Thesis

*Terra incognita: women on Royal Geographical Society-supported expeditions 1913-1970*

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the University of the West of England, Bristol for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

This research programme was carried out in collaboration with the Royal Geographical Society (with the Institute of British Geographers)

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March 2015
Abstract

Women’s expeditionary work, in common with women’s geographical work more broadly, has been comparatively understudied within the history of geographical thought and practice, and within the wider discipline, until relatively recently (Domosh 1991a, 1991b; Rose 1993; Maddrell 2009a). This thesis, completed for a Collaborative Doctoral Award between the University of the West of England, and the Royal Geographical Society (with IBG), charts this terra incognita, and presents a reconstructed historical geography of women’s participation in RGS-supported expeditions between 1913 and 1970, taking as its start date the permanent admission of women to the Fellowship of the RGS. Building on earlier substantive feminist research into women’s historic geographical and expeditionary work (Maddrell, 2009a), it presents a systematic survey of all applications for RGS support during this period, drawing on a range of sources from across the RGS archives and collections. Prior to this doctoral study, this material had not been investigated for this purpose or in great depth, nor was there a complete record of the RGS’s support of expeditionary work during this period: this thesis presents a new and original database which can be used to research these questions.

Drawing on these original findings, and on the extensive literatures around feminist historical geography, feminist epistemologies, the historiography of geographical thought and practice, as well as the recent literature on mobilities, this thesis investigates how women negotiated the networks in, around, and beyond the RGS to gain support for their expeditionary work. In particular, it highlights the importance of women-focused networks and familial-social networks for gaining this support. It also uses their participation in and embodied experiences of RGS-supported expeditions, including their expeditionary (im)mobilities and expeditionary relationships, to complicate existing understandings of expeditions as a male-dominated space, form, and practice of geographical knowledge production, thereby investigating the relationships between gender, subjectivity, and expeditionary knowledge production. Finally, it
considers the dissemination and reception of their expeditionary knowledges within the spaces of the RGS.

Thesis word count (excluding title page, abstract, lists of contents and figures, acknowledgements, references, and appendices): 81,261.
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Acknowledgements

Firstly, I gratefully acknowledge the support of the Arts and Humanities Research Council through the Collaborative Doctoral Award, without which I would have been unable to undertake this research.

My Director of Studies and main supervisor, Avril Maddrell, has been a constant source of support and encouragement throughout this doctoral project, providing inspiration and thoughtful feedback, as well as countless cups of Earl Grey tea! Working on a study which has shown how important supportive networks between women can be, it has been a great honour and a privilege to forge a similarly supportive partnership with Avril. As well as being the all-important ‘critical friend’, she has also been an endlessly kind and true friend.

I have been similarly honoured to work with my advisors Alison Blunt and Alan Terry, who have both provided valuable perspectives on the project as it developed, as well as encouragement and support. Alison’s detailed and thorough critiques of my draft chapters helped me to rethink and reshape the project, to its great improvement!

I would like to thank my examiners, Nicola Thomas, Jenny Hill and Christien van den Anker, for their thoughtful and generous comments, and for a stimulating and rigorous discussion of the thesis and the wider project.

I would also like to thank other academic colleagues who have provided helpful leads and useful feedback. As well as providing opportunities and encouragement for me to participate more fully in conferences and research groups, Heike Jons very kindly shared her preliminary research materials on the development of the Worts Fund. Dydia DeLyser and Karen Morin, with whom I co-convened the Historical mobilities and gender session at the Annual Meeting of the Association of American Geographers in Los Angeles in 2013, provided thoughtful and immensely helpful comments on my presentation at that conference, which eventually became Chapter 6. At UWE, Chad Staddon, Juliet Jain and Miriam Ricci provided helpful commentary and useful viva experience in this project’s earlier stages of assessment, which helped me to think through the project’s development and steer it in productive directions.

As the collaborating institution the Royal Geographical Society (with IBG) has also played a key role in the successful development of this project. My second supervisor Catherine Souch has also been a constant source of encouragement and support, helping me to navigate the Society’s contemporary networks, keeping me on track, and providing lots of opportunities for disseminating the project’s findings to a range of audiences. I would like to thank Stephanie Wyse and Bryant Longley for extensive help with designing and constructing the database used to house applications for support, and for kindly providing training in how to use it. Thanks also to Lucy Allen, and other members of the RHED team over the past four years, for encouragement and support.

I would particularly like to thank the Collections team in the Foyle Reading Room, past and present, including Eugene Rae, Jan Turner, David McNeill, Sarah Strong, Julie Cole, Julie Carrington, Jamie Owen, Joy Wheeler, and other members of the FRR team. With their expertise and knowledge of the collections, they have helped to guide me through this expedition into the terra incognita of the RGS-IBG archives. I have also relied on Shane Winser’s great expertise with regard to RGS support of expeditions, and in particular the Expeditions Reports collection, which she has kindly shared with me. I would also like to thank Chrissie James and Alasdair MacLeod for their kind support and encouragement as this project nears its end – Chrissie’s advice and gin-and-tonic-cake has been particularly helpful!
I would also like to thank the staff of the Scott Polar Research Institute collections and the Cambridge University Archives, where I conducted additional research for this study, for their help and support.

I would especially like to thank the women I have interviewed for this study, who so generously shared their time and stories of expeditionary work with me: Helen Sandison, Oonagh Linehan, Janet Momsen, Judith Tomlin, Lisette Henry, Jane Bateman, Jennifer Silcock, Gillian Mallett, and Beatrice de Cardi.

The other CDA students at RGS-IBG have also been a great source of support and encouragement: Emily Hayes, Natalie Cox, Jean de Pomereu, Jane Wess, and Jan Faull. I have really appreciated our group meetings and informal chats in the Tea Room, putting historical geography and the world to rights! I also appreciate the support of my fellow PhD students at UWE, particularly Liz Elliott, Samantha Organ, Gillian Cope, and Edward Wigley.

Thanks to all of my family and friends for supporting me through the last four years, and for learning not to ask how the thesis was progressing. I’m looking forward to spending a lot more time with you all now that it is finished! Thank you to my sister Megan, for her love and support, and mutually supportive phone calls as she completed her teaching training. Thank you to my parents Molly and Chris for their love and support: Dad, it is – finally – written.

Finally to Rob, who has commented, proof-read, listened, provided chocolate and hugs, and known when to hide in the next room with a good book: with all my love and thanks, I could not have done this without you.
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Founded in 1830, the Royal Geographical Society (with the Institute of British Geographers) (RGS-IBG) has since its inception been a supporter and promoter of geographical expeditionary work, as part of its much broader remit for the promotion of geographical science. As part of its extensive collections, the RGS-IBG holds a substantial amount of archival and printed material relating to women’s participation in geographical expeditions over the course of the twentieth century. Prior to this doctoral study, this material had not been investigated for this purpose systematically or in great depth, nor was there a complete record of the RGS’s support of expeditionary work in general during this period. In this thesis, the fruits of an AHRC-funded Collaborative Doctoral Award between the University of the West of England and the RGS-IBG, I chart this terra incognita, and present an innovative historical geography of women’s involvement with RGS-supported expeditions between 1913 and 1970, taking as its start date the permanent admission of women to the Fellowship of the RGS.

There are three key strands which weave through this study: women; the RGS; and expeditionary work. This introduction will explore how these concepts are used and understood within this thesis, before discussing this study’s chosen research questions and chapter outline. Unlike earlier feminist epistemologies, such as feminist empiricism or feminist standpoint theory, which treated the category of women as straightforward and unproblematic, recent feminist work, including postcolonial, intersectional, and postmodern approaches, has shown it to be a far more constructed and contested category, as discussed in Chapter 2. However, it is possible to acknowledge that gender was a significant part of the experiences of the subjects of this study, shaping and restricting their opportunities for geographical knowledge production, and that they occupied gendered subject positions as

1 The RGS and the IBG were two separate institutions, founded in 1830 and 1933 respectively, prior to their merger in January 1995. It is with the archives and history of the RGS that this project is principally concerned.

2 For more discussion of the collaborative nature of this project, and the practicalities, opportunities, and pitfalls present in this form of doctoral study, see Evans, 2013.
women, without thereby needing to treat either women or gender as essentialised concepts or as universal experiences.

In her ground-breaking survey of British women’s geographical work in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Avril Maddrell makes the strategic choice to focus on women as a historically marginalised group, while simultaneously acknowledging their ‘complex locations’ in terms of their class and racial, as well as gendered, subject positions (Maddrell, 2009a). That is, Maddrell argues for the value of considering gender, and of the ways in which this unites women as a discussable group, while remaining open to and aware of the differences between and among them. This approach is important in terms of addressing the absence of women and gender from previous histories of geography, and thereby redressing the balance somewhat. This is also the principal approach used in this study, which seeks to recognise that the women discussed occupied similarly complex locations – often marginalised by their gender, yet privileged in terms of their racial and class positions. This thesis concentrates on the gendered aspects of their subject positions, while simultaneously recognising that the gendered discourses and practices which shaped that subject position were neither monolithic nor uncontested.

The complexity of their subject positions can also be seen in their relationships with the RGS as a hegemonic geographical institution, particularly with regard to its policies for the promotion and support of expeditionary work. In this thesis, the RGS is imagined as a series of interwoven and overlapping networks and spaces, both physical and conceptual, including a range of individuals, and encompassing a number of divergent and sometimes contested aims and strategies. As explored in later chapters, the RGS was both aware of and sought to maintain its position at the heart of geographical and expeditionary work, although there was contestation and debate within its networks about how to achieve this. This self-positioning is reflected in the visual representation of its history at the Society’s home at Lowther Lodge in South Kensington. This concentrates on reflecting the iconic expeditions supported and encouraged by the RGS over the years, including projects led by heroic
figures such as David Livingstone, Robert Scott, Ernest Shackleton, and Edmund Hillary (see Mill, 1930; Cameron, 1980).

Yet its rich history of supporting expeditionary work extends far beyond the iconic expeditions. In the RGS’s collections there remain traces of many smaller stories of geographical expeditionary work, both in the sense of smaller-scale, less ambitious projects, and also in the sense of less well-known expeditions, which have been forgotten or downplayed within histories of geography and exploration. Uncovering these traces can highlight aspects of past expeditionary work which have also been neglected within such histories, including the participation of historically marginalised groups (Lorimer and Spedding, 2002, 2005; Lorimer, 2003; Driver and Jones, 2009). These can serve to complicate and destabilise the traditional heroic narrative of the history of the RGS and of geography as a discipline, both in the academy and beyond, and to unsettle the heroic figure of the explorer himself. One important route into unpicking and destabilising the RGS’s hegemonic position, and to seeing it in more fluid and contested terms, is to look at the relationship between the RGS and the women who sought to enter and work within it, as marginalised figures both at that time and within previous histories of geographical thought and practice (see Domosh 1991a, 1991b; Rose 1993, 1995; Maddrell 1997, 2008, 2009a; McEwan 1998a).

As explored in Chapter 2, in seeking to write a more genealogical, or more-than-contextual, history of women’s participation in and experiences of RGS-supported expeditions, one that seeks to take account of past power relations and micropractices, it is possible to write a more inclusive, and more accurate, account of this important aspect of geography’s development, and of expeditions as a discourse, space, and practice of geographical knowledge production that is far more contested, and collaborative, than might at first appear (Driver, 1995a, 1995b; Rose, 1995; McEwan, 1998a; Maddrell, 2009a; Mayhew, 2011).

The final conceptual strand running through this thesis is that of expeditionary work, and what it is understood to be. ‘Expedition’, ‘exploration’, and ‘fieldwork’ are
complex terms which encompass a diverse range of discourses, practices, and spaces. However, it is only relatively recently that geographers have begun to unpick the discursive formations surrounding these terms (Driver, 2000, p. 267). In adopting a genealogical approach to understanding them, emphasis is not placed on determining the true meaning of them, or defining them, but rather on examining how they have been used in the past, how that usage has shifted over time, and the ways in which the use of particular terms, such as ‘expedition’, may reflect a claim to a particular status rather than a specifically bounded form of geographical practice.

Although, as discussed in Chapter 3, all projects requesting RGS support between 1913 and 1970 have been included in this study, and not only those self-defining as ‘expeditions’ per se, the dominant term used throughout the period by such projects was ‘expedition’. In this, these projects appear to be reflecting back the usage of the RGS, as this is also the preferred term used by the Society throughout this period, even as the practices and discourses around this term shifted. In this way, through its patronage, or the withholding of such patronage, the RGS can be seen as seeking to define the nature of expeditionary work, and what counted as a geographical expedition, and also to safeguard this status from interlopers whom it considered unworthy, as discussed in Chapter 5. In so doing, the RGS also sought to preserve its own hegemonic position as the main arbiter of these matters.

However, it is also useful to discuss the elements which may be encountered within the discursive formation – made up of both concepts and of embodied practices – known as ‘expeditionary work’ or ‘expedition’. This formation includes many different aspects, not all of which may be present in the case of a given project. These include, but are not limited to: attempts to produce original or novel geographical or other scientific knowledge; a sense of adventure or risk; venturing into the unknown; and moving ‘away’ from ‘home’. As such, ‘expeditionary work’ sits between and is related to a number of other discursive formations, including fieldwork, exploration, and travel, with emphasis shifting away from
'exploration' towards 'scientific fieldwork' over the course of the twentieth century (Stoddart, 1986; Livingstone, 1992; Maddrell, 2009a).

Key to the 'expeditionary work' discursive formation, however, is that the use of the term 'expedition' can be read as an attempt to claim status as an authoritative producer of original knowledge, whether made by those carrying out the work or by others who are supporting them. Expeditionary work, taking place within epistemologically privileged spaces of knowledge production, is inherently bound up with questions of status-claiming and prestige, particularly during the period with which this thesis is concerned. During this period, for a project to gain recognition and support from the RGS, it seems to have been useful to self-define as an expedition, or to allow a project to be thus defined by the RGS. Use of this term can be read as an implicit or explicit status claim about geographical expertise and, potentially, the scientific rigour of the planned work; the originality of any intended contributions; or the capability to endure risk, danger, and potential suffering; or all three. It can also be read as expressing an aspiration towards these ends. Having that claim supported through RGS patronage helped to demonstrate this status, and ability to access the necessary resources, with subsequent results serving to further reinforce that status and the success of future work.

The story of women's participation in these RGS-supported expeditions, recovered and examined within this thesis, is a story about networks and relationships, both official and unofficial, elite and marginal; about the relationship between travel, mobility, immobility, and geographical enquiry; about bodies, and how they can be made capable of producing geographical knowledge; about material objects, including theodolites, boots, and tubs of Cadbury's drinking chocolate – an expeditionary staple; and about a number of different spaces and places across the world.
Research Questions

The principal aim of this project is to contribute to ongoing debates about the epistemological and methodological status of geographical expeditions, and related debates about the relationship between gender and the production and reception of geographical knowledge, and women’s position as producers of geographical knowledge, as part of an ongoing commitment to the writing of more inclusive histories of geographical thought and practice. That is:

How does women’s involvement in geographical expeditions affect understandings of the epistemological and methodological status of expeditionary spaces, discourses, and practices, and the relationships between gender and the production and reception of geographical knowledge?

In order to answer this broader research question, a number of supplementary questions have been devised:

1) What was the extent of women’s participation in RGS-supported geographical expeditions between 1913 and 1970, in the context of all RGS-supported expeditions during this period?

2) How and why did these women participate in these expeditions? By what routes did they gain support for their expeditionary work, from the RGS and from other institutions, and how was this affected by their gender?

3) How did these women materially, discursively, and emotionally experience their participation in these expeditions, and how did their gender influence and shape these experiences? How were they shaped in turn by their expeditionary involvement?
4) How were their expeditionary outputs received? How was the reception of their work affected by their gender?

**Chapter Outline**

Chapter 2 sets out the theoretical framework for this thesis. It first considers the relationship between gender, subjectivity, and geographical knowledge production, drawing on feminist epistemologies including situated knowledges and sexuate difference, and on work done by feminist historical geographers around these issues. In particular, it considers women’s relationships to the discourses, spaces, and practices of expeditions as forms of geographical knowledge production, and how these are shaped by expeditionary mobility and place. It then examines the debates around including women and their geographical work in the histories and historiography of geographical thought and practice, in relation to contextual, genealogical, and more-than-contextual approaches.

Chapter 3 outlines the methodological framework for this study, exploring archives as spaces of knowledge (re)production, and issues of power and representation within the institutional archives of the RGS-IBG. It discusses the chosen methods of archival and oral history research used in this study, the sources used, and the methodological issues encountered. It discusses the two major phases of this research: constructing the database of all applications for support; and conducting in-depth analysis of certain women-participating expeditions. It also discusses the key findings for the period as a whole.

Chapter 4 maps out the hidden story of women’s participation in RGS-supported expeditions between 1913 and 1945. It first discusses the wider context to the permanent admission of women to the Fellowship of the RGS in 1913, and the significance of this decision for women’s wider status within geography. It then considers how women used a range of formal and informal networks, including those within and around the RGS, those connected with universities and with other learned societies and institutions, and familial
and social networks, in order to participate in and gain support for their expeditionary work. It argues that while a handful of elite women drew on their close professional and social networks with the RGS and other institutions to gain support directly for their work, a larger number of other women participated in RGS-supported expeditionary work through their familial and social networks.

Chapter 5 maps out women’s participation in RGS-supported expeditions between 1945 and 1970. It discusses the consolidation and formalisation of the application process in the post war period, in response to a rise in the number of applications and shifts in the type of applications being received. It then considers the impact of these changes on women’s participation in RGS-supported expeditions, demonstrating that a new emphasis on university undergraduate expeditions in the immediate post war period served to indirectly exclude women from receiving RGS support. It also suggests that the increase in women’s participation during the 1960s was driven not only by increasing access to opportunities in higher education, but also by the development of women-centred networks of mentoring and support.

Chapter 6 discusses women’s expeditionary mobilities and immobilities, drawing on the recent literature on mobilities. It argues that bringing women’s association with tropes of immobility into understandings of expeditionary mobilities suggests that rather than seeing expeditions as perpetually mobile, they make more sense read as rhythms, seeking a balance between mobility and immobility. It discusses how these women experienced expeditionary place through mobility, how they drew on a range of embodied experiences to produce their expeditionary knowledges, and how expeditionary places were frequently constructed and presented as enchanted places.

