per la

ricerca umanistica?

10. quali sono le specificità dell'informatica umanistica?



Fig. 5.1 Captain Noel and kinematograph camera with large telephoto lens established on the Chang La [North Col] at 23,000 ft. Unknown photographer. 1922. Note the partially visible Sherpa keeping camera and tripod steady (© Royal Geographical Society [with IBG]. Reprinted with permission)

have themselves been the subject of significant attention in the histories of geography and anthropology (Edwards, 1994; Loiseaux, 2006; Ryan, 1997). The exhibition's large central section devoted to images of exploration was thus intended to encourage reflection on the particular history of the various modes of visualization evident in the Society's collections. Images of image-making were especially prominent, accompanied by contextual material emphasizing the specific conditions under which images were made (Driver & Jones, 2009, pp. 25–41). Mixing the spectacular with the mundane, the exhibition as a whole was intended to inspire curiosity, a desire not just to know more about the RGS-IBG collections, but to know more about the conditions under which some things in the collections were more visible than others.

This was partly a matter of looking at familiar material with fresh eyes. Perhaps the single most telling example used in the exhibition was provided by an iconic portrait of the cameraman John Noel, member of the 1922 and 1924 Everest expeditions, pictured in the act of filming on the Chang La (which the British then called the North Col) at a height of around 23,000 ft (Fig. 5.1). Noel occupies an important place in the historiography of mountaineering, partly for his achievements as a climber but mostly for his enthusiastic advocacy of the uses of film in the course of adventurous exploration. His photographs and films brought Everest expeditions to life, and continue to do so. The exhibition thus included footage from his 1922 film alongside documentary evidence concerning the role of Sherpas in Everest

9. che cosa si intende per obsolescenza digitale?

2. cosa si intende per big data in ambito di ricerca umanistica?

Research of this kind clearly faces significant evidential challenges. But it also raises wider questions about the biographical mode in which much of this kind of “salvage” work—the uncovering of “hidden histories”—is done within the heritage sector. For in seeking to excavate and celebrate the lives and achievements of individuals in the name of an explicitly revisionist history, we risk replacing one kind of hero-myth with another. In the case of exploration, for example, the figure of the “heroic indigene” has a longer history than might be imagined. In some circumstances, certain kinds of local agency were celebrated during the age of empire, and indeed mythologized. The story of the “pandit” Nain Singh, the subject of new research in recent years, provides the most telling example (Jones, 2010, pp. 58–91; Raj, 2006). Nain Singh was famously awarded the Gold Medal of the Royal Geographical Society for his contributions to the mapping of Tibet, Ladakh, and Central Asia in 1877, and his name has loomed large in the Society’s recent efforts to promote a more inclusive history of geography (Driver & Jones, 2009, pp. 43–46). Yet a fully historical perspective on his celebrity requires close attention to the terms on which his exceptional contributions were recognized during the nineteenth century as well as in our own time. Almost literally a subaltern in the service of the British, Nain Singh was represented in the halls of metropolitan science—his portrait can still be seen on the walls of the RGS-IBG today—but essentially his recognition depended on his ascribed status as a faithful servant of his employers in the Survey of India.

The case of Nain Singh prompts further reflection on some of the key assumptions behind the idea of hidden histories itself. In the course of selecting suitable case studies for the exhibition, it became clear that certain kinds of non-European agency, such as those of the “pandits,” were recognized even in the nineteenth century and, moreover, that the knowledge of many of the identifiable guides, interpreters, and field assistants encountered in the RGS-IBG collections in many different contexts, from the Arctic to Amazonia, could hardly be characterized as “local” or “indigenous” in any straightforward sense. Nain Singh, for example, originated in the Kumaon Himalaya in Northern India and was clearly not “indigenous” to the vast territory in Tibet through which he traveled, often *incognito*, covertly collecting the geographical information so precious to the British authorities, and indeed relying heavily on local informants and intermediaries. And his experience in working for successive European travelers in the trans-Himalayan region, beginning with his employment by the Schlagintweit brothers on an expedition across the region sponsored by The East India Company and the king of Prussia in the mid-1850s (Finkelstein, 2000), suggests that his personal knowledge was far from merely “local.” Indeed, seen in the broader context of late-Victorian ideas about race and culture, the presentation of locally created knowledge as “indigenous” or “native” could be considered from a postcolonial perspective as a deeply colonial move. After all, at the same time as they were airbrushing the role of non-Europeans out of their narratives, colonial travelers were also constructing visions of indigeneity and of local knowledge designed, in a sense, to keep the others in their place.