Chapter 7 examines the importance of networks and relationships within expeditionary space. It argues that many expeditions can be read as colonial contact zones (Pratt, 1992), in which the complex position of white European women on expedition – as both marginalised and powerful – can be used to give light to the agency of local people involved in the expeditionary work. Building on the work of Felix Driver and Lowri Jones
about the collaborative nature of expeditionary work (Driver and Jones, 2009), it also argues that the socialised norm of women’s performance of caring and domestic work, and the fact that they often performed the day-to-day tasks of an expedition, helps to draw our attention to this work being carried out in expeditionary space, and helps foreground the role of caring and emotional work in producing bodies capable of knowledge production, crucial to all expeditions.

Chapter 8 discusses the reception of women’s expeditionary work at the RGS on their return from expedition. It considers how expeditionary knowledge was disseminated through the lecture theatres of the RGS and subsequent publication in the Geographical Journal, its publication of record, between 1913 and 1939. It argues that women’s participation in these spaces and practices of knowledge reception, and their uneasy negotiation of the gendered norms that governed them, help to show up these practices as contextually constructed and gendered. It also considers how these practices of dissemination and reception changed in the post war period, and the development of the RGS’s collection of expedition reports.

Finally, Chapter 9 draws together the key findings of this thesis, and considers future directions for research.
CHAPTER 2: WOMEN, GENDER, AND THE HISTORIOGRAPHY OF EXPEDITIONARY WORK

This chapter examines the key supporting literature used for this study, exploring and engaging with a number of important themes around gender, subjectivity, space, knowledge production, and the writing of disciplinary and intellectual histories. This study adapts and uses various feminist and critical approaches to the writing of history of geographical thought and practice, drawing on both their theoretical and methodological innovations. In particular, the project draws extensively on Avril Maddrell’s ground-breaking research into the history of British women’s geographical work, and on the wider feminist historiography of geography which provided a framework for that research. The study also adopts a similar approach to that employed by Maddrell of situating women’s geographical work in the context of their wider lives and careers, as well as in the wider institutional and intellectual histories of the RGS and of geography as an intellectual pursuit as well as academic discipline. Where Maddrell discusses a wide range of women’s geographical work, however, both this project and this chapter will concentrate on expeditionary fieldwork as a particular subset of that geographical work.

The chapter will explore ideas about the relationship between women, gender, and the historiography of geographical thought and practice. It will first discuss the relationship between gender, subjectivity and the production of geographical knowledge, relating this discussion to the debates around expeditions and fieldwork as forms of geographical knowledge production. It will then move on to consider the debates around incorporating women into the historiography of geographical thought and practice, with reference to how these ideas can be used to include women’s expeditionary work in understanding of past expeditionary practices.
Gender, subjectivity, and the production of geographical knowledge.

This section examines the role of women as producers of expeditionary geographical knowledge, in relation to dominant discourses around expeditions and fieldwork in operation during the period under study. It will discuss a number of different feminist epistemologies, before considering how a number of feminist geographers have used these approaches to consider women’s relationship to the discursive constructions around expeditionary fieldwork. In addition, drawing on the recent mobilities literature, it will also discuss the role of mobility and place in expeditionary knowledge production.

Feminist epistemologies, sexuate difference, and the importance of positionality

In the 1980s a group of feminist historians, philosophers, and sociologists of science began to write critiques of the ways in which scientific research was gendered as part of their project to raise awareness of women’s scientific work and tear down barriers preventing their participation. Their critiques were a response to both constructionist and strong empiricist epistemologies, in that constructionist approaches both generated the epistemological space in which feminists could critique strong empiricist norms of doing science as producing gendered, androcentric knowledge, but also, in their more extreme variants, potentially threatened to dilute the political power of feminist struggles. A common example given of the distorting effect of androcentrism is the model in medical science of the adult male as the default human, from which women’s reproductive systems are treated as an aberration, and under which women’s differing symptoms in response to specific diseases, such as cardiac disease, are ignored (Lykke, 2010). These early critiques have generated a number of feminist epistemologies. Sandra Harding (1986) provides a useful taxonomy of feminist empiricism, feminist stand point theory, and feminist postmodernism, which Nina Lykke (2010) has recently updated to include feminist postconstructionism. This section considers each of these in relation to the feminist
historiography of geography, and to this doctoral study, before concluding that it is a feminist postconstructionist approach, that of Donna Haraway’s concept of positionality, or situated knowledges, albeit one which draws upon Irigaray’s notion of sexuate difference, that is of most importance for both these projects, although all make important theoretical contributions.

Feminist empiricist perspectives argue that the exclusion of women from science is the result of bad, insufficiently objective science distorted by the androcentrism of the scientists producing it, which could be improved by better adherence to the declared scientific norms of objectivity and rationality (Harding, 1986). They argue that there is no contradiction or opposition between women and existing norms of scientific knowledge production. They also seek to make women visible within the history of science, using empiricist methods of research. This aim was part of earlier phases of feminist critiques of the history of science, and represents an important theoretical development that remains useful today. One of the central aims of many feminist approaches to the historiography of geography involves making women visible within histories of geography, on the basis of carefully conducted research (DeLyser, 2011; Maddrell, 2009a), and thus draws on feminist empiricist epistemologies. However, by itself feminist empiricism is theoretically insufficient, just as a contextual history which ignores societal power relations is also theoretically insufficient, as discussed further below (Maddrell, 2009a). In advocating for stricter adherence to strong empiricist principles about how to do science, feminist empiricism is unable to recognize ways in which the underpinning structures and discourses of these principles could themselves perpetuate androcentrism. Furthermore, as feminist historians from several disciplines have argued, the neglect of women and gender within histories, disciplinary or otherwise, could not be remedied simply by adding women to the pre-existing histories (Wallach Scott, 1988, 1992; Alberti, 2002).

An often cited example is that of Francis Bacon, the seventeenth century philosopher who is often credited with helping to originate the scientific method in its strong empiricist form. Evelyn Fox Keller discusses one of the models of scientific practice
that Bacon put forward, in which the scientist, positioned as male, seeks to sexually dominate nature, positioned as female. This model was highly influential within the mechanical philosophy upon which much subsequent science was built; adhering to this model makes it epistemologically difficult, if not impossible, for a woman – a female-identified person – to occupy the position of scientist or knowledge producer (Keller, 1985; see also Rose, 1993). Similarly, Luce Irigaray has argued that traditional Western philosophical thought defines the subject in opposition to the object-other, with the subject implicitly male and the female implicitly other and objectified, a relationship defined by sexual difference that is paradoxically invisible within this system of knowledge production. Irigaray’s radical solution is for those involved in knowledge production to recognise what she calls ‘sexuate difference’: a positive recognition of sexual difference that does not define either sex in opposition to or through the lens of the other, but as two irreducible sexual subjects (Jones, 2011). This has echoes of both feminist postconstructionist approaches and feminist standpoint theories.

Whilst feminist empiricism therefore recognises that many individuals hold particular biases, for example, gendered ones, its aim is to have these set aside by the knowledge producers in question, rather than for them to be integrated into an understanding of the knowledge produced or to be valued in some way. Conversely, feminist standpoint theories draw upon classical Marxist standpoint theory to argue that members of marginalized groups, including women, often have privileged insights into the operations of their oppression, and that the standpoint of the oppressed can therefore be an ‘epistemologically privileged position’ (Lykke, 2010, p. 129). For example, the feminist standpoint theorist and sociologist Dorothy Smith argued that conventional sociology was characterized by a top-down view of society, a perspective that did little to tackle many of the concrete, everyday problems facing society. Rebuilding sociology from the ground up, from the perspectives of the women most closely involved, would, Smith argued, help to address this problem. Smith’s work illustrates how the detached positions advocated by strong empiricism are often actually the view from above, i.e. that of the elite, and thereby
will not address problems experienced by the marginalised (Smith, 1974 [1996]). Building on this, Sandra Harding suggested that research from the perspective of the marginalised would be better placed to uncover evidence of distorting bias in research than traditional objectivity, and would as such constitute a form of ‘strong objectivity’ (Harding, 1986, 1991).

It is important to note that feminist standpoint theory does not argue that one has to be a woman, or someone occupying a marginalised position, in order to produce knowledge, but rather that it can be valuable to think of matters from such a standpoint. Nonetheless, in searching for that standpoint, feminist standpoint theory has often risked suffering from an essentializing tendency which elides differences between women within the category of woman. Within historical geography, Mona Domosh's pioneering article ‘Do we need a feminist historiography of geography?’ argued for the inclusion of nineteenth century women travellers in the history of the discipline, on the basis that not including knowledge produced from their standpoint resulted in a distorted picture of the geographical work then being produced (Domosh, 1991a). Domosh's arguments were also later criticised for appearing to advocate an essentialized version of ‘women's knowledges’ (see Maddrell, 2009a). Similarly, Irigaray's theory of sexuate difference is often criticised for being at least potentially ontologically essentialist, if not as biologically essentialist as at first appears, although Rachel Jones argues convincingly that the latter interpretation arises mainly from confusion over differing French and English translations of the relevant terms around sex and gender (the French word sexué suggesting more of an integration between biological and cultural than the English word sex) (Jones, 2011; see also Lykke, 2010).

For advocates of what Nina Lykke calls feminist postmodernist ‘anti-epistemologies’ (Lykke, 2010), such as Judith Butler (Butler, 1990), both feminist empiricism and feminist standpoint theory are naive in their treatment of the notion of ‘woman’ as a foundational category, thereby fixing and normatively reinforcing both the categories of ‘men’ and ‘women’ and the hegemonic two-gender model in which they
interact. This is one of many critiques that feminist postmodernists have of other feminist epistemologies, and of wider traditional science and knowledge production. Rather than setting up criteria by which to judge effective knowledge production, postmodern approaches seek to problematize and deconstruct the foundations upon which much knowledge production rests, seeing traditional processes of knowledge production as being deeply implicated in structures of power such as androcentrism, Eurocentrism, and heteronormativity. For example, a postmodernist feminist approach instead theorises the subject, one of the foundations of both feminist empiricism and feminist standpoint theory, as decentred and as, more importantly, (re)produced in and by discourses. Whilst the discursive and textual strategies developed by feminist postmodernists have been useful for feminist historical geographers, the discursive focus of feminist postmodernism has also been criticised for failing to include embodied and material experiences, in keeping with wider criticisms made of postmodernist and postcolonial approaches.

Furthermore, the necessary conflict between the relativism inherent within postmodern anti-foundationalism and the emancipatory project of feminist politics has led to the development of a fourth strand of feminist epistemology, which Lykke calls feminist postconstructionist stances.

These draw upon the notion of intersectionality developed by postcolonial and anti-racist feminists (Spivak, 1988a, 1988b; Crenshaw, 1989, 1995; see Lykke, 2010), as well as upon ideas about the social construction of knowledge as articulated above, to try to avoid both essentialism and relativism, leading to the development of the concept of situated knowledges (Haraway, 1991). Briefly, people, as embodied beings, are always historically, geographically, and socially located; that location is inflected by a number of different categories, and so encompasses a number of different potential privileges and oppressions. Their location influences, shapes, enables, and restricts the knowledge that they produce. This means that any one researcher can only produce partial knowledges from their partial perspective, denying the possibility both of the universal, detached ‘gods-eye-view’ promised by traditional objectivity, and of the grand narratives of classical
standpoint feminism wherein focusing on a single ‘women’s perspective’ can liberate all women (Haraway, 1991). By embracing particular, situated knowledges, Haraway also seeks to steer a path through the ‘twin traps’ of relativism (a threat potentially posed by feminist postmodernism) and universalism. By insisting on characterizing vision as an embodied form of knowledge production, Haraway provides further resistance to the detachment of traditional objectivity. In calling for recognition of sexuate difference, of two irreducible subjects and of the productive space between them, Irigaray also draws attention to the embodied nature of human existence and of knowledge production, and in particularly the agency and active status of the body, in an active challenge to the form/matter distinction that plays into and works alongside the male/female subject/other oppositional dichotomies that she seeks to overturn and undermine (Jones, 2011).

The use of the spatial metaphor of locatedness, of position, within positionality, has helped Haraway’s epistemological approach to become enormously influential within geography (Hubbard and Kitchin, 2011), leading to calls for acknowledgements of positionality, of both researchers and researched, and for a greater degree of reflexivity on the part of researchers within feminist geographies. Of the contributions made by feminist geographers, positionality has been one of the most influential within other areas of the discipline. In addition, of the feminist epistemologies, it is largely the feminist postconstructionist approach of positionality, or situated knowledges, that has been particularly important for feminist historical geographers, providing epistemological support for understanding how gender shapes geographical knowledge production, without subscribing to an essentialised understanding of gender.

An example of such a postconstructionist stance can be seen in Maddrell’s strategic choice to focus on women as a historically marginalised group, while simultaneously acknowledging their ‘complex locations’ in terms of their class and racial, as well as gendered, subject positions, as well as in relation to contemporary geographical institutions, practices, and discourses (Maddrell, 2009a). That is, Maddrell argues for the
value of considering gender, and of the ways in which this unites women as a discussable group, while remaining open to and aware of the differences between and among them. This draws on earlier feminist research on the complex subject positions occupied by women travellers (see Mills 1991, Blunt 1994, Kearns 1998; McEwan 1998a; Maddrell, 2004a).

This is also the principal approach used in this study. The women discussed in this study occupied similarly complex locations – often marginalised by their gender, yet privileged in terms of their racial and class positions. Gender remained a significant category for these women, and was central to their experiences during the time period – the early to mid-twentieth century – when they lived and worked. They also had often complex relationships with the RGS and with other hegemonic institutions, such as the universities that many of them attended, and complex positions within the networks which surrounded these institutions. Like some of the women in Maddrell’s study, such as Marion Newbigin, they were both marginal and central at the same time, occupying a liminal position at the rainbow’s edge (Maddrell, 2009a).

Feminist geographers working with positionality and embodiment have also engaged with the recent literature on mobilities (DeLlyser, 2010, 2011). Over the last ten years there has been significant renewed interest in mobilities from across the social sciences, including geography, to the extent that it is now possible to speak of a ‘mobilities turn’ within these disciplines (Hannam et al, 2006; Sheller and Urry, 2006; Cresswell, 2006, 2010; Uteng and Cresswell, 2008; Adey, 2009; Cresswell and Merriman, 2011). This research seeks to reassert the centrality of mobility to many of these disciplines, alongside critical reflection on the concept of mobility itself, in relation to both sedentarist and nomadic theories (see Sheller and Urry, 2006), and whilst not minimising or ignoring the importance of immobility. The new mobilities turn has been particularly influential within geography, drawing as it does upon older geographical themes and preoccupations (Cresswell, 2010; Cresswell and Merriman, 2011).
Mobilities are fundamentally relational: to each other, to discourses, practices, individuals, wider social structures, and so on. Peter Adey defines mobility as a lived relation – as ‘an orientation to oneself, to others and to the world’ (Adey, 2009, p. xvii) – which is also to be understood primarily as a spatial displacement. Similarly, Tim Cresswell has presented mobility both as existing in relation to movement as place does to location (Cresswell, 2006), and as ‘the entanglement of movement, representation, and practice’ (Cresswell, 2010, p. 19) – the physical movement, the meanings with which it is imbued, and the practices in which it is embedded. Cresswell argues that these three aspects of mobility need to be understood holistically, as deeply intertwined, and as encompassing both embodied and emotional-affective elements.

In the case of expeditionary mobilities, these might include the physical movements, at a variety of scales, involved in an expedition, whether as a continuous journey or travel to a particular field site; the representations of such movements in expeditionary accounts and the significance attributed to them; and the wider practices of geographical knowledge production within which expeditionary mobilities are embedded. Cresswell also emphasises the importance of attending to past mobilities and systems (‘constellations’) of mobilities, alongside newer forms (Cresswell, 2006, 2010). Mobilities are also to be understood as operating at and between a number of different scales, from the inner workings of the human body to the global. An important strand of mobilities research is that which focuses on the mobilities of the human body, in relation to issues of phenomenology and embodiment (Cresswell, 2006, 2010; Sheller and Urry, 2006). Finally, mobilities are understood in a wide-ranging sense, encompassing ‘physical movement such as walking and climbing to movement enhanced by technologies, bikes and buses, cars and trains, ships and planes’, understood interdependently and not as separate spheres (Sheller and Urry, 2006, p. 212).

What emerges clearly from both Adey and Cresswell’s definitions is the sense of mobilities as being deeply embedded in the social world, and thereby replicating and reinforcing embedded social norms, including those of gender. Feminist research into
mobilities, drawing on earlier feminist work on embodiment and practice, has drawn attention to the ways in which mobilities are deeply gendered, showing how women and men enact different and gendered forms of mobility and immobility (Uteng and Cresswell, 2008; Sheller, 2008; see also Young, 2005), from wider patterns of transport use to issues of specific bodily deportment.

Broadly speaking, there is a strong set of discourses in which the feminine is associated with immobility, and the masculine with mobility, alongside associated embodied practices which reinforce and are reinforced by such discourses; so that the ‘male body is culturally performed as a more mobile body, while the female body becomes more restricted and spatially circumscribed’ (Sheller, 2008, p. 259). This is demonstrated clearly by Iris Marion Young in her work on feminine embodiment and deportment, such as in the example she gives of the ways in which young girls play sports, in comparison to their male peers, drawing particular attention to the restricted ways in which they move their bodies (Young, 2005). Analysis of these patterns of mobility and immobility becomes a question not ‘of privileging a “mobile subjectivity”’, as the nomadic theoretical turn has been criticised for doing, but one ‘rather of tracking the power of discourses and practices of mobility in creating both movement and stasis’ (Sheller and Urry, 2006, p. 211).

In Dydia DeLyser’s work on women aviators from the early 1920s and 1930s, she describes how extraordinary mobilities such as flying (piloting) planes were practices of liberation for many of these women, from the restrictive mobilities that they encountered in everyday life (DeLyser, 2011). This emancipatory potential within extraordinary mobilities is also present within the expeditionary mobilities of my research subjects. There are a number of other parallels between DeLyser’s women aviators and my research subjects, including the wider contemporary public fascination with the women engaged in these mobilities, and complicated relationships with promoting the cause of other women engaged in this work or preferring to present themselves as exceptional women.
There are a number of elements that stand at the heart of expeditionary discursive formations, and which are closely linked to processes of validating and authenticating expeditionary knowledges: the place itself that is journeyed to, and the movement necessary for getting there, as well as, sometimes, the degree of endurance, effort and risk involved. An additional element is the pedagogical function of expeditionary fieldwork, as a site and space of modes of geographical learning for students, at school, undergraduate and postgraduate levels (Hall et al, 2002), and one which is associated with elements of the initiation rite which has been criticised by feminist geographers (Rose, 1993; Maguire, 1998).

Within the discursive formations around expeditionary fieldwork, therefore, emphasis is placed both on the site and on the mobility by which one reaches that site, so that there is a continuing tension between both mobility and sitedness at the heart of expeditionary knowledge production. As Rebecca Solnit has stated, ‘to travel without arrival would be as incomplete as to arrive without having traveled’ (Solnit, 2001, p. 50). This echoes the recent literature on mobilities which discusses a constant, productive tension between movement and mooring, as expressed in many discourses and practices of mobilities (Hannam et al, 2006; Cresswell and Merriman, 2011). There are also parallels with the recent literature on pilgrimage within the new mobilities turn, in which both the sacred site journeyed to, as well as the journey itself, are important to the experience of pilgrimage, as is the discursive importance accorded to endurance and the arduous nature of the undertaking (Maddrell, 2011, 2013; Gemzöe, 2012; Maddrell and della Dora, 2013; Maddrell, Terry and Gale, forthcoming).

*Expeditionary place*

An expedition, characterised as a space, site and practice of knowledge production, has as its destination and focus a particular place, where the phenomena under proposed

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1 Mary Kingsley’s summit of Mount Cameroon was dismissed by some contemporaries on the grounds that she took the easy route. See Blunt, 1994 and Maddrell, 2009a.
investigation exist, and which must be journeyed to in order to study these phenomena (see Richards, 2011). That place may be considered to be special, even unique, in view of having these phenomena present. Whether it was a particular mountain to be conquered, a hillside where certain rare flowers grew, the site of ancient ruins or geological phenomena ready for excavation, a group of people to be engaged and interacted with, or territory previously unknown to Europeans to be discovered and charted, these were the places where knowledge could be produced. Thus a sense of embodiment, of being in the field, and of becoming part of it through one’s reciprocal interactions with the surrounding environment (Maddrell, 2011) is often presented as being particularly important to the validity of the knowledges produced there; the permeability of the boundaries between self and other is rendered especially visible in this space (Richards, 2011).

All places are invested with a particular set of values by the people that inhabit them, and often by outsiders, becoming more than the physical space itself (Tuan, 1977; Thrift, 1997). In the case of expeditionary places – those that are the focus and destination of an expedition – these values are caught up in a sense of the potential for achievement, scientific or adventurous or both, that these places contain, as well as a sense of the novelty of that potential achievement. That novelty may be external (in the sense of presenting an obvious, objectively measured achievement, such as the first known ascent of a mountain or discovery of the source of a river), internal (that is, about self-discovery and emotional growth, or proving something to yourself), or combining a sense of both, and is often overlaid with gendered considerations (Domosh, 1991a). In being somehow novel, or unknown, or inaccessible, or in presenting something otherworldly to the everyday, the desired sites of expeditions become enchanted places, places in which the practices of knowledge production will produce real and valuable knowledge (Holloway, 2006; Mackian, 2011, 2012; Irving, forthcoming; Thurgill, forthcoming).

Whilst expedition sites are very rarely explicitly characterised as sacred spaces, in the way that pilgrimage destinations are (Maddrell, Terry and Gale, forthcoming), they contain something of that sacrality in the importance accorded to them, and the ways in
which presence within them is held to at least partially validate the knowledge produced there. This sense of enchantment, and to some degree sacrality, operates on a number of different levels, as is explored in more detail in Chapter 6. For some, the enchantment is connected to the liminality of these spaces, the sense that they are somewhere between or outside ordinary mundane experience, or outside ordinary time-space. For others, their emotional responses to the expeditionary places they pass through and spend time in are those of being enchanted, in the sense of enjoyment and love, and of finding these places pleasantly enchanting. Conversely, and noting the blurred line between the enchanted and the eldritch (Holloway and Kneale, 2008; McEwan, 2008), some expedition members experience a sense of alienation, or ever terror, at the uncanny nature of these places, and a feeling of being profoundly unsettled within them.

These senses of enchantment are often connected to strong processes of Othering, so that to go on expedition is to enter (an)Other place/space, with the paradigmatic case being that of Orientalism (Said 1978 [2003]). In the cases of many of the women-participating expeditions under consideration, as well as the broader set of expeditions supported by the RGS during this period, this displacement to Other place is also overlaid with colonial politics and interactions. These processes of Othering, and the expeditionary spaces which they help to constitute, are closely connected to contestations and struggles over knowledge and power (Blunt and Rose, 1994), and have been extensively critiqued by postcolonial geographers. Drawing on the work of Foucault and of Edward Said, postcolonial theory targets Western epistemological claims to the universality, objectivity, and disinterested purity of their forms of knowledge production, and of the knowledge that is thereby produced (Robinson, 2003). Instead, postcolonial writers assert that these Western knowledge projects and epistemologies have been, and continue to be, deeply implicated in Western power projects and attempts to dominate the rest of the world; that

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2 Although there is a developing literature about the enchantment of everyday spaces, and the ways in which the mundane can also encompass a sense of enchantment. See Binnie et al, 2007; Holloway and Hones, 2007; Mackian, 2012.
is, with modern Western imperialism and with Western colonialism (Young, 1990; Crush, 1994).

In his ground-breaking work *Orientalism*, one of the key texts of postcolonialism, and one which opened up productive space for discussing the relationships between imperial powers and imperial knowledges, Edward Said describes a discursive formation, Orientalism, which was central to much geographical thought and practice in the eighteenth, nineteenth, and early twentieth centuries, including the work of many of the women involved in RGS-supported expeditions. Before Said, Orientalism had been taken merely as the marker describing a particular form of knowledge production, which takes as its subject the countries and peoples of the East, so that Orientalists were specialists upon the East or Orient. What Said seeks to demonstrate is that Orientalist knowledge production was by no means so innocent or disinterested. Nor did it necessarily depict the reality of the lives of Eastern peoples.

Crudely (and Said’s model is not so simplistic, despite the views of some critics), the endeavours of the newly established Orientalist societies to classify and map out the geographical and ethnographic contours of the Middle East were an attempt by Western powers to ‘know’ the Orient. They sought the power to name, and therefore to dominate and to control what they named. This Orientalist discourse drew on other contemporary discursive formations, including systems of classification developed in natural history and the ethnic nationalism powered by Romanticism, in order to essentialize the East and its inhabitants into knowable (and controllable) entities with identifiable characteristics. Crucially, these attempts at knowing ‘the Orient’ were powered by a process of Othering: the production of identity through the construction of oppositional hierarchical dichotomies. Within this, Western identity was posited as an exclusionary norm, so that the West’s many Others were understood to be everything (negative) that the West was not.

A good example revolves around the concept of rationality, which was believed to be a peculiarly Western (and masculine) trait, with (male) Western minds liberated from
the chains of former superstition during the Enlightenment. If the West was rational, the discourse held, then all that was not of the West must necessarily be irrational (and nothing like the West) (Said 1973 [2003]). This also feeds into the discourses around masculine rationality that Gillian Rose sees as being implicit in the traditional figure of the geographical field-worker, which are discussed in greater detail below (Rose, 1993).

This discourse was in practice ‘enormously flexible and adaptable’ (Nash, 2002a, p. 221), with its effectiveness derived from precisely that flexibility. As his many critics have demonstrated, Said’s model of Orientalism is by no means a perfect one; many feminist critics have noted that he presents the ‘position of enunciation in colonialist or Orientalist discourse as essentially male’ (Foster and Mills, 2002, p. 7; see Lewis, 1996). Building on this, a wide literature on feminist postcolonialism has been developed (see Lewis and Mills, 2003; Harding, 2008).

Another important criticism of Said’s theory of Orientalism is that it projects an ‘abstract geographical sensibility’ rather than the more ‘visceral feel for the tangible geographies of empire’, such as that provided by Mary Louise Pratt’s concept of colonial contact zones (Godlewska and Smith, 1994, p. 6). Pratt characterizes contact zones as ‘social spaces where disparate cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in highly asymmetrical relations of domination and subordination’ (Pratt, 1992, p. 4). I find Pratt’s concept highly fruitful for examining expeditions to colonised or postcolonial countries, as was the case for many of the RGS-supported women-involved expeditions in my dataset. It is particularly useful in terms of exploring the relationships between expeditionary participants and local people, and will be returned to in Chapter 7. However, Said’s importance lies in having exposed supposedly innocent colonial knowledge production as a discursive formation inflected and informed by the workings of imperial, implicitly masculine, power.

Another dimension of these processes of othering is explored by Gillian Rose in her work on the relationship between discourses and practices of geographical expeditionary fieldwork and discourses and practices of masculinity. In the ‘traditional’, hegemonic
version of expeditionary fieldwork critiqued by Rose, the imagined characteristics of expeditionary places outlined lead to their imagined feminisation, enabling the fieldworker or expedition member entering them to adopt a range of constructed and idealised masculine roles. In this relationship, the feminised expeditionary landscape is placed in the role of other to the conquering, masculine expedition member. Thus, Rose suggests, that fieldwork, in its traditional guise, 'is an example of geographical masculinities in action', 'a performance which enacts some of the discipline’s underlying masculinist assumptions about its knowledge of the world' (Rose, 1993, p.65). This includes a ‘specific dualistic distinction between [a feminised] Nature and Culture’ (Rose, 1993, p. 65) which is itself highly contradictory (see also Sparke, 1996; Maddrell, 2009a).

Rose outlines a number of idealised masculine roles, showing how two of them – the dispassionate, measuring, scientific observer, and the passionate, desiring aesthete with an emotional response to his surroundings, both of which relate to a feminised landscape and often to feminised local people – are continually in tension within geographical knowledge production (Rose, 1993). Both function by means of a distant and distancing gaze which perpetuates the Othered relationship with their surroundings. Following Rose’s call for the use of a feminist, positioned praxis to critique and deconstruct these roles, and the distancing gaze by which they function, this thesis uses actual, historical examples of women’s expeditionary work to show how the relationship between expedition member and expeditionary landscape is more complex and embodied. This is not least because a female expedition member would find it very difficult to occupy the masculinised subject position within this dyad, in opposition to and subduing a feminised and othered landscape, creating tension and ambivalence within her accounts of her work. A crucial element of this during this period is the strong discursive identification of women with the home and the domestic (Blunt, 1994), which discursively excludes women from being the ones who go away.

The gaze at a feminized landscape presupposes a male viewer, serving as a means to exclude women, much as Said’s version of Orientalism presupposed a male viewer (see
An example is the frontispiece to Stoddart's 1986 *On geography and its history*, in which the figures of three naked women stand in for the continents, and for which both Rose and Domosh took him to task (Rose, 1993; Domosh, 1991b; see also Killick, 1995). Furthermore, these fieldwork discourses promote the visual as a source of knowledge, in ways which can prevent attention being paid to other material aspects of field practice (Driver, 2000).

The third figure identified by Rose is that of the stoic, enduring hero, capable of coping with difficult, dangerous and even life-threatening expeditionary conditions. This element - the idea of travelling into the unknown, into dangerous places – is a very important part of expeditionary imaginaries, of the discursive conception of expeditionary spaces, and of the process of validating and authenticating expeditionary knowledge production during the period in question, although it begins to decline after the Second World War. Rose has argued that many of these discourses around heroic endurance are implicitly gendered, envisaging a (white, heterosexual, able-bodied) male hero-fieldworker, often in conjunction with a feminised Nature of which he is master (Rose, 1993; see also Maguire, 1998; Hall et al, 2002). Given that ‘undergraduate field trips are [and remain] the initiation ritual of the discipline’ (Rose, 1993, p. 69), this potential stereotype threat, chronicled by Sarah Maguire (1998) has become of increasing concern. Maguire’s work demonstrates how continuing gendered and ableist discourses around fieldwork can discourage certain undergraduate students – those who do not perceive themselves as conforming to the ‘ideal model’ of a fieldworker – from participating or from finding enjoyment in fieldwork. Where women did gain access to expeditionary space, both before and after institutional barriers had been lifted, they often displayed profound ambivalence in relation to these three sets of discursive formations (Blunt, 1994; Phillips, 1997).

Such discursive barriers, however, should not be taken as absolute. Rose’s approach has been criticised as reductionist, collapsing diverse discourses and practices into a single model which was never absolute (Powell, 2002). Her model also risks re-
inscribing the spaces and practices of fieldwork as entirely masculine (Bracken and Mawdsley, 2004). Maddrell (2009a) has shown how during the early twentieth century most women geographers took part in fieldwork despite the gendered barriers to their participation, and, in their position as university lecturers, were also at the forefront of promoting fieldwork to their students, including the next generation of women geographers. They included Dora Smee, Eunice Timberlake, Jean Grove, Jean Carter, Joan Fuller, Blanche Hosgood, Monica Cole, and Cuchlaine King, who overcome discursive barriers to her participation in expeditions, as discussed in Chapter 5. Many of these women were involved with the LePlay Society and later the Geographical Field Group which actively promoted their involvement (Maddrell, 2009a). Maddrell notes that ‘it is important to stress women’s agency in fieldwork whether in succeeding despite masculinist discourses and practices, or by subverting them’ (Maddrell, 2009a, p. 322).

Many women also enjoyed and identified with the exploratory tradition; Bea Alt, one of the field scientists that Richard Powell interviewed for his oral history of their geographical work, explicitly identified with exploratory narratives, as the real, and heroic, geography (Powell, 2008).

Similarly, Louise Bracken and Emma Mawdsley argue that ‘without understating the very real challenges confronting women in physical geography ... women have more varied experiences of fieldwork than some of these studies allow for’. As such, they ‘wish to round out the picture, and “reclaim” the ways in which women can and do make spaces in what is undoubtedly a male dominated and often gender discriminating environment’ (Bracken and Mawdsley, 2004, pp. 280-81). Echoing Rose, but more positively, they argue that it is often attitudes, and not the fundamental nature of fieldwork itself, that is at issue. What is needed is ‘a recognition of the pleasure that many women take in doing fieldwork that takes them outdoors and to certain environments’ (Bracken and Mawdsley, 2004, p. 284), including the ‘muddy glee’ described by Cathy Whitlock (2001). However, women engaged in RGS-supported expeditionary work in the early part of the twentieth century
do seem to have had a more ambivalent relationship with discourses and practices around heroism, mobilities and expeditionary knowledge production.

*Expeditory mobility*

In the account of expeditionary places outlined above, the expeditionary site acts as a mooring for the mobilities enacted within and through it (Hannam, Sheller and Urry, 2006. Importantly, it is not merely a context for these mobilities, but is also ‘actively produced by the act of moving.’ (Cresswell and Merriman, 2011, p. 7). The recent literature on the relationship between geography and mobility, which also aims at bringing the “new mobilities turn” into academic geography (Cresswell and Merriman 2011), has recognised the wider links between mobility and the geographical imagination, and between mobility and processes of geographical knowledge production, as well as the fact that travel and journeys have long been associated with practices of geographical knowledge production. Expeditions are both associated with mobility discursively, and involve a literal physical displacement in most cases. This has often been taken to mean travel to a distant site, but can be understood metaphorically, psychically, as well as literally, with ‘local’ sites of fieldwork used throughout the development of geographical practices (Katz, 1994). It can also be understood productively in the sense of being somehow out of place. The ways in which it is the displacement itself which is seen to authenticate expeditionary geographical knowledge production have been discussed and critiqued in depth (see Blunt, 1994; Cresswell, 2006; Cresswell and Merriman, 2011; Driver, 2000; Katz, 1994; Richards, 2011).

Mobility – in this case, the journey itself to an expeditionary place – is also key to the validation of expeditionary knowledge production, and especially to the ‘heroic’ element. In particular, an emphasis on demanding, arduous journeys has been used to bolster disciplinary anxieties about the porous borders between fieldwork, travel and tourism. The potentially greater levels of difficulty and danger inherent in getting to
certain expeditionary places have added to the status of those that reach there, and helped to mark them off as ‘proper’ geography, such as in the case of Halford Mackinder’s summit of Mt Kenya in the 1880s (Kearns, 1997, 2010). Similarly, as Mike Crang notes, practices of observation have also been used to distinguish fieldwork from recreation, and to preserve the higher status of those undertaking geographical fieldwork (Crang, 2011). Expeditions, as ‘mobile ways of knowing’ (Crang, 2011, p. 205) therefore evoke a complex relationship between mobility, masculinity, anxiety and status.

As explored further in Chapter 6, it is possible to read expeditions, and in particular women-involved, RGS-supported expeditions, as ‘constellations of mobility’ (Cresswell, 2010, p. 18), geared towards geographical knowledge production, and thereby evocative of the gendered mobilities, discourses, and embodied experiences which shaped that knowledge. This thesis uses the recent mobilities turn, including the idea of constant tension between movement and mooring, as a way of thinking through the embodied forms of knowledge production engaged with and experienced on these expeditions by my research subjects. This chapter will now consider how debates about the multiplicity of the history of geographical thought and practice, and about the importance of context, have played out in the wider historiography of geography, and have prompted similar conclusions about the importance of comprehensive, multifaceted histories of the discipline.

**Gender, women, and the history of geographical thought and practice**

Although different feminist historical geographers adopt different theoretical and methodological approaches to the study of geography’s history and of women’s past geographical work, broadly speaking these cohere around two major aims, as summarised by Maddrell (2009a). The first is to make visible the stories and achievements of past women geographers within histories of the discipline. However, and as other feminist historians have observed (Wallach Scott, 1988, 1992; Alberti, 2002), such a project cannot
simply consist of ‘add women and stir’ (a feminist empiricist approach). Paying attention to women in history means paying attention to their lived gendered experience, and to the gendered norms, discourses and structures that shaped and constrained that lived experience.

This necessitates the second major aim of the feminist historiography of geography, that of looking closely at the relationships between gender and past geographical thought and practice, and of recognising the importance of gender as one of the many contexts that have shaped the production and reception of geographical knowledge. Maddrell argues that the history of geography is incomplete without the inclusion of these women, or without attention to gender, and, by implication, that a more comprehensive history, one which pays attention to these issues, is a better one. In making these claims, feminist historical geographers build upon a number of feminist epistemologies, including that of positionality or situated knowledges, as developed by Donna Haraway (Haraway, 1989, 1991) and others, and that of sexuate difference, as developed by Luce Irigaray (Jones, 2011). Feminist historical geographers also draw upon the contextual turn within the history of geography (Stoddart, 1981, 1986; Livingstone, 1992, 1995a; Driver, 2001). The contextual turn was part of a broader movement within the histories of scientific disciplines, which drew in turn from the theories about the social construction of knowledge that emerged in the 1960s and 1970s. This section will first discuss contextual approaches, before considering the extensive critiques that feminist historical geographers have made of this approach.