13. che cosa si intende per analisi di corpora testuali in ambito storico?

11. che cosa sono i linked data?

Chapter 5 Exploration as Knowledge Transfer: Exhibiting Hidden Histories

Felix Driver

This paper is concerned with two things that depend, essentially, on the spatial mobility of knowledge.¹ First there is geographical exploration, a process of knowledge-making involving the translation of ideas, people, and things across space in a two-way movement between known and unknown territory. This is, as is clear from much historical and contemporary research, an uneven process in which certain things get translated more readily than others. There is, so to speak, a politics, as well as a physics, of knowledge transfer. The second is public exhibition, a project designed to disseminate knowledge (in the case I will discuss, knowledge of exploration) to a wider audience, a process sometimes described in higher education under the bureaucratic rubric of “knowledge transfer.” The idea linking these two things is simple enough, but deserving of further elaboration in many different ways, as the contributions to this volume attest. The thing transferred—the knowledge explorers brought home, the knowledge imparted through an exhibition—is transformed in the course of its translation. Space, like language, is not a neutral surface over which knowledge travels, or an empty container into which we can pour our learning; it enters into and shapes that knowledge in significant ways (Livingstone, 2003; Meusburger, Livingstone, & Jöns, 2010; Naylor, 2005).

The *Hidden Histories of Exploration* exhibition took place in London at the Royal Geographical Society with the Institute of British Geographers (RGS-IBG) in 2009, and its life extended well beyond that in electronic form.² The exhibition was part of a wider project designed to question—and to disturb—a dominant narrative in the history of exploration that privileges the actions of heroic individuals in

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² The exhibition displays and other resources are available online at www.rgs.org/hiddenhistories

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7. che cosa consente di fare una network analysis in ambito di ricerca umanistica?

15. che rapporti possono intercorrere tra data visualization e rappresentazione cartografica?

extraordinary circumstances and presents exploration as an individual drama, with the explorer the principal character, usually the hero, occasionally the villain (Driver, 2005). Such has been the dominant view of explorers and exploration, and it has proved remarkably enduring. For all the weight of decades of research scholarship and postcolonial critique, much is still to be learned about the culture, practices, and institutions that made geographical exploration possible.³ The *Hidden Histories of Exploration* exhibition was designed in particular to portray the business of exploration as a collective experience of work involving many different people in many different kinds of relationship.⁴ It highlighted the contributions of a large number of people who were rarely center stage—including the carriers, cooks, soldiers, porters, guides, and interpreters recruited and paid off *en route*. The exhibition provided an opportunity to present some of the outcomes of research on the collections of the RGS-IBG (Driver & Jones, 2009; Jones, 2010). However, the relationship between research and display was by no means all one-way, as the language of “dissemination” tends to suggest. The process of bringing the exhibition into being—conceptually, discursively, and practically—also helped to reshape research questions and perspectives in ways that were productive of new insights about the subject of the research, and the process of public engagement.