*Contextual histories: internalism, presentism, and essentialism*

Since the 1980s there has been a distinct turn by researchers interested in geography’s pasts towards writing histories of geography which reflect the multiple contexts which helped to shape and forge the geographical theories, discourses, and practices which have come to constitute the discipline. Drawing upon the constructionist theories of Thomas Kuhn, Michel
Foucault; Bruno Latour, Steve Woolgar, and others (Kuhn, 1962 [1970]; Foucault, 1969; Latour and Woolgar, 1979), the authors of contextual histories of geography argued, following Quentin Skinner (1969), that attempting to treat geographical ideas and achievements separately from the social and economic conditions which helped to produce them, as many previous histories of geography had done, results in distorted disciplinary histories which can suffer from the faults of internalism, essentialism, and presentism (Berdolay, 1981; Stoddart, 1981, 1986; Livingstone, 1992; Driver, 2000).

These three historiographical problems are closely interlinked and overlapping. Having derived an ‘essential core’ of geography from preferred present practice, geographers have then sought its roots in the past, often focusing narrowly on their chosen key ideas with little attention paid to context or alternative theories. Whilst internalism – derided by advocates of the contextual approach as producing ‘train timetable’ or ‘shopping catalogue’ accounts of geography’s development over time, in which histories focused on telling the story of the ‘internal’ development of geography, without reference to other socio-political events also taking place, that is, to the context of that development – is largely no longer a problem in more recent histories of geographical thought and practice, as the importance of paying attention to the context of developments is now very well-established, both presentism and essentialism continue to present historiographical problems.

Presentism is a particularly intractable historiographical problem, and one that is perhaps inherent to the process of writing histories of ideas. It is almost impossible, practically speaking, to adhere to the pure model of historiographical practice derived by Robert Mayhew from Oakeshott, in which ‘the historical past’ (set against ‘the practical past’) is reconstructed from the available evidence, purely for its own sake and with no further purpose to be served. Instead, almost all the pasts that historians reconstruct are variations upon the practical and not the historical past, under Oakeshottian definitions (Mayhew, 2001).
Histories of particular traditions or, for example, academic disciplines, therefore represent acts of collective imagination, practices of imagining the past of their discipline, and constructing a particular practical past along those lines, which speak to and reverberate upon contemporary understandings of geography. These constructed traditions, which draw on certain concerns, concepts, contexts and casts, rest upon certain exclusions and boundaries (Rose, 1993, 1995; McEwan, 1998a; Maddrell, 2009a). As long as inconvenient historical evidence is neither ignored nor suppressed, the construction of a tradition will not unnecessarily distort the history thereby produced. The problem of presentism arises when, for example, an author is too closely wedded to their vision of the essential core of geographical thought and practice to recognize other movements as anything other than irrelevant deviations from the true path. This can and often does result in the history in question being distorted by essentialism. This occurs when attention is focused solely on a particular strand of geographical development, to the exclusion of others, and when the resulting partiality is not explicitly acknowledged.

Advocates of the contextual approach, including David Stoddart (1986) and David Livingstone (1992) lambasted earlier and contemporary histories of geography that they saw as indulging in presentism. However, as Mayhew notes, the contextual historians themselves were often not immune from presentism (Mayhew, 2011). Rather, they frequently argue using the same rhetorical and epistemological strategy as that used in those earlier histories that they criticise. That strategy is one that Mayhew describes as that of tracing a ‘pedigree’, in which historians of geography seek justification for their preferred version of geography by writing its origin story, finding evidence of it in past geographical practice, tracing its clear line of descent, claiming it as the ‘true’ version of geography, and discounting that which does not accord with it (Mayhew, 2011). In some histories, two lines of descent are traced, such as in Fred Schafer’s account of the history of geography (Schafer, 1953); in these cases, the two traditions are frequently characterised as either ‘Good’ or ‘Bad’, and operating in a Manichean dialectic.
Mayhew's arguments here are based upon Raymond Geuss's reading of Friedrich Nietzsche's concept of genealogy. In this reading, Geuss coined the term pedigree to describe the historiographical strategy to which genealogy was a reaction, and which Mayhew identifies as being practised in these histories of geographical thought and practice (Geuss, 1999; Mayhew, 2011). As a result, "ought" is reached via "was"; history discloses essence, this being seen most purely by looking at geography's originating moment, whatever the writer in question takes that to be (Mayhew, 2011, p. 22). In an example cited both by Mayhew and by the earlier contextual historians such as Stoddart and Livingstone, 'both [Carl Sauer and Hartshorne] want to use historical evidence to show the rectitude of their argument about the essence of geography' (Mayhew, 2011, p. 22). This strategy is not limited to appeals to the ancients, of the kind made by Sauer and Hartshorne, but also includes attempts to site the origin of geography in more recent events.

As Mayhew notes, Stoddart's *On Geography and its History* (1986) provides a prime example of this approach: for Stoddart, 'geography existed prior to [1769, which Stoddart takes as the moment of the birth of modern scientific geography], but is of no real relevance, falling outside the ambit of modernity' (Mayhew, 2011, p. 27). As discussed below, the focus by Stoddart on his essential core of 'modern scientific geography' leads him to neglect a great deal of geographical work taking place during the eighteenth, nineteenth, and twentieth centuries, not least that done by women geographers during this period. Conversely, Mayhew understands Livingstone's recurring emphasis on contingency, both in the way that the events that he is narrating played out and in the historiographical decisions that he himself has made, as an attempt to avoid adopting this approach, but suggests that readers of Livingstone's book may nonetheless interpret it along the familiar rhetorical lines.

Rather than seeking to validate particular forms of knowledge by demonstrating the purity of their origins, Nietzsche's genealogical approach rejects the search for pure origins, and instead concentrates on excavating the more complex and messy traces of what
happened, and the ‘multiplicity of the social and conceptual origins of the categories we deploy’ (Mayhew, 2011, p. 28). Such categories are to be understood as deeply implicated in contemporary power structures, as they emerged and were successively re-appropriated and reshaped. Foucault took up the concept of genealogy and shaped it in accordance with his archaeological method, in which he sought to explore the operation of these disciplines – how they produced their knowledges and truth-claims – rather than establish their truth or falsity (Foucault, 1984; Rabinow, 1984). Nietzschean genealogy is also echoed in Foucault’s separation of total and general history, in which a subject-based total history approach reads somewhat like a novel, with all elements controlled and relating to one another, whilst general history uncovers a more haphazard and contingent development, and may be uncovered through a genealogical reading of the discursive forms on and through it is mediated (Foucault, 1969 [2011]).

Whilst Livingstone recognised the ‘considerable impact’ made by the ‘genealogical impulse, ‘particularly as mediated through the work of Foucault’, within geography, he characterised genealogy as a ‘thoroughly anti-essentialist historical strategy’, dealing in ‘utter contingency and discontinuity’, to be placed it at one end of a historiographical spectrum, balanced by the ‘encyclopedist’ who was apt to produce derisory internalist histories (Livingstone, 1995a, p. 421; see also Livingstone, 1994, 1995b). He argues that neither of these extremes is satisfactory, and that it is the ‘historian of tradition’ that steers a way through these twin traps (Livingstone, 1995a, p. 421). In presenting genealogy as being about ‘utter contingency and discontinuity, Livingstone seems to be to overstate his case and misread at least Foucault’s presentation of genealogical approaches. Whilst Foucault may not be as successful in his project of reconstructing continuities as he is at that of deconstruction, this is stated as one of his aims, and indeed, given that his project is one of exploring the relationships between particular statements, is perhaps key to the whole exercise (Foucault, 1984; Foucault, 1969 [2011]. This opens up space for the possibilities of genealogical approaches within histories of geography (Nash 2002b; Mayhew, 2011).
One example of such a genealogical approach, one that seeks to understand and excavate the power relations implicit within the production of geographical knowledges, may be found in the substantive research within the history of geographical thought and practice on the connections between geography and empire (e.g. Driver, 1992, 2001; Driver and Rose, 1992; Godlewska and Smith, 1994; Bell et al., 1995; Sidaway, 1997). Such histories are part of a wider project of decolonizing the discipline (Clayton, 2003; Crush, 1994). These first began appearing in the early 1990s, around the time that Foucault and Said’s ideas became mainstream in historical geography. They constituted an ‘archaeological retrieval’ (Young, 2001, p. 6) of geography’s past complicity with empire, particularly with regard to institutions like the RGS, which ‘married its promotion of overseas exploration and survey to the needs and ambitions of an imperial nation’ (Ryan, 1995, p. 53).

One common critique made in these histories was that geography ‘illustrates better than any other “imperial science” the soaring proprietorial ambition of the European imperial mind’ (Bell et al., 1995, p. 4), the European planetary consciousness described by Pratt (1992) which has left deep scars upon the modern world (Godlewska and Smith, 1994, p. 7). This European planetary consciousness, which can also be referred to as the concept of transparent space, and which was constructed by geographers amongst others, was complicit ‘with the epistemic and physical violence of imperialism’ (Blunt and Rose, 1994, 13), in which ‘imperialism itself was an act of geographical violence through which space was explored, reconstructed, re-named and controlled’ (Crush, 1994, p. 337). As Alison Blunt and Cheryl McEwan observe, geography, like Orientalism, ‘is a part of those dominant discourses of imperial Europe that postcolonial critiques seek to destabilize because they are unconsciously ethnocentric, rooted in European cultures and reflective of a dominant Western worldview’ (Blunt and McEwan, 2002, p. 9). This literature provides important situating context and concepts for this research and for this thesis, as many of the expeditions examined were to places then under European colonial control, or
operated within the wider colonial system. This will be discussed in more detail in Chapter 7.

Feminist critiques of contextual histories

Feminist approaches to the historiography of geography argue that particular exclusions around gender, which lead to the exclusion of women from disciplinary histories, matter, not least because of the way that debates around these issues speak to the contemporary status of women in the discipline. There are two major kinds of exclusions that need to be addressed; historical exclusions that shaped how knowledge was produced at the time; and exclusions within the histories that are written today. With regard to the latter, in some of the influential earlier contextual histories (Stoddart, 1986; Livingstone, 1992), gender, which is a key organising societal and discursive structure, is not discussed as part of the political, cultural and socio-economic contexts which enable and inhibit geographers and their work; in addition to this, only a handful, at best, of women geographers appear. Instead, the role played by gender is naturalized and thereby forgotten, rendered invisible in these imagined geographical pasts. This invisibility of gendered structures and social norms, which prevented or limited women’s participation, and the use of epistemologies and metaphors which ontologically exclude the feminine and the female, means that women also vanish from the histories of geography. This is to the extent that even women who do in fact fit the existing categories have been excluded from these contextual histories of the discipline. Maddrell, alongside other feminist historical geographers, argues that ‘gender as an analytical concept is vital to understanding this process of marginalisation and exclusion.’ (Maddrell, 2009a, 13)

Turning to the first kind of exclusion addressed by feminist historical geographers, throughout the nineteenth century there were significant institutional and practical barriers to women’s participation in expeditions, and to undertaking adventurous travel in general, such as lack of access to funding and to institutional affiliation, including Fellowship of the
RGS (Birkett, 1989; Blunt, 1994; Bell and McEwan, 1996; Maddrell, 2009a). These barriers frequently served to exclude women and to gender expeditions as de facto masculine spaces. Although the extent to which the experiences of the London-based RGS can be taken as representative even of British geographical thought and practice during this period is contested, the hegemony which its members established over British geography in the nineteenth century means that they constitute an important strand for those wishing to understand the development of the exploratory and fieldwork traditions, as well as having had important implications for the gendering of geographical thought and practice (Stoddart, 1986). As Livingstone illustrates, through providing ‘financial backing, institutional sponsorship, and a publication outlet for travel narratives’, ‘the RGS established itself as the cultural power base of the English geographical confraternity and reinforced its self-appointed hegemony by securing royal patronage and dispensing its own geographical benediction through the presentation of various medals’ (Livingstone, 1992, p. 162, p. 159).

The development of surveying training courses administered by the RGS, and the fact that completion of these courses was a prerequisite for borrowing Society equipment, is another way in which the RGS acted as disciplinary gatekeepers before the development of university degrees in geography (Collier and Inkpen, 2002; Maddrell, 2009a). They also presided over other innovatory technological practices such as the development of photography and its use in fieldwork (Ryan, 1995, 2005, 2013). This would have implications for the gendering of geographical knowledge production. The shift from exploration to fieldwork as the dominant geographical tradition in Britain was closely related to the changing requirements of an imperial nation, over the course of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century (Worthington, 1983). The debates over surveying chronicled by Peter Collier and Rob Inkpen demonstrate how ‘the RGS was moving away from giving instruction to explorers, towards providing training courses for the new class of colonial administrators generated by the fruits of the “Scramble for Africa”, partly as a

As discussed further in Chapter 4, the particular institutional barrier to Fellowship of the RGS was the source of a great deal of controversy at the time, with women’s ability to produce geographical knowledge at the heart of the debate. Women’s subsequent inability to access the training opportunities provided by the RGS was a significant impediment to their ability to be recognised as producers of geographical knowledge, As Maddrell notes, this was a ‘double bind for women whose work was found wanting for failing to employ this methodology, where they were simultaneously excluded from the means of acquiring the said knowledge and skills’ (Maddrell, 2009a, 321). Domosh discusses how anxieties about women’s admission as Fellows to the RGS ‘began to be voiced in terms of proper geographic knowledge’, in particular that women were not producing new geographical knowledge, although Domosh notes that this requirement ‘was never applied to men seeking membership’ (Domosh, 1991a, p. 97).

The projects undertaken separately by women, whilst often adhering to the norms of geographical exploration then current, were often not recognised as ‘expeditions’ that might qualify them for the status of geographer, or for participation in the hegemonic networks of the RGS. These norms were not solely those of the ‘scientific geography’ then in the ascendant, which included a focus on surveying and measurement, as Stoddart identifies, but also included a discursive formation relating to observation along more ethnographic and descriptive lines; the two discursive formations identified by Rose in her discussion of women’s relation to fieldwork discourses and practices (Rose, 1993). More importantly, and relating to the second form of exclusion contested by feminist historical geographers discussed above, their work has also not been recognised in several subsequent histories of the discipline. The position of women travellers in relation to contemporary hegemonic discursive formations about expeditions was the subject of a debate between Domosh and Stoddart in 1991 which has set the agenda for much of the subsequent feminist historiography of geography (Domosh, 1991a, 1991b; Stoddart, 1991), particularly with
regard to addressing the exclusion of past women geographers from recent contextual histories of the discipline.

Over the past forty or so years there has been a great deal of interest in the geographical work carried about by nineteenth century and early twentieth century Western women travellers (Domosh, 1991a; Blunt, 1994; Blunt and Rose, 1994; Bell, 1995; Morin, 1998, 2002, 2008a; McEwan, 2000; Blunt and McEwan, 2002; Thomas, 2004; Maddrell, 2004b, 2004c, 2009a). This has developed alongside interest in women’s geographical work more broadly, including that done by academics, scientists, educators and so on, with a particularly strong focus on British women. This is part of a much wider literature about nineteenth and twentieth century women travellers, which spans across a number of different academic disciplines, and also encompasses a large number of more popular works (e.g. Middleton, 1965 [1982]; Birkett, 1989; Foster, 1990; Mills, 1991; Robinson, 1990, 1994, 1999; Chaudhuri and Strobel, 1992; Melman, 1992 [1995]; Pratt, 1992; Ware, 1992; Sharpe, 1993; Morgan, 1996; Morgan, 2001; Foster and Mills, 2002; Foster, 2004).

This literature often represents a revival of interest in these women, since many of them were well-known to the public at the time of their journeys, a source of great public interest, and the subjects of popular collections of biographies (e.g. Adams, 1882; Tiltman, 1935). Such anthologies, in presenting these women as intrepid popular heroines, often took a rather hagiographic tone, whilst also presenting women like Gertrude Bell, Freya Stark and Mary Kingsley as highly unusual exceptions to the rule. As such, they differ from the more critical biographical approaches adopted by Maddrell and Thomas, as also used in this study, as discussed in Chapter 3. The boundaries around what constitutes geographical work as carried out by these women were heavily contested at the time, and have been re-contested in the more recent literature.

Beginning in the 1960s, second wave feminists began the process of recovering the writings and stories of some of these nineteenth and early-twentieth century women travellers, who had largely passed into obscurity (e.g. Middleton, 1965 [1982]; Birkett, 1989; Robinson, 1990, 1994, 1999, Morris, 1994). Their role in retrieving forgotten texts and
remembering previously forgotten women constituted an important first step, laying the foundations for later, more critical, work, and was based upon an implicit feminist empiricist approach. There were, however, significant issues with some of these works. The first of these, and representative of the fact that several of these researchers were operating within a feminist standpoint epistemology, is that such accounts have a tendency to universalise their subjects’ experiences, so that they stand as representative of all women (e.g. Allen, 1987; see Morin, 2008), or to ‘simply assume that women’s travel writing is different from men’s writing’, thus taking a strongly essentialist position which did not critically engage with the texts themselves (see Foster and Mills, 2002, p. 3).

This is connected to the second problem, which is reflective of the fact that several of these works are anthologies or biographical dictionaries. Such works often do not attempt to situate their subjects within their historical context, or relate their work to wider themes, often also omitting women travellers who did not conform to the heroic, intrepid mould or who were considered problematic in terms of their views on race or colonialism (e.g. Morris, 1994). That is, given that one of the aims of such works is to recover lost ‘heroines’, women who were more obviously complicit within colonial structures or who articulated more explicitly racist views were omitted from such collections, or their views were played down. This also often results in a continuation of the uncritical and celebratory tone of the older collections. As Foster and Mills note, some of these works also continued to focus on ‘the more unusual, “eccentric”, or adventurous accounts’, continuing the earlier trend of positioning such women as anomalous, although possibly unintentionally (Foster and Mills, 2002, p. 1).

This began to change in the late 1980s, although elements of both the hagiographic and the cataloguing approach remain in some recent popular biographies and collections (e.g. Wallach, 1996 [2005]; Howell, 2006), as does the positioning of such women as somehow other, or odd (Conefrey, 2011). Dea Birkett reports feelings of ambivalence towards her erstwhile heroines as she learned more about their complexity; her account is also an integrated discussion rather than an anthology or biographical dictionary (Birkett, 1989).
During this period, more theoretically sophisticated research on women’s travel writing began to appear. These sought to produce more contextual readings and nuanced portraits of the lives and writings of these women, which acknowledged their contributions whilst also using these to upset dominant discourses about travel and colonialism (Mills, 1991; Chaudhuri and Strobel, 1992; Melman 1992 [1995]; Pratt, 1992; Ware, 1992; Sharpe, 1993; Blunt, 1994; Blunt and Rose, 1994; Lewis, 1996; Morgan, 1996; Morin, 1998, 2002, 2008a; Phillips, 1999; Guelke and Morin, 2001; Morgan, 2001; Blunt and McEwan, 2002; Garcia Ramon, 2003; Foster, 2004; Thomas, 2004).

In particular, the accounts produced by feminist historical geographers such as Alison Blunt and Gillian Rose explicitly attended to the positionality of these women as colonial agents who were nonetheless subject to gendered oppression ‘at home’ (Blunt, 1994; Blunt and Rose, 1994). The experiences of European women travellers, and their ‘uneasy or ambivalent relationships with British colonialism and imperialism’ (Blunt and McEwan, 2002, p. 149; see also McEwan, 2000) disrupt imperial projections of a hierarchical binary relationship between colonizer and colonized, breaching Orientalist boundaries and destabilizing fixed categories. At the same time, as Joanne Sharp notes, we ‘need to be wary of accepting uncritically the accounts of female travel writers as subversive of Orientalism’ (Sharp, 2009, p. 46). As Sharp notes, these ‘were not just women travellers, they were white women travellers. While patriarchy repressed them at home, racism facilitated these women’s freedom in the Orient’ (Sharp, 2009, p. 46). Blunt adopts a similar analysis to discuss the work and career of Mary Kingsley and her travels in West Africa, noting the complexity of Kingsley’s positionality and attitudes towards West African people. The position of these women within wider geography at the time of their travels and work, and in relation to then contemporary discursive formations relating to expeditions, is of particular importance to the feminist historiography of geographical thought and practice, and was the principal subject of Domosh’s pioneering article (Domosh, 1991a).
According to Domosh, a feminist historiography would include re-evaluating the ‘scientific’ standards of what is considered valuable, or proper, geographical work, as well as, as Maddrell has later argued, ensuring recognition of those women geographers who did conform to the standards (Maddrell, 2009a). This includes, for example, noting that Isabella Bird did take measurements on her travels (once her membership of the RGS gave her access to the technical training courses offered to members of the Society), but also examining the geographical merit of the descriptions that she gave and the subjective observation that she carried out. Stoddart is wrong to assert that Isabella Bird never ‘made a measurement, a map or a collection, or indeed ever wrote other than impressionistically about the areas she visited’ (Stoddart, 1991, p. 484; see Maddrell, 2009a).

The omission of women from Stoddart’s history arises therefore both from Stoddart’s neglect of the interpretative tradition of geographical work in favour of the discursive formation of scientific geography, and from his lack of awareness of the ‘scientific’ work that they often carried out. Outlining how ‘scientific geography’ developed as a hegemonic norm at this time in British geography, to the exclusion of other forms of geographical practice, and interrogating how and why these norms became hegemonic, is one thing; refusing to question the ‘emerging standards of the time’, and taking it as read that they are therefore the only kind of geographical practice, as Stoddart seems to do, is quite another. It erases the differences and disputes that occurred at the time in favour of homogenising a narrative, and as such is an example of the presentism which he otherwise castigates. Stoddart therefore appears to make no real effort to engage with Domosh’s main point about critiquing and deconstructing these emerging standards. In contrast, Domosh argues that ‘emerging standards, it appears, were no more and no less than the personal standards of those who served as the profession’s gatekeepers’, especially since these standards ‘were not the sole criteria for inclusiveness in the category geographer’ (Domosh, 1991b, p. 488).

These arguments were further developed by Gillian Rose. Building on her earlier argument that women were historically marginalised as producers and subjects of
geographical knowledge, as a result of the discursive formations which epistemologically excluded women and the feminine (Rose, 1993). Rose noted how histories of the discipline which focused on the “great men”, and on “geography’s paternal lines of descent” also produced disciplinary histories, and subsequent understandings of the discipline, from which the feminine is both practically and discursively excluded (Rose, 1995).

Importantly, Rose also noted that the removal of outsiders who do not fit these discursive formations, in order to construct a pedigreed line of descent, also worked to erase the practice of exclusion itself. In light of these debates, Maddrell calls for a ‘more-than-contextual’ approach to writing histories of geography, one that renders visible these kinds of invisible power structures, and which can therefore be understood as a genealogical approach under the terms discussed above (Maddrell, 2009a). Feminist approaches to the writing of geography’s histories, and particularly Maddrell’s magisterial demonstration of women’s past geographical work, have had a significant impact within the wider historiography of geography (Ward et al, 2010). Many of the more recent histories of geography attend both to the position of women within the discipline, and to the operations of gender within that history (Maddrell, 2009a; Kearns, 2009; Keighren, 2006, 2010). This follows similar lines of argument as those made for developing accounts of geography’s past micropractices, and to the writing of histories which includes such ‘smaller stories’, including the discursive formations involved. This draws upon Hayden Lorimer and Nick Spedding’s arguments for recovering such ‘smaller stories’, and on Ann Laura Stoler’s argument that minor histories are not ‘trivial’ histories (Lorimer and Spedding, 2002; Lorimer, 2003; Lorimer and Spedding, 2005; Powell, 2008; Stoler, 2009). Similarly, Maddrell has noted the importance of including both ‘major’ and ‘minor’ figures, and seeking to achieve a balance between these, with the ultimate aim that ‘this crude dichotomy is at least blurred, if not eradicated.’ (Maddrell 2009a p. 19)
Conclusion

In embracing a complex and multifaceted disciplinary history, and one marked by the power relations of the societies that originated and re-appropriated its key concepts and practices, over shining lines of descent, the more-than-contextual, genealogical approach lends potential epistemological support to attempts to write a feminist historiography of geography. In particular, it opens up space to consider gender as one of the power structures shaping the concepts and practices in use, and provides an epistemological framework for understanding the forgetting of women’s past geographical work within histories of the discipline. Furthermore, in its provision of space for tracing all one’s intellectual ancestors and forebears, not simply one clear line of descent, it allows feminist historiography to avoid simply adding elite women to the pantheon, but also to make space for women as a group, for an ensemble cast of geographers with varying degrees of influence. Feminist postconstructionist epistemologies provide theoretical support for this endeavour. With their emphasis on the partial and situated nature of knowledge production, these suggest the importance of including the geographical perspectives of a wider variety of past geographers, including women geographers, within histories of the disciplines. They also provide the epistemological for considering a number of partial stories within such histories, without seeking to reduce them down to a single master narrative. These approaches also strengthen support for including marginalised past geographers precisely because including them allows for greater insight into the operations of previously understudied contexts, such as gender.

Drawing upon these ideas, this thesis seeks to trace and reconstruct some of the geographical micropractices of women involved in RGS-supported expeditions in the twentieth century. It should be viewed as attempting to build steps towards a genealogy of expeditionary space, towards reconstructing the discursive formations existing around expeditions and fieldwork at this time and through this one institution, as an exploration of how the expedition operates as a site of geographical knowledge production. The next
chapter will explore the different methods and approaches adopted by this study in order to achieve these aims.
CHAPTER 3: RECOVERING THE FRAGMENTS: METHODS AND SOURCES

In the previous chapter, the merits of a more-than-contextual, genealogical, and (auto)biographical approach to the writing of the history of geographical thought and practice, and the history of women’s expeditionary work in particular, were discussed. A case was made for adopting a more-than-contextual approach that draws upon feminist and postcolonial theory, and with particular regard to debates around subjectivity, gender, and knowledge production. This chapter will discuss how this study used a combination of more-than-contextual, (auto)biographical, and thematic approaches to conduct its research into women's RGS-supported expeditionary work.

This study has used a range of sources and methods to gather data on women's participation in RGS-supported expeditions between 1913 and 1970, drawing upon and adapting the methodology used in Maddrell’s *Complex Locations* (Maddrell, 2009a). For a number of reasons, archival material and methods have featured heavily in my data collection. A major impetus for this PhD project was the existence of untapped archival resources at the RGS-IBG relating to women’s participation in RGS-supported expeditions, resources which it was appropriate to make use of. Archival research is also the only means of accessing unpublished information for expeditions which took place in the earlier years of the study, as the participants have since died (Baker, 1997). Archived materials, when used alongside and with reference to other sources, can help to substantiate findings and gain insight into personal and institutional motivations. As with Maddrell’s wide-ranging study of British women’s geographical work, here archives have also ‘contributed much to the substantiation of individual stories and women’s collective status as long-standing, varied and productive tillers of geographical territory rather than as recently arrived stakeholders’ (Maddrell 2009a p. 20).

The present study has focused on the RGS-IBG archives in particular, with other archives consulted where necessary. As explored below, this has necessitated using these archives ‘in light of their limitations’ (Maddrell, 2009a, p. 19): that is, recognizing the ways
in which they have been shaped and mediated by their contexts (Withers, 2002; Mayall, 2005). It also necessitates reading them for the silences and omissions within them as much as for the explicit content presented, aware that ‘as much as archives can reveal they can also obscure’ (Maddrell, 2009a, p. 20).

I have also conducted three oral history interviews with participants from three postwar RGS-supported expeditions. These were selected as being representative of some of the different kinds of expeditions in the post-war period: a mixed-gender undergraduate expedition; a women-only undergraduate expedition; and a mixed-gender research (non-undergraduate) expedition. There is significant potential for further research to extend this programme of interviews.

In this chapter I first discuss some of the major issues and themes involved with archival research, including issues of power and representation. I then discuss in detail my chosen methodological framework, and the two major phases of data collection undertaken for this project, including an outline of the study’s major findings.

**Archives as spaces of knowledge (re)production, and issues of power and representation.**

For generations of historical researchers, the archive has served as both source and site for the production of historical knowledge, as the place that one goes to in order to do history ‘properly’, for fledglings to perform the initiation rites of the discipline, and where the initiated labour to lend gravitas and authenticity to their work (Steedman, 2001; Boyer, 2004; Burton, 2005; Ogborn, 2011). Until relatively recently, this role, and the ontological, epistemological, and political assumptions that underpinned it, had been largely unexamined. It relied upon an unproblematised understanding of the archive as a neutral and objective location; to write history, one simply went to where the historical records were kept. This is no longer so straightforwardly the case, if indeed it ever was.
In the 1960s, some historical researchers began to focus on the stories and pasts of socially, politically, and economically marginalized groups, including poor people, women, members of ethnic minorities, and many others. Frustrated at the apparent absence of their subjects from traditional archives, these researchers began to seek new methods of historical inquiry, new ways of reading traditional archives, and means of creating and defining new archives, which might allow them to uncover these hidden pasts. Feminist and postcolonial researchers, as part of their development of the literature and theory discussed in the previous chapter, were particularly active in this process, using ideas about power, subjectivity, and representation to develop critiques of traditional archives and of traditional historical methodology.

In so doing, they challenged and problematised understandings of ‘the archive’ as neutral space, casting it instead as a place for the active production of knowledge (Chaudhuri et al, 2010). These efforts, which present a challenge both to the canonical status of some archives, and to their previously accepted ontological and epistemological status (Maddrell, 2009a), have ignited fierce debates about questions of power and representation in archives. Debates arise from the tension between radical progressives and traditionalist empiricists over the issue of whether these recent advances represent democratization of the archives, or merely their vulgarization, and a loss of the neutrality that lends historical research its authenticity (Burton, 2003; see also Withers, 2002; Maddrell 2008, 2009a).

Recent historical researchers, such as Antoinette Burton, have defined archives in a very broad sense, resulting in their recognising a vast plurality of potential archives - ranging from documents housed in official state archives to flickering entries in online, evanescent repositories, from memories recovered and recreated in community oral history projects to material artefacts of a private domestic collection, and even further (Burton, 2005; Gagen et al, 2007; Maddrell 2009a; Ogborn, 2011). This broad account has led to the destabilization of certain hegemonic forms of archive, allowing historical researchers to engage with the context-based specificity of individual, particular archives,
created at particular moments in time and space, and taking a particular physical form through which researchers interact with it (Randolph, 2005). As such, archives themselves become contact zones (Sahadeo, 2005).

This process of interaction, or encounter, means that the positionality of the researcher, as well as the particular form taken by the archive, helps to shape the historical knowledge produced therein (Boyer, 2004; Burton, 2005; Ghosh, 2005). Furthermore, this historical-geographical specificity means that such archives are marked by the power relations of the societies that created them, often speaking in the languages of and from the perspectives of the powerful in those societies, and excluding certain perspectives altogether (Dirks, 1993; Milligan, 2005; Robertson, 2005). This makes it difficult, although not impossible, to excavate the experiences and voices of the marginalised from such documents (Burton, 2001, 2003; Stoler, 2009; Chaudhuri et al, 2010). As well as this exclusion of certain subjects, it is also important to recognise that both hegemonic and counter-hegemonic archives are shaped by ‘the imperative of a particular historical narrative’ (Maddrell 2009a p. 20, citing Mayall, 2005). That is, what is considered worth archiving will reflect not only a particular perspective, but will also be framed in the terms of a particular narrative.

An important element of these radical innovations in historical methodology has been a close focus on oral history interviews. These draw upon the embodied archives of memory (Roque Ramírez, 2005), and often create new recorded archives to be held in more conventional institutional settings (Yow, 2005). The practice of conducting such interviews was begun by social historians in the 1960s and 1970s (Thompson, 2000), drawing on work carried out in other social science disciplines (Yow, 2005), and so grew out of historiographical attempts to democratize the archives. In literally giving voice to research subjects, they also provide an important means of recovering the perspectives of those marginalised in more traditional archives, and of recovering information about topics, particularly traumatic ones, that commonly appear as silences in more traditional sources (Butalia, 2000). Oral history interviews have been particularly popular with
feminist researchers ‘because they allow the subject to speak in their own words’. As such, ‘they can reveal “hidden” aspects to history not “visible” in textual forms, especially the personal memories of everyday experience’ (Maddrell 2009a p. 21).

Whilst the ‘telescoping’ effect of memory can mean that certain facts may be elided or omitted (Perks, 1992), triangulating oral history interviews with a range of archival and published sources, while recognising the positionality of each source, can help develop a historical account that is both accurate and inclusive, and in ways that ‘demonstrate the limitations of preceding historiographies’ (Maddrell, 2009a, p. 21). By their subjectivity, oral histories show up the ways in which written source are also subjective, and that subjectivity is not detrimental to the validity of historical sources (Maddrell, 2009a). As Robert Perks comments, ‘it is equally important to recognise that the way in which people make sense of their lives is valuable historical evidence in itself’ (Perks, 1992, p. 13).

Rather than trying to force the accounts given in oral history interviews into the narratives developed from more conventional document sources, it is productive to use them to trouble and undermine existing narratives (Gluck and Patai, 1991; Perks, 1992; Perry, 2005).

These attempts at democratizing the archive, and at drawing in a range of unconventional archives and sources, including oral history interviews, have been particularly important for the development of women’s history and feminist history, since women as marginalized historical actors are particularly likely to have been excluded from more traditional sources. Feminist historians have also developed innovative techniques for using these archives and sources (Gluck and Patai, 1991; Stoler, 2009; Chaudhuri et al, 2010).
The RGS-IBG as institutional archive

The collections of the RGS-IBG today are vast and wide-ranging, providing ‘an unparalleled resource tracing 500 years of geographical discovery and research.’ They include maps, books, periodicals, paintings, photographs, and artefacts, as well as the personal archives of a number of past geographers and others associated with the Society. In addition, and of particular importance for this project, they also include the institutional archive of the RGS itself. This consists of a number of official documents, including the minutes of its Council and various committees; its annual reports; paperwork relating to its activities, such as its grants programmes; and a large collection of correspondence between the staff of the Society and others active in its networks. These documents were written and compiled primarily by its staff, and often reflect the viewpoints of the privileged and powerful individuals associated with this institution.

The major RGS archive for this project therefore, is a particular kind of archive: that of a hegemonic and powerful institution. From its foundation in 1830, the RGS has sought to position itself as one of the leading geographical societies, both nationally and internationally. Its achievement of such status is the result of an ongoing process of contestation and struggle, in which factions within the RGS sought to take it in different directions, as based on their preferred version of ‘good’ geographical practice (Mill, 1930; Stoddart, 1986; Livingstone, 1992; Driver, 2001; Maddrell, 2009a).

Within the institutional archive of the RGS, therefore, it is possible to hear echoes of ambivalence, tension, and dissent. It is also possible to uncover traces of forgotten figures who nonetheless contributed to the development of the discipline. However, these tensions, and these processes of contestation, are not solely disruptive or destructive. Instead, they can contribute to a reading of geography and of geographical science as a wide-ranging enterprise, and of the RGS as a pluralistic institution in which a range of

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competing voices are active, up to the present day (see Maddrell, 2010). The present day institution seeks to provide space for a number of these competing visions of geography, and for a range of activities associated with them.

**Chosen methods, available sources, and justification with regard to research questions**

The study has involved two major phases of research. The first was to reconstruct all applications from expeditions for RGS support between 1913 and 1970, including evidence of those which had female participants, and to construct a database to house this information. The second phase was to then investigate the women-participating applications in more depth, using a combination of approaches, including (auto)biographical, contextual, thematic, and case studies.

As Caroline Steedman brings home so forcefully in *Dust*, if there is a Platonic past, a past as it actually was, we are forever separated from it (Steedman, 2001). Histories, instead, as many historians of geography have argued, should be understood as practices of imagining and reconstruction. In this project, and drawing again on Maddrell's approach in *Complex Locations*, I have adopted a Foucauldian genealogical, archaeological approach and methodological framework. For the first phase of my research, this has involved envisaging my dataset of all applications as a reconstruction from broken traces, and as a practice of imagining the history of the RGS's past support of expeditions. Equally, for the second phase of my study, I have also been conscious of my own role in mediating between the different sources, and recognizing that ‘there always has to be at least a note of qualification and speculation’ (Maddrell, 2009a p. 19).
To map out the extent of women’s participation in RGS-supported expeditions, and to situate that participation within the broader context of RGS support of expeditions, it was necessary to first reconstruct all applications for support. Having this wider dataset available, and therefore providing this broader context, meant that the study could address questions such as what proportion women-participating projects made up of all applications. It could also analyse the impact of gender on women’s participation in RGS-supported expeditions, rather than being limited to commenting solely on the number of women’s applications across the period. Mapping out all applications also allowed me to bridge this existing gap in knowledge that I had identified in the RGS collections, in that no such list of applications previously existed. This is an important legacy of this collaborative project for the RGS-IBG as the host institution.