I begin this paper by outlining the institutional setting of the exhibition, explaining its wider significance in the context of the history of the RGS-IBG and the methodological challenge of using the Society’s historical collections to tell new stories about exploration. The second section outlines the form and content of the exhibition, explaining how it highlighted the agency of indigenous peoples and intermediaries in the conduct of expeditions. By highlighting and, to an extent, celebrating the role of intermediaries such as guides, interpreters, porters, and pilots, the exhibition prompted questions about what was made visible and what was obscured in standard narratives of exploration, especially when seen from a British perspective; specifically, whose labors come to be recognized as indispensable to the process of exploration and whose are marginalized? In turn, these questions prompted further reflection on the biographical mode in which the work of recovery is often conceived within the heritage sector, suggesting in particular the possibility of a more explicitly spatial perspective on the networks and infrastructure of exploration. The third section considers the relationship between the ethos of the *Hidden Histories* exhibition and three design strategies involved in its realization, referred to here as “role reversal,” “juxtaposition,” and “rescaling,” respectively. The knowledge presented within this exhibition, as in any other, was significantly shaped by its spatial form and context (Hooper-Greenhill, 2000; Moser, 2010).

³For recent overviews, see Kennedy, 2007; Naylor & Ryan, 2010; and Thomas, 2015; more specialist studies include Cavell, 2008; Dritsas, 2010; and Safier, 2008.

⁴Studies of the expedition as an economic institution are surprisingly rare: see Thomas (2015).

3. che cosa è un historical GIS?

14. che cosa si intende per network analysis in ambito storico?

noting compensation to their families living in Darjeeling, Nepal, and Tibet. As far as I know, this is the only documentary evidence of their identities that survives. Here they are named as Thankay Sherpa, Sangay Sherpa, Temba Sherpa, Lhakpa Sherpa, Pasang Namgya Sherpa, Norbu Bhotia, and Pema Sherpa, with the report indicating that six were ethnic Sherpa and one “Bhotia” (a loose term that the British authorities used to cover a variety of ethnically Tibetan hill peoples).⁷ Although the achievements of the British climbers were widely celebrated after their return to England, the deaths of the Sherpas were soon forgotten as far as public memory in Britain was concerned, in striking contrast to the lasting popular obsession with Mallory following his death on the mountain in 1924. Mallory’s fate continues to inspire fascination within Britain and beyond, as witnessed in Geoffrey Archer’s pseudo-documentary novel, *Paths of Glory* (2009), and the spectacular film, *The Wildest Dream* (2010), both of which drew directly on materials in the Everest collections at the RGS-IBG. In this context, the possibility of telling other stories through these collections is yet to be widely recognized.⁸ An exhibition such as *Hidden Histories* swims against a powerful tide.

As the above example indicates, research for the exhibition involved the identification of individuals whose labors had been hidden or airbrushed from history, suggesting the possibility (cheerfully exploited in the exhibition publicity) of a kind of alternative “roll of honor” in the annals in exploration. But the task of naming and individualizing those I have referred to above as “partially visible” was itself by no means simple. The vast majority of those employed by such expeditions are unidentified in most published narratives or the archives that survive. Moreover, those that are named are often identified on the basis of convenience or misinterpretation by their employers, roles frequently mistaken for names or family names for first names. There are also many examples of the use of adopted or conferred names, as for example in the case of Sidi Mubarak Bombay, the celebrated leader of many nineteenth-century expeditions in East Africa, whose names reflected his experience as a child slave taken by his Arab captor to India (Simpson, 1975). Further consideration of these conventions and practices of naming is itself an important step in the process of unsettling conventional accounts of exploration, in which “locals” are so often merely means to an end. Attempting to do more by breathing biographical life into the often fragmentary surviving evidence is a real challenge. It requires painstaking research, often against the grain of the archive, to trace the barest pattern of a life.

A further example from the archives displayed in the exhibition for the first time may help to illustrate this point. This is a delicate watercolor sketch by Catherine Frere, daughter of British colonial governor Sir Henry Bartle Frere, made in South Africa in 1877 (Fig. 5.2). It depicts a group of the female members of Henry Morton

⁷The total compensation given was 1900 Rupees, about £130. See “Committee assembled to consider compensation to be given to the dependants of the men killed on the Everest Expedition,” dated 11 August 1922. RGS-IBG Everest Expedition archives, EE/18/1/98.

⁸Wade Davis has published a remarkable account of the Everest expeditions of the 1920s situating them in the aftermath of World War I (Davis, 2011).