Creating the full list of applications was also useful because evidence of women’s participation in expeditions was often fragmentary, appearing in perhaps only one or two sources. It was easier to add this involvement to an existing database than having to return to previous sources to gather information. Including all applications for support, rather than just successful ones, also allowed for analysis, where possible, of the reasons given for supporting an expedition, or for the withholding of support. Women’s participation was defined as the participation of at least one woman whilst the expedition was ‘in-the-field’; the team for a given expedition was generally based on that given in the extant records of the expedition, although this often did not include the support work performed by local people, as discussed in Chapter 7 (see Driver and Jones, 2009; Jones, 2010). Deciding on the boundaries of ‘participation-in-the-field’ was also an important methodological issue. There were a number of Public Schools Exploring Society (PSES) expeditions which received RGS support in the 1930s. For several of these, the wife of the expedition leader, Mrs Audrey Levick, went to the chosen field site beforehand to scope out the land and help with expedition planning. However, as she was not a team member
for the expedition itself, in any of these cases, these were not included in the list of women-participating expeditions. This example highlights the blurred boundaries that separate the official expedition team from its support network.

From preliminary scoping work with the Council Minutebooks, I anticipated that the process of mapping out all applications for support was going to generate a large amount of data, which needed to be stored and organised effectively. This preliminary scoping work, in which I inputted data from the Council Minutebooks into a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet, generating new columns for information as I progressed, helped me to think about the kinds of data that I wished to capture, in terms of both answering my research questions, and the information that I was likely to be able to gather from the available sources. For example, the question of dating an expedition was an important one – when team members first began to plan the project? When they first approached the RGS for help? When they embarked from ‘home’? When they arrived ‘in-the-field’? I decided upon using the date of first mention in the sources as the main ‘date’ for the expedition, although I also captured other key dates where possible. This decision was in keeping with my chosen methodological focus on reconstruction from recovered traces.

With additional training and extensive support provided by the RGS-IBG Research and Higher Education Department (RHED), I constructed a Microsoft Access database in which to capture information about all applications for support recorded in the sources. The database consists of a number of linked tables, each table containing a number of different fields, as generated and defined during the preliminary scoping work. A matrix of these tables can be seen in Figure 1.
Figure 1: Structure of the database, showing the relationships between tables
As can be seen in this figure, my database centres on the main Expeditions table, to which the other tables are linked. These other tables cover areas such as personnel, planned fieldwork topics, the form of support given, and so on. For ease of use, a form was created for the key tables, to make it easier to input data. An example of a completed record using the Expeditions Form (which input data into the Expeditions table) is given in Figure 2:

Figure 2: Example of completed record in Expeditions Form

The advantages of using an Access database for data collection included the ability to capture data in an easily manageable form; the ability to run queries and return information; and, most importantly, to return easily to records to input more data or to edit them. There are also some disadvantages to using this method of data collection and storage. The first is the need for a degree of proficiency with the software, and an understanding of how and why databases operate, particularly if one needs to construct a bespoke database from scratch, as I did. I was very fortunate in having access to the expertise of Stephanie Wyse in RHED, who provided key training and built the structure of the database for me, based on extensive conversations about the data I wished to capture and my intended use of the database. Using a database of this kind also requires making and committing to significant decisions early on in the research process about the
questions to be answered, what is considered to be important, and how this relevant data
is to be captured and structured, as it is very difficult to retrofit the database later on.
However, if careful thought is given to these decisions at the beginning of the research
process, this is not necessarily a disadvantage, particularly since one can range broadly at
the beginning, and then choose to concentrate on key areas later on, leaving unused
capacity in the database. The database constructed for this project will form part of the
legacy of my PhD for the RGS-IBG as the host institution. It is hoped that it will become a
tool for future research on the history of RGS-supported expeditions.²

I have populated the database through a process of ongoing engagement with a
range of sources in the RGS-IBG archives (Figure 3).

**Figure 3: List of sources consulted for Phase 1.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Archival source</th>
<th>Information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Council Minutebooks</td>
<td>Details of applications and decisions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Committee Minutebooks</td>
<td>Details of applications and decisions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Council Annual Reports</td>
<td>Details of instrument loans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Geographical Journal</td>
<td>Whether expeditions took place; further details</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expedition Grants paperwork</td>
<td>Details of applications and decisions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expedition reports</td>
<td>Whether expeditions took place; further details</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘Secondary’ literature</td>
<td>Further detail of expedition</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

² For more information on how historians can use databases effectively, please see Mark Merry, n.d.
I systematically mined the Minutebooks, annual reports, and grants paperwork for every mention of an application, creating a new database record or adding to an existing one as necessary, noting the source of the information. These sources were largely useful for uncovering evidence of an application in the first place, and for determining whether or not the application had been successful (although the answer to this second question was not always clear). I primarily used the Geographical Journal, including printed lectures, short articles, Society announcements, and the Presidential addresses, and the later Expedition Reports, as a means of verifying whether the expedition had taken place. I also returned to these sources for women-participating expeditions in order to conduct more in-depth analysis.

A number of parameters were set around which projects to include in the database, as outlined in Figure 4. These evolved gradually over time and through a process of active engagement with the sources.

**Figure 4: Parameters for the dataset**

![Diagram showing parameters for the dataset]

In keeping with the Society's remit of promoting 'geographical science', applications for support included a wide range of potential subjects, and were often
interdisciplinary in nature. In this study, all applications for support were included in the
database with no restriction applied as to the proposed subject of the project. This is with
the exception of loans of instruments that were clearly being used solely for training
purposes in the UK, either by educational institutions or by the military.

Support itself was also defined broadly as all forms of direct, prospective, support.
This included: approval of plans; financial grants; loans or gifts of instruments, equipment,
and books; letters of recommendation; and other assistance as necessary. In order to keep
the database, and the project as a whole, to a manageable size, projects which received
retrospective recognition of their achievements by the Society were not included, unless
they had also received prospective support. This retrospective recognition could come in
the form of a medal or award, or by having their book reviewed, or by being invited to
lecture on their results. In this study prospective therefore means support applied for or
received before or during the expedition’s time ‘in-the-field’.

Small token grants, such as the £25 awarded to Gertrude Caton-Thompson and
Elinor Gardner’s Fayum expedition in 1928, or the £20 awarded to Cicely Kate Ricardo and
Janet Owen’s East African expedition in 1936, were a very important part of the way that
the RGS supported expeditions. Throughout the whole period under study, most of the
expeditions that were financially supported received small grants, with the exceptions
tending to be the Society’s ‘own’ expeditions, i.e. those in which it played a substantial part
in organising, such as the Everest expeditions. These small grants were not intended to
meet many of an expedition’s expenses. In some cases, as with Caton-Thompson and
Gardner’s Kharga Oasis expeditions in the early 1930s, to which the Society subscribed £5
per annum, the grant represented the RGS’s contribution to a convened fund set up to
source subscriptions and donations. This seems to have been a relatively common method
of funding fieldwork during this period, and the RGS itself used the subscription method to
fund some of its own expeditions. In other cases, where there was not such an explicit
funding model, it is likely that, as in the postwar period, the small grants were intended as
a mark of RGS approval and sanction, which could then be used to attract funding and
resources from other bodies and companies, as discussed in more detail in Chapter 5.

As discussed briefly above, my analysis is based on the appearance of expeditions
within the surviving archival records of the RGS and other institutions, and within other
printed published documents. For many expeditions, the surviving evidence is
fragmentary, with evidence of women's participation particularly so, and often buried
deep within the sources. The difficulty of establishing women's participation also shifted
over time and between the sources, particularly in the main RGS archival records. In the
Minutebooks, for example, women's participation is only occasionally alluded to for
applications from mixed expeditions, although, perhaps obviously, it is noted in the case of
expeditions led by women or where a woman was the applicant. The participation of
women on expeditions has often been identified from other sources, such as a reference in
articles or reviews in the Geographical Journal, or from later memoirs, obituaries, or
secondary accounts and literature. Reviews were most useful as a triangulating source;
they could be used to determine whether a project, having got RGS support, did embark
into the field and complete its aims sufficiently to have a publication, which was
subsequently reviewed.

Conversely, in the later Expeditions Grants paperwork women were often explicitly
marked by their title or first name, or by a reference to women's participation in the
application. This seems to be a clear example of the othering of women in expeditionary
space, the marking of them as something strange or unusual. Throughout the period in
question, uncovering their involvement becomes a question of significant triangulation
between the different sources. In this, I draw upon techniques developed by feminist and
radical historians for 'interrogating official documents found in traditional archives for
what they can yield about the women who appear in sources never intended to preserve
their voices and experiences' (Chaudhuri et al 2010, p. xiv).

As befits this kind of Foucauldian archaeology (Maddrell 2009a; Ogborn, 2011), I
have tried to be sensitive to the particular language of these sources, and to the norms and
discourses that govern them. As discussed in Chapter 1, this can be seen in the term 'expedition' itself, which is rarely explicitly defined, and which seems to shift over time. Rather than try to define it myself, and only include the projects which met my criteria, I have instead included all projects applying to the Society for support, while making note of the terms they are using. Expedition is by far the predominant term, and in this applicants seem to be reflecting back the usage of the RGS, as expedition is the most commonly used term in the RGS official documents throughout the period.

My base unit was the single project/expedition, rather than a single application or mention in the sources; this was an area where the decision to use an Access database was particularly useful. However, it also sometimes raised difficulties in triangulating between sources, particularly for the earlier expeditions, where there was no annual systematic list of applications as there was in the later period, as discussed in Chapter 5. Sometimes the same project would be referred to at different times under slightly different names, or a different person would be mentioned in association with the project at different times; sometimes expeditions had to change their planned destinations as they encountered difficulties with the original plans, and so on. This was a particular problem for the early university-associated expeditions. One good example of this is the expedition referred to in one source as the Oxford University expedition to Baffin Island (the first intended destination), in another as the Oxford University Exploration Club expedition to Akpatok Island (the eventual destination), and in another as Mr. Clutterbuck’s expedition (Hugh Clutterbuck being the leader). In many cases, and particularly those of colonial officials stationed abroad, there were a number of different applications for support over a relatively short period of time, and it was not always easy to distinguish separate projects or expeditions, particularly if one project had been cancelled or postponed.

It became clear that a given expedition was never a rigid, bounded entity, but rather a fluid and mutating one, which could encompass such changes but still be considered the same. The process of data collection was therefore intellectually fruitful in itself in terms of thinking through my epistemological conception of expeditions. I had to
use my own judgement, familiarity with the topic, and other secondary literature, in
mediating between sometimes contradictory materials, and was always conscious of my
own creative role in doing so.3 It is probable that future researchers working on the
database will find further discrepancies, and will be able to bring their own
understandings and knowledge to bear upon it. In this way the database will become an
archive in its own right.

Another methodological issue I encountered was the absence of a significant
number of expedition reports. The problem of missing sources is often common to
archival research (Johnston and Withers, 2008). Whilst listed as having been received on
the Expedition Grants paperwork, and also listed in the old card catalogue as part of the
collections, these reports have been relocated at some point over the intervening years
without the records being updated, and so are presently un-locatable within the archive.
As discussed further in Chapter 8, this has limited the work that I had intended to do with
regard to the dissemination and reception of RGS-supported expeditionary knowledge in
the postwar period. It also necessitated research in the collections of the Scott Polar
Research Library, where copies of a number of these reports reside, and in the archives of
Cambridge University.

The sources differ in the degree of excavation necessary to find evidence of
support, of occurrence (that is, that the planned expedition actually took place), and of
women's involvement. This also differs from expedition to expedition. Over the period in
question, each source also shifts in relevance and importance for reconstructing the
dataset. For example, a gradual delegation of responsibilities occurs over the period, from
the Council down to the various RGS committees, with Council meetings becoming less
frequent, and tending to pass or veto the recommendations of other committees rather
than referring to the content of those recommendations in detail. This is with the
exception of particularly large or RGS-originated expeditions, such as the Everest
expeditions.

3 Secondary is used here in the historian’s sense, as a source written sometime after the event, often by
someone not directly involved, which seeks to account for it.
The organisation of committees dealing with the closely related areas of research and expeditions seems to have been a perennial problem for the RGS, as separate and then combined Research and Expeditions committees were formed and then broken up, often with a significant amount of institutional amnesia about these processes. By the mid-1950s the business of sorting through the applications for support had been delegated to the Grants-in-Aid Sub-Committee, which continued its work through to the end of the period under study and beyond, with their decisions recorded in the Expeditions Grants paperwork.

**Key findings 1913-1970**

There were 1557 applications to the RGS for support between 1913 and 1970. 244 of these were for projects with women participants (mixed and women-only), giving an overall percentage for the period of 15.6% (see Figure 3). Women were participants in RGS-supported expeditions for all six decades of the period under investigation. The proportion of women-involved applications also increased over time, reaching nearly 20% in the final decade (1961-1970), and making up 37.5% in 1970, the final year of the study. Within this overall picture, there are two distinct periods, separated by the Second World War, in which the processes of applying for support, and the patterns of women’s access to RGS-supported expeditionary spaces, are quite different.
Phase 2 - Echoes and fragments: reconstructing women’s expeditionary experiences

The second phase of the project was to reconstruct and examine women’s expeditionary work and experiences in more detail, placing them in the context of their wider lives and careers, and drawing out the key themes in which I was interested, such as expeditionary (im)mobility, expeditionary domesticity, or expeditionary contact zones. This in-depth examination of women’s expeditionary work and experiences required the use of a combination of contextual, (auto)biographical, and thematic approaches. The first of these was a contextual approach: to read women’s expeditionary work in the light of wider developments within society, within particular institutions, and within geographical thought and practice as a broader intellectual endeavour. An important aspect of this was the adoption of an (auto)biographical approach, to place women’s expeditionary work in the context of their wider lives, as well as in broader social, institutional, and epistemological contexts (Buttimer, 1983; Kitchin and Tate, 2000; Barnes, 2001; Baigent, 2004; Daniels and Nash, 2004; Thomas, 2004; Blunt, 2005; Maddrell, 2009a, 2009b).

Drawing on Thomas’ (2004) study of Lady Curzon, which places Lady Curzon in relation to
her family and friendship network as well as to Curzon’s wider political and social context, where possible I have sought to reconstruct these aspects of my subjects’ lives.

Sources used have included letters and other personal papers; photographs, maps, and other visual sources including paintings; expeditionary outputs in the form of scientific papers, recorded lectures, popular accounts, and others; much later published accounts in the form of memoirs; and other secondary literature written by historians and others. I have also drawn on obituaries, memoirs, existing biographies, and biographical dictionaries, as well as ranging more widely in personal archives where available, drawing on the approach adopted by Maddrell in Complex Locations (Maddrell, 2009a). Obituaries also have been useful for basic biographical details where there is little existing research on the woman in question. The different sources, with their different intended audiences, are governed by different conventions, and often play on different tropes and make use of particular tones. For example, ‘obituaries are a form of textual memorial’ (Maddrell 2009a 22), which usually have an elegiac, and often explicitly or implicitly hagiographic tone, are often reiterative in terms of their content, and are governed by particular conventions, in which ‘certain adjectives speak volumes’ (Maddrell 2009a 336).

The different sources also have a range of ways of presenting their subject or author, which in some cases become ways of presenting the self. As Maddrell notes, ‘written subjective constructions vary according to the form of writing or speaking – that is, a different slant on an individual’s subjectivity can be gleaned from reports, academic papers, interviews, speeches and policy documents’ (Maddrell 2009a pp. 17-18). Drawing together these fragments of subjectivity allows us to account for the ‘historically specific, the varied and even contradictory subjectivities on the part of individual women, and women collectively, as they negotiated their complex position/s within geography as travellers, academics, authors and educationalists’ (Maddrell 2009a, p. 18).

While there was available information on these topics for most of the expeditions in my women-participating dataset, I have chosen to focus on those where I have access to sources authored by the women themselves, in the form of letters, diaries, published
accounts, and lectures. This is in keeping with a broader aim of this thesis, of making audible the voices and perspectives of these often forgotten women (Woollacott, 1998; Maddrell, 2009a). For the earlier period of the study, this criterion immediately reduced the available case studies to a manageable number, although some themes were more prominent in individual accounts than others. For the postwar period, there were far more women-authored accounts, and therefore a greater number of possible candidates for in-depth analysis. Having reconstructed the overall picture of women’s expeditionary work, I then selected examples of each of the major types of women-participating expeditions during this period, to serve as case studies.

Many of the sources reside in the RGS-IBG archives; others at other archives, including university archives and the British Library. Reading and interpreting these varied sources has involved careful attention to a number of important questions, based on a close reading of the texts in question, and of other archival artefacts such as images. These include the question of the intended audience of the text, as well as whether it was later published; its date of composition, and the distance of that time from the expedition itself; and the apparent purposes of the text, including the intentions of its author, although to an extent these can never be entirely known. Where appropriate, I have also triangulated between the sources, and between relevant secondary literature.

Accounts authored by the women themselves, even if they are not explicitly in the form of autobiography or memoir, represent a ‘conscious form of self-representation within that frame.’ (Maddrell 2009a p. 16, emphasis original). Such autobiographies, however fragmentary, can complement and work alongside formal archive-based histories, as well as other published and printed material. In addition to these textual sources, I have conducted three oral histories interviews with surviving female participants of RGS-supported expeditions.

The three sets of participants for these interviews each represent a particular approach to RGS-supported expeditionary work in the postwar period, and a particular subset of expeditions. The first interview, with Helen Sandison and Oonagh Linehan of the
1953 and 1954 Nottingham University Iceland expeditions, is an example of mixed undergraduate expeditions. The second interview, with the members of the Oxford Women’s Expedition to the Azores, is an example of a single-sex undergraduate expedition. The final interview with Beatrice de Cardi, is an example of a non-undergraduate research expedition. All three were important forms of women’s expeditionary work during the postwar period. I made use of existing networks and contacts to find the participants for this element of the study, including networks through the RGS-IBG, and contacts from Maddrell’s research. Two of the interviews were conducted alongside my PhD supervisor, Avril Maddrell, and the third, with Beatrice de Cardi, with one of my colleagues in the RGS-IBG CDA programme, Emily Hayes.

Reconstructing historical mobilities

Much recent work on mobilities has focused on contemporary mobilities, as it is contemporary research methods – such as the use of auto-ethnography, participant observation, or the keeping of time-space diaries – that allow for mobilities to be deliberately recorded. However, work by Dydia DeLyser into the mobilities of female aviators has shown how it is possible to reconstruct some of the experiential components of mobility from textual sources, and from historical or archived sources in particular (DeLyser, 2010, 2011; see also Blunt, 1994; Cresswell, 2006;). Such sources can be read as unofficial time-space diaries, and the representations contained within them treated ‘not as a code to be broken or as an illusion to be dispelled’ (Dewsbury et al, 2002, p. 438), but as performances, as enactments, in their own right. Given the overlap between DeLyser’s research subjects and those with which this study is concerned – the time period of the early twentieth century, and their pioneering status as women participating in a sphere that was strongly discursively constructed as male – I have also adapted DeLyser’s methodology in order to examine past expeditionary mobilities. The sources used to
reconstruct historical expeditionary mobilities are often rich in detail on other themes with which this study is concerned.

Questions of mobility and of immobility appear to have been of great interest to the women involved in RGS-supported expeditions, if not couched explicitly in such terminology. What Sidonie Smith calls ‘technologies of motion’ (Smith, 2001, p. xi) are discussed extensively in these women’s private and published accounts of their expeditionary work. They discuss the forms of transportation by which they travelled; how the journey went, often in great detail, so that it can almost be used to reconstruct a quasi-time-space diary; their experience and reactions to the journey, and whether they enjoyed it or otherwise, thereby giving their emotional responses to the form of mobility employed. The women also, usually implicitly but occasionally explicitly, engage with how their chosen forms of mobility shaped their practices of knowledge production.

This engagement with, and interest in, questions of mobility can stem from the kinds of accounts that women were writing, and the narrative conventions that governed these accounts. Private letters home would often focus on the mundane elements of expeditionary travel, at least as much as more exciting moments, and certainly more than the details of the work being conducted. The recipients, usually friends and family, would be primarily concerned with knowing that their loved one was in good health, eating properly, and that journeys were proceeding well.

Many women also kept private diaries during their expeditions, for a number of reasons, and such diaries would also often contain these details, again for a number of reasons (Blunt el al, 2003). Even if kept purely for their own enjoyment, these women might well find such details interesting in and of themselves, and thus worthy of being recorded. However, many women, including Gertrude Bell and Freya Stark, already successful travel writers by the time of their respective RGS-supported expeditions, also kept diaries as an aide memoire to help with the future preparation of published accounts, particularly popular travel accounts. This reworking of diary material could take place long after the expedition itself. Gertrude Caton-Thompson published a memoir in 1983,
some 45 years after her return from her last major expedition in 1938; according to her, the memoir drew extensively on diaries kept through her life. Both letters and diaries were discursive forms that were particularly associated with women (Blunt et al, 2003; Maddrell, 2009a), and so it is unsurprising to find that examples of these have survived from the women in this study.

Both women and men often published travel accounts of their expeditions; the everyday details given in such accounts helped to evoke the expeditionary place in question, which, as discussed in Chapter 6, was often constructed as enchanted, mysterious, and dangerous. The more prosaic details given, such as the details of the travel itself, or of everyday embodied experience, helped readers to imagine themselves there by forging an embodied sense of connection between reader and traveller. By the early twentieth century there was already a long tradition of published women’s travel writing, often drawing explicitly on the textual forms of letters and diaries which were often associated with women and femininity.

In addition, women’s accounts often drew readers attracted by the apparent novelty of a woman travelling to such places, wanting to know what kind of woman she could be. This was an ambiguous position for a woman to be in, which might bring her acclaim as surely being an extraordinary heroine, or opprobrium as transgressing the bounds of conventional, appropriate femininity. As a result, many of the women are ambivalent towards being awarded or claiming heroic status, or identifying too strongly with certain tropes of expeditionary heroism, as discussed in Chapter 6 (see Mills, 1991; Blunt, 1994; Blunt and Rose, 1994; Phillips, 1997; Smith, 2001). It is perhaps the case that these women focus on the everyday and mundane elements of their expeditionary experience as part of this (perhaps unconscious, perhaps deliberate) strategy of ambivalence; or perhaps they are simply able to see the interesting elements in the everyday.
There is another set of sources held at the RGS-IBG which is particularly rich in details of everyday life on expedition, including expeditionary mobilities. This is the expedition reports archive, which was created by the practice of the RGS of encouraging all supported expeditions, and later, any that wished to, to deposit a report on their expedition with the RGS library. Production of an expeditionary report became a condition of expeditionary support in the 1950s. Part of the impetus for creating this archive, and a major component of many of these reports, was the desire to create a resource for aspiring expedition members about how to plan and successfully carry out an expedition, focusing on the logistical and mundane details of this process. Although, as discussed above, this archive is partially fragmented, particularly with regard to reports from earlier expeditions, it remains an important source for reconstructing expeditionary experiences.

**Conclusion**

In this chapter I have outlined the main methods and sources used in the study to conduct research into women’s RGS-supported expeditionary work. With an eye to issues of power and representation within archives, and particularly those which shape powerful institutional archives like those of the RGS-IBG, I have sought to reconstruct firstly the wider dataset of all expeditionary applications for RGS support, and secondly the expeditionary experiences of women on some of those expeditions. Both phases of this research has involved careful reconstruction from fragmented sources. This has therefore necessitated careful attention to the gaps and silences within sources, as well as to their explicit content; triangulating between a variety of different sources, in order to corroborate and validate the history presented here, while also remaining aware of the partiality of both sources and that reconstructed history; and being open to using a wide variety of sources, so as to democratize, destabilize, and extend what counts as an archival source. Paying attention to context, including (auto)biographical context, helps to lay the groundwork for exploring a range of key themes which emerge from this study. In the next
chapter, which seeks to map out women’s participation in RGS-supported expeditionary work between 1913 and 1939, reconstruction of these biographical elements helps to support a discussion of key themes around women’s ability to gain support for their expeditionary work during this period, including an examination of the role of the RGS and its networks in helping or hindering them to gain that support.
CHAPTER 4: MAPPING TERRA INCOGNITA, PART 1. 1913-1945

Introduction

This chapter will map out the previously unknown territory of women's participation in RGS-supported expeditions between 1913 and 1945. It will begin by discussing the significance of the change in the RGS's Fellowship admission policy with regard to women in 1913, and the opening up of potential avenues of expeditionary support that this represented, drawing on the existing literature on this topic. It will then go on to discuss key changes and trends in the first part of my research period, from the admission of women to the Fellowship of the RGS to the outbreak of the Second World War, before closing with a discussion of the RGS's halt in supporting expeditionary work during the war.

The chapter will situate individual expeditions within the wider trends around women's expeditionary participation. In particular, it will examine their network participation and processes of accreditation, within an analysis of the RGS as a collection of interlinked and sometimes competing networks. It will consider in turn three major criteria which were key to gaining RGS support: expertise, including levels of education and particular qualifications; experience, in terms of previous expeditionary work or travel of the kind proposed; and appropriate sociability and network participation, which I have described as fellowship/Fellowship, in both senses of the term.1 All three sections will consider both direct and indirect applications from women, and will highlight the importance of their participation in RGS-based networks, and in other institutional and familial networks.

The chapter will argue that while some high-profile women made the most of their Fellowship and social and professional connections with the RGS, applying directly to the Society to gain support for their planned expeditionary work, other women continued to

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1 That is, fellowship in terms of appropriate sociability, and literal Fellowship of the RGS.
make use of other networks and opportunities available to them, without direct contact with the Society. As Avril Maddrell notes in her own ground-breaking study of women’s geographical work, as well as considering women-focused networks and women’s achievements in negotiating male-dominated networks, it is also important to recognise the supportive role played by many men, as colleagues, friends, and relatives (Maddrell, 2009a). The chapter will also explore the policies, aims, and anxieties of the Society around supporting expeditionary work during this period, and thereby the ways in which it played a hegemonic role in defining expeditions both epistemologically and methodologically. I begin by considering the significance of the 1913 decision to admit women to the Fellowship of the RGS.

The significance of 1913

This thesis takes as its start date the permanent admission of women to the Fellowship of the RGS in 1913. This was an important institutional change, which opened up new avenues of potential support for, and participation in, expeditionary work for women. It was also of great symbolic, if not immediately practical, significance for the status of women within geography, and as geographers, and for women’s relationship with the RGS itself (Evans, Keighren and Maddrell, 2013). As such, it provides important context for a discussion of women’s RGS-supported expeditionary work.

Background to the 1913 decision

The election of 163 women to the Fellowship over the course of 1913, overturning previous policy that had explicitly excluded women, put an end to a long-running controversy which had begun in earnest in 1887. The ‘Lady Question’ had first been raised as early as 1847, a mere 17 years after the foundation of the RGS, and women had a presence at the Society throughout the second half of the nineteenth century. Women
were granted the right of admission (albeit as guests of male Fellows) to RGS meetings in 1852-3, and the Society awarded medals to Lady Jane Franklin in 1860, and Mary Somerville in 1869, although neither woman was proposed for Fellowship. By the debates in the early 1890s, a woman, Queen Victoria, had been patron of the Society for all but the first seven years of its existence (Bell and McEwan, 1996; Maddrell, 2009a). However, throughout this period, with the exception of the 22 female Fellows admitted between 1892 and 1893, women’s participation in the networks of the RGS was dependent on their connections with male friends and relatives, who they employed as proxies and intercessories to gain access to the spaces and facilities of the Society. For example, the eminent traveller Isabella Bird (Bishop) had to borrow books under the name of her male publishers (Maddrell, 2009a).

As discussed in Chapter 2, Maddrell notes that it was ‘no small thing for women geographers to be excluded from having the status and benefits offered by the hegemonic RGS, not least the opportunity to be trained in surveying and related expeditionary skills at a time when such methods were at the heart of the subject’s epistemology and therefore the definition of what it meant to be a “geographer”.’ (Maddrell, 2009a, pp. 316-317). As this makes clear, the question of women’s ability to undertake expeditionary work was central to the debates around women’s status as geographers, and subsequent fitness for Fellowship of the Society. Women were not only limited in their access to opportunities for participation in expeditionary work, and for the training that could have enabled further opportunities; when women did undertake adventurous travel or expeditionary fieldwork of this kind, their achievements were often downplayed and not recognised.

The question of women’s Fellowship was discussed seriously in 1887, no decision being made, and then again in 1890, when the Council of the RGS approved the principle of admitting women, and agreed to revisit the issue when evidence of women’s appetite for Fellowship had emerged (Bell and McEwan, 1996). This decision was taken in a context of gradual, and contested, advances in women’s basic rights over the previous 30 years, including the Married Women’s Property Act of 1870, which allowed women to retain
ownership of property held before marriage; and the Enabling Act of 1876, which gave universities the ability to grant degrees to women, with the University of London being the first UK institution to do so from 1878 (Maddrell, 2009a). By 1892, several women had applied to the RGS for admission, and in July of that year the Council accordingly resolved to admit men and women on ‘equal terms and conditions’ (Bell and McEwan, 1996, p. 296), publicizing their decision to the wider Fellowship and to the broader public in July and early August. This brought the RGS into line with a number of other metropolitan learned societies which admitted women, such as the Zoological, Botanical, and Anthropological Societies, and with the non-metropolitan regional geographical societies, such as those at Manchester (1884), Tyneside (1887), and Liverpool (1891), which had admitted women from the dates of their foundations (Maddrell, 2009a).

Importantly, the decision to admit women also brought the RGS into line with the Royal Scottish Geographical Society (RSGS) (founded in 1884), a serious rival to the RGS whose membership policies – also admitting women from its foundation – had brought the two societies into conflict. The rivalry between the two societies was partly responsible for triggering the RGS Council’s decision, and the subsequent membership debates. The RSGS had suggested reciprocal membership, so that meetings of either society were open to the members of the other, a relatively common practice at that time for learned societies. The suggestion was rejected by the RGS, at least partly because of the women members of the RSGS, whom the RGS would have been forced to admit in their own right rather than as the guests of men (Maddrell, 2009a). As a result, the RSGS established a London branch for its own meetings, positioning itself as having a broader scope than the RGS, not least because of its acknowledgement that women could produce geographical knowledge. As if to underline the point, Isabella Bird, one of the founding members of the RSGS, spoke at its second London meeting in 1892 (Maddrell 2009a).

Shortly afterwards, Bird was invited by the RGS Secretary Douglas Freshfield to speak to the RGS. Her reply has been much cited, even mythologised, as the flashpoint which triggered the Council’s decision to admit women, and the subsequent debates
around the ‘Lady Question’, not least by Freshfield himself. Bird declined due to ill health, adding that she ‘did not feel disposed to appear before a Society which would not receive her as a Fellow when she already belonged to another Geographical Society which was equally anxious to hear her’ (Mill, 1930, p. 108). Dorothy Middleton, in keeping with her overall portrayal of women travellers as plucky and determined ladies getting their own way, depicts Bird here as ‘something of a lioness’ and, if not the instigator, certainly a key player in the controversy and the decision to admit women (Middleton, 1965 [1982], p. 11), as does Mill. However, as Maddrell notes, Bird was far more reticent and defensive about her status as a geographer and her role in the heated controversy, and several other women had already sought membership in more explicit terms (Maddrell, 2009a). In addition, given that the annual subscription for Fellows was raised in 1893, the Council may have also been motivated by financial imperatives to open the Society to qualified women and the income they would bring in (Maddrell, 2009a; Evans, Keighren and Maddrell, 2013).

22 women were duly elected to the Fellowship between November 1892 and March 1893, including Bird herself, who would later become the first woman to read a paper before the RGS in 1897 (Middleton, 1965 [1982]). However, there was a sustained and significant backlash, in which the progressive leanings of the Council were overridden by the anxieties of a small but determined faction within the Fellowship (Mill, 1930; Middleton, 1965 [1982]; Bell and McEwan, 1996; Maddrell, 2009a). The backlash was largely successful; it resulted in the eventual decision to admit no further women, although the 22 existing women Fellows were permitted to remain. Freshfield, who had done much to promote and secure the admission of women Fellows, resigned from his post as Honorary Secretary in 1894 in disgust (Maddrell, 2009a).
**Key concerns in the debates**

In what Mill called the ‘tragi-comedy of the Lady-Fellows’ (Mill, 1930, p. 136), a number of concerns drove the regressive faction; these centred on questions of science, socialisation, and space, and were closely intertwined (Evans, Keighren and Maddrell, 2013). Firstly, there were concerns about women’s capacity for producing geographical knowledge, as perceived in accordance with contemporary gendered norms of knowledge production, and the impact that admitting women might have on the perceived scientific value of Fellowship (Birkett, 1989; Domosh, 1991a; Blunt 1994; Bell and McEwan, 1996; Maddrell, 2009a). Such concerns were closely linked to women’s inability to participate in explicit expeditionary work, and to the downplaying and dismissal of any such work that they might successfully undertake.

This was closely linked to the second set of concerns: that the presence of women might turn the RGS into a ‘tea-party association’, and detract from scientific and ‘manly’ discussion at meetings. This anxiety is potentially connected to concerns earlier in the nineteenth century about the so-called feminisation of Section E – Geography at the meetings of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, due to the keen interest of female attendees in the geography sessions, and the potential threat of a subsequent devaluation of its scientific content and positioning as a sociable rather than serious science (Higgitt and Withers, 2008). It is also closely linked to explicit concerns about the governance of the RGS, as articulated by several of the dissenting Fellows, who were concerned about women being able to stand for Council, or having a say in the running of the Society (Maddrell, 2009a).

Finally, the third set of concerns, which focused on questions of space, stated that there was no room for an influx of women in the Society’s then restricted premises in Savile Row, and that such an incursion would potentially displace better qualified – for which read male – Fellows from Society meetings. Such concerns can also be read as

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2 George Nathaniel Curzon to Fellows, 24 October 1912, Additional Papers 93/2ii, RGS-IBG Archives.
seeking to preserve the homosocial spaces of the RGS, and thereby objecting to the bodily presence of women (Maddrell, 2009a). However, women had been permitted to attend evening and afternoon meetings since the mid-nineteenth century, albeit as the guests of male Fellows. According to Mill, by the late nineteenth century women were present in large numbers at the evening meetings and the informal conversaziones which followed, and at the popular annual dinner and soiree (Mill, 1930, p. 107). Differing from Maddrell’s reading, I suggest that the objection to women’s bodily presence was therefore conditional rather than absolute, having more to do with excluding women from particular, perhaps more privileged, spaces, or spaces of power and control within the institution, such that the RGS as a whole remained strongly male-dominated.

Under this view the RGS becomes a series of bounded and shifting spaces, which are temporally as well as spatially positioned, and which are subject to varying degrees of exclusion. All three sets of concerns were also related to class anxieties, as can be seen in the desire stated by some of the rebels to exclude schoolteachers from their definition of geographer, a group that included women and lower middle class people (Maddrell, 2009a). This can also be read as an attempt to preserve certain spaces of the RGS – its meetings, its library, its Council and Committees - as upper class spaces.³

The key point in 1913

Pressure continued to build over the next 20 years as women, including those who had published in the Society’s journals or lectured to Society meetings, continued to push for admittance, and supporters within the RGS continued to press the issue (Maddrell, 2009a). By the time that the question was raised again in the early 1910s, the situation had changed dramatically, both at the RGS and in wider society, and as Bell and McEwan put it, the ‘absurdity of the RGS position [had become] manifold’ (Bell and McEwan, 1996 p. 300; Maddrell, 2009a). The situation was one of substantially increased rights for women, and

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³ Again, this is conditional rather than absolute, given the working-class servants likely to have been physically present at certain times in the Society’s buildings during this period.
greater participation by them in public life. Women had established a strong presence in the universities and an increasing membership of the professions, with the struggle for universal suffrage gathering momentum. The debates around female suffrage in particular helped to influence debates at the RGS (Bell and McEwan, 1996).

When the decision to permanently admit women was made at a special meeting in January 1913, earlier concerns about space, socialisation, and science had been alleviated by a number of changes and advances (Evans, Keighren and Maddrell, 2013), although the decision was still contested, and a minority of Fellows remained opposed (Bell and McEwan, 1996; Maddrell, 2009a). Women had amply demonstrated their ability to produce geographical knowledge, with a number of women including Gertrude Bell, Olive MacLeod, and Ellen Churchill Semple, lecturing before the Society, and a number of women publishing in the Society’s journals (Maddrell, 2009a; Keighren, 2010). Innes Keighren argues that it was exposure to Semple, and her scholarship and ideas in particular, which helped to ‘cement – or, at least, to render less disingenuous’ the RGS President Lord Curzon’s change of heart and new commitment to the admission of women, although Curzon remained resolutely opposed to female suffrage (Keighren, 2010, p. 103). Indeed, known suffragettes were prohibited from becoming Fellows (Bell and McEwan, 1996).

Meanwhile, concerns about space had been addressed by the Society’s move to Lowther Lodge, a more spacious house in Kensington Gore, in 1913, with a substantial programme of extensions planned by the Council. It seems likely that the final impetus for the decision to admit women was connected with the move, and with the need to finance the planned building programme, so that the decision to admit women was ultimately made for pragmatic rather than principled reasons. Mill argues that Curzon ‘saw a valuable source of income in the fees of future lady Fellows’ (Mill, 1930, p. 182), although as Keighren notes, this was not stated explicitly, with Curzon focusing on women’s geographical achievements in his official pronouncements (Keighren, 2010). In promoting the changes to the wider Fellowship, Curzon’s ‘tactic of persuasion lay in emphasizing
continuity and consolidation rather than radical change’ (Bell and McEwan, 1996, p. 298). The decision to admit women resulted in a ‘remarkable increase’ in the membership, income, resources, and energies of the RGS (Curzon, 1914; Bell and McEwan, 1996) and a revival in the Society's fortunes.

Aftermath and long-term impact

The permanent admission of women to the Fellowship of the RGS can be read in two ways. It can be seen as the crossing of a symbolic Rubicon, which represented a step of profound symbolic importance for the public image of the RGS and for women’s status within geography (Bell and McEwan, 1996; Evans, Maddrell and Keighren, 2013). The significance of the fact that elected women were now able to access the resources, spaces, and networks of the Society in their own right, rather than having to go through male proxies, should not be understated, nor should the appetite of interested female geographers for gaining that access. 163 women were elected to the Fellowship in 1913, and the number of women Fellows continued to increase steadily thereafter, even when the overall strength of the Fellowship was in decline (Evans, Maddrell and Keighren, 2013). The decision also, and perhaps more importantly, recognised the capacity of women for producing geographical knowledge, and their right to be recognised as having that status (Bell and McEwan, 1996; Maddrell, 2007, 2009a; Evans, Maddrell and Keighren, 2013).

However, it is also important to acknowledge that access alone does not guarantee equality. The decision to admit women can also be read, in terms of women's access to the support and spaces of the male-dominated RGS, more as a diffuse permeable frontier zone than as a line in the sand. Within this frontier zone, there were both significant breaks and continuities with the pre-Fellowship period, with many women continuing to access expeditionary space through male proxies (Evans, Keighren and Maddrell, 2013). Fellowship conferred upon women the right to borrow from the Society's library and to
attend lectures and meetings in their own right (at a time when women who were not Fellows, guests of Fellows, or known students were excluded from the Society's premises for fear of militant suffragette activity).\footnote{Minutes of Council 23 March 1914, Council Minutes vol. 9 p. 76, RGS-IBG Archives.} It is, however, difficult to map these more everyday activities, or their impact on women Fellows' geographical knowledge production, as historical records of book loans have not been kept, and lists of attendees at meetings were not taken (although women are occasionally recorded in the Society's journal as having contributed to discussions of lectures, as discussed in Chapter 8).

The activities that have left traces in the RGS archives, and elsewhere, are those of publications and awards, which show a number of continuities with the pre-Fellowship period. Acknowledging her existing status as an acclaimed scholar and travel writer, Bell was awarded the Gill Memorial Prize by the RGS in 1913, almost immediately after being admitted in the first cohort of new women Fellows. She famously requested to have the prize in the form of a small, portable theodolite for use on her expeditions, which now resides in the Society's collections. She was provided with training in its use by the Society, and took it on her next expedition later in 1913 (O'Brien 2000; Maddrell 2009a).\footnote{Although unusual, the RGS did occasionally give gifts of equipment to support ongoing expeditionary work by particularly favoured or high-status individuals like Bell, and so despite the overlap here with a retrospective form of recognition of achievement – the prize itself – I have included Bell's Hayyil expedition in my dataset, and she, alongside Katherine Routledge, is one of the first two women to appear in it. See Figure 6.}

Maddrell has also demonstrated evidence of other women, including Bird and Violet Cressy-Marcks, benefiting from Society training in surveying after becoming Fellows (Maddrell 2004c, 2009a).

Lecturing before the Society, publishing in its journal, and receiving its awards, were not restricted to Fellows, and were thus open to women before 1913. However, women's participation in these activities was rare, and as mentioned above the women in question tended to be high profile and high status, such as Bell, Bird, or Semple. After the permanent admission of women, the expertise of exceptional women continued to be recognised in these ways, but the number nevertheless remained small in the first decades after 1913. Women also continued to access the resources of the RGS through male
proxies; this was particularly the case for the expeditionary work supported by the Society.

Certain spaces within the RGS – its governing bodies and staff – remained closed to women even as Fellows and did not begin to open up until the late 1920s. These spaces illustrate the ways in which women could contribute to and support expeditionary work through the Society without necessarily participating in expeditions, which have been uncovered by my research. This period was another time of transition for the RGS, linked to the completion of its building programme in time for its centenary in 1930, and within the wider context of the extension of the franchise to women on equal terms with men in 1928. As with the earlier Fellowship decision, this was also a period of financial upheaval for the Society, as the general financial climate of the Great Depression resulted in significant losses from cancelled Fellowship subscriptions.6

Women were not employed by the RGS until 1929, when Elizabeth Fea was appointed as assistant editor of the Geographical Journal.7 Fea’s appointment overturned a policy passed less than two years earlier which had explicitly excluded women from being employed by the Society.8 From this point on women continued to be employed in small numbers. One particularly interesting case is that of Mrs Wade, who was first employed by the RGS in 1939 as an advisor to organizers of future expeditions. The Society was anxious to retain her services on the basis of her ‘long experience in expedition work for the Mount Everest Committee, the British Graham Land Expedition, and other expeditions’, and it was agreed by Council that ‘the sum of £1 per week should be provided, perhaps by an advance from the Expedition Fund, to retain the services of Mrs. Wade for a further two days per week, and that Fellows making use of her services should be charged for her time.’9

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6 RGS Council Annual Reports 1919-1947, RGS-IBG Archives.
8 Minutes of Finance Committee, 12 December 1927, Committee Minutes Vol. 1926-1929, p. 83, RGS-IBG Archives.
9 Minutes of Council 20 March 1939, Council Minutes vol. 16, p. 12, RGS-IBG Archives. Wade was not the only female staff member who was involved in supporting expeditionary work during the period of this
It was also during this period of transition that a woman, Elizabeth Wilhelmina Ness (better known, in the gendered nomenclature of the day, as Mrs Patrick Ness), was first elected to Council, and to the Society’s committees, in 1930, a hundred years after the founding of the RGS (Maddrell, 2009a). The appointment of other women quickly followed, including Eva Taylor, Blanche Hosgood, and Gertrude Caton-Thompson (Maddrell 2009a). A wealthy socialite who travelled widely, Ness had become a Fellow in 1918 and was a regular donor to the Expedition Fund, eventually establishing the Mrs Patrick Ness Award in 1953. In this, Ness was not alone, being one of a number of wealthy women who supported the Society with funds, some of which were earmarked for expeditionary work.

Ness’s breaching of the barrier preventing women from participating in the governing bodies of the RGS seems to have occurred for similarly pragmatic reasons to those which helped drive the 1913 permanent admission of women. In March 1928, Ness wrote to Arthur Hinks (the then RGS Secretary) that:

I, as well as other people, have noted with regret & some surprise, that, since all papers however good or bad that are read before the Society find some mention in the daily papers, the fact that a woman has once more lectured (after a lapse of years) at an evening meeting has been carefully omitted. With regard to your recent question as to whether I would help some geographical expeditions financially, I regret to say, that at the moment I am not inclined to do so, though, I need hardly add, that since the £250 is promised for the Blue Nile Expedition it will be forthcoming if required at some future date not too remote.12

study. In the 1960s Miss S. Muir was employed as the Director’s assistant. (see Minutes of Finance Committee 10 December 1962, Committee Minutes vol. 1962-1964, p. 414, RGS-IBG Archives). Muir appears to have been responsible for creating and maintaining the records of applications and decisions that now form the basis of the Expeditions Grants paperwork, which has been so central to the analysis of the later years of this study. Her name appears on many of these documents from 1963 onwards, suggesting that the records are compiled from her copies. The way that the collection is organised suggests that it began to be kept together around the time that she was appointed in 1963. Whilst outside the scope of this thesis, there is potential for further research into both Mrs Wade and Miss Muir, and the role played by early female staff members within the twentieth-century RGS.

12 Wilhelmina Elizabeth [Mrs Patrick] Ness to Arthur Hinks, March 22 1928, Correspondence Block 9 Mrs Patrick Ness 1921-1930, RGS-IBG Archives.
Ness’s key point here is that her paper had not been publicised properly, as any other, male-authored, paper would have been, ‘however good or bad’. In her use of the phrase ‘carefully omitted’, she also implies that this was a deliberate decision, one that sought to avoid drawing attention to the fact that the Society was allowing a woman to lecture in its programme of evening meetings. That is, Ness argues that the Society had failed to publicise her paper because of her gender, regardless of its perceived quality. Equally clearly, Ness was unwilling to countenance such unequal treatment, and instead asserts her right to be taken seriously, using the means available to her as an independently wealthy woman who could withdraw funding from the RGS.

In this use of leverage to combat gender discrimination, there are some parallels with the earlier example of Bird’s refusal to lecture to the RGS (i.e. withholding something they wanted) which, as discussed above, was instrumental in the debates around women’s access to the Fellowship. Less than two years after this letter was sent, Ness joined the Council of the RGS. No discussion of the decision to elect Ness to Council is recorded in the minutes, or in letters between Ness, Hinks, and other Council members. Nonetheless, it seems likely that in awarding her this honour, the other Council members were seeking to ensure her continued good relationship with the Society and thus a continued stream of funding, particularly since Ness had been a key contributor to the Building Fund.13

Although it would be very interesting to explore what impact the presence of women on the RGS Council and Committees had on the likelihood of a women-involved expedition gaining support, there is little evidence in the available sources. During this period, the decision to support a particular expedition still rested with Council or with the Expeditions Committee (in its various iterations). The minute of these meetings sometimes record discussion about a given decision, but it is more usual that they only give the outcome of a discussion. After the Second World War, when the process for considering applications, and the ways in which the process was recorded, changed significantly, as discussed in Chapter 5, even less detail of discussions was recorded.

Whilst the earlier period is more likely to have discussions recorded, only the last ten years cover a period when there were women sitting on Council and the various Committees. It is unsurprising, therefore, that there is little recorded evidence of women’s participation in the decision-making processes around supporting expeditions.

**Key criteria**

There is one example of a female Council or Committee member getting involved in such discussion, although not, as far as can be seen from the surviving evidence, for a woman-participating expedition. This comes from Gertrude Caton-Thompson’s time on Council and the Expeditions Committee in the mid-1930s, and concerns plans by a Mr G. M. Dyott for an expedition to New Guinea with significant anthropological components, including photographing local tribespeople. During discussion by the Council, Caton-Thompson raised concerns about Dyott’s level of professional expertise, as he was not an anthropologist, and that Dyott’s planned expedition ‘would not be very welcome to professional anthropologists’.\(^\text{14}\) In a letter Hinks sought to reassure Caton-Thompson that Dyott was a ‘first rate photographer, a very good traveller who manages an expedition well, and a nice quiet fellow’ whose expedition ‘might provide an excellent opportunity of a first rate anthropologist going in good conditions’.\(^\text{15}\) After further discussion, the Society committed to supporting the expedition.\(^\text{16}\) The recorded discussion shows Caton-Thompson participating fully in decision-making, and basing her interventions on her own professional expertise and knowledge (although, ultimately, her expertise was ignored). It is probable that Caton-Thompson, and other female members of Council and Committee,

\(^{14}\) Minutes of Expedition Committee, 12 November, 1934, Committee Minutes vol. 1932-1938, p. 135, RGS-IBG Archives.

\(^{15}\) Arthur Hinks to Gertrude Caton-Thompson, December 3\(^{rd}\), 1934, Correspondence Block 9 Gertrude Caton-Thompson 1925-1940, RGS-IBG Archives.

participated in a similar fashion in other discussions, but the format of the sources means that this has not been recorded.

Importantly, the quotation from Hinks also gives insight into the criteria by which applicants were informally assessed during this period. These include a high level of expertise in their particular expeditionary skill-set – in Dyott’s case, that of photography; significant prior experience of expeditionary travel, and the ability to successfully manage an expedition; and of conforming to particular social expectations and norms – of being a ‘nice quiet fellow’ – and therefore, implicitly, ‘one of us’ to those on the Committee. The implicit (and presumably unintended) pun here on fellow/Fellow is also useful for understanding these processes of accreditation, in the sense that it highlights how such credentials, whether formal or informal in the sense of performing appropriate sociability or clubbability, could help with network participation.

These three criteria – expertise, experience, and sociability – can be observed to varying degrees in other expeditions applying for support, including those with female participants, and are key to understanding how applicants gained support for their expeditionary work. They were often closely bound up together and so can be difficult to tease apart. Expertise and experience helped to establish oneself credibly as deserving of the status of Fellow, whilst having such status, supported by adhering to appropriate norms of sociability, helped to open doors to gaining further experience and further honing of expertise. The next section of this chapter will first map out the two major modes of participation in expeditionary work for women during this period, before considering each of these three criteria in turn.
Mapping terra incognita: 1913-1939

Modes of participation

Between 1913 and 1939 there were a number of different types of RGS-supported expeditions. These included expeditions which the RGS had organised or agreed to sponsor; expeditions organised and sponsored by other learned societies, such as the Royal Anthropological Institute (RAI); and a handful of university-backed undergraduate and research staff expeditions. A number of applications were also from ‘private’ expeditions; that is, expeditions without direct institutional origin, although members of these expeditions were often closely networked with universities and learned societies, from which the expeditions often received support and sanction. During this period, applications were considered as they came in throughout the year by the Council. Over the course of the 1930s this responsibility was gradually devolved to the Research and Expeditions Committees, although the Council still checked and approved the decisions.17 Although the Finance Committee kept an eye on the amount of financial support given, and the Instruments Committee on loans of instruments, the process appears to have been largely an informal one, with an outcome dependent on being connected to or part of the networks of the Society.

In the years immediately after 1913, there were very few women-participating expeditions supported by the RGS. In the first eight years of women’s Fellowship, there is evidence of only four applications from expeditions with female participants. These are: Bell’s expedition to Hayyil in Arabia in 1913-1914 (O’Brien, 2000; Maddrell, 2009a); Ness’s unsuccessful application for a journey in South America in 1920; and the two

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17 Throughout the period covered by my study there were regular reorganisations of the Committees that covered research and expeditions. At times there were two separate ‘Research’ and ‘Expeditions’ committees, and at others a single ‘Research and Expeditions Committee’.
Routledge expeditions in which Katherine Routledge\textsuperscript{18} was a participant, to Rapanui (Easter Island) in 1913-1916, and to the Pacific in 1920 (Routledge, 1917; Routledge, 1919 [2005]; van Tilburg, 2003). These early expeditions, although few in number, illustrate the two main patterns of women’s participation in RGS-supported expeditions during this period: of applying directly to the RGS themselves; and of participating in expeditions where someone else had made the application. Between 1913 and 1939 there were 19 applications directly from women requesting RGS support, as can be seen in Figure 6.

Figure 6: Direct applications from women

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of participants</th>
<th>Form of support</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Destination</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Gertrude Bell</td>
<td>Approval, gift of instrument</td>
<td>1913</td>
<td>Hayyil, Arabia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Wilhelmina Elizabeth Ness</td>
<td>No support given (requested letter of introduction)</td>
<td>1920</td>
<td>South America</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Rosita Forbes</td>
<td>Approval, loan of instruments</td>
<td>1921</td>
<td>Mecca, Arabia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Winifred Blackman</td>
<td>No support given (requested approval)</td>
<td>1924</td>
<td>Egypt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 Gertrude Caton-Thompson and Elinor Gardner</td>
<td>Approval, training</td>
<td>1925</td>
<td>Fayum, Egypt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Mrs Scott-Brown</td>
<td>No support given</td>
<td>1926</td>
<td>Kalambo Falls,</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\textsuperscript{18} In the case of women who had changed their name over the course of their life, such as by taking a husband’s name at marriage, I will throughout this thesis use the name by which they were known at the time of the expeditionary work in question.

\textsuperscript{19} O’Brien, 2000; Maddrell, 2009a.

\textsuperscript{20} Wilhelmina Elizabeth [Mrs Patrick] Ness to Arthur Hinks, 5 November 1920, Correspondence Block 9 Mrs Patrick Ness 1921-1930, RGS-IBG Archives; Arthur Hinks to Wilhelmina Elizabeth [Mrs Patrick] Ness, 22 November 1920, Correspondence Block 9 Mrs Patrick Ness 1921-1930, RGS-IBG Archives; Arthur Hinks to Sir Maurice de Bunsen, 23 November 1920, Correspondence Block 9 Mrs Patrick Ness 1921-1930, RGS-IBG Archives; Wilhelmina Elizabeth [Mrs Patrick] Ness to Arthur Hinks, 30 November 1920, Correspondence Block 9 Mrs Patrick Ness 1921-1930, RGS-IBG Archives.


\textsuperscript{23} Gertrude Caton-Thompson to Arthur Hinks, August 11 1925, Correspondence Block 9 Gertrude Caton-Thompson 1925-40, RGS-IBG Archives.

\textsuperscript{24} Minutes of Council 8 February 1926, Council Minutebooks vol. 12, p. 32, RGS-IBG Archives.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Name(s)</th>
<th>Action</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>725</td>
<td>Gertrude Caton-Thompson and Elinor Gardner</td>
<td>Approval, grant of £25</td>
<td>1927</td>
<td>Fayum, Egypt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>826</td>
<td>Margaret Hasluck</td>
<td>Approval?, loan of instruments</td>
<td>1929</td>
<td>Albania</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>927</td>
<td>Gertrude Caton-Thompson and Elinor Gardner</td>
<td>Approval, grant of £5/year for 3 years</td>
<td>1930</td>
<td>Kharga Oasis, Egypt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1028</td>
<td>Freya Stark</td>
<td>Approval, training</td>
<td>1931</td>
<td>Luristan, Persia</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1129</td>
<td>Louise Boyd</td>
<td>No support given? (requested approval)</td>
<td>1931</td>
<td>Canadian Arctic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1230</td>
<td>Louise Boyd</td>
<td>Approval</td>
<td>1933</td>
<td>Arctic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1331</td>
<td>R Dawson</td>
<td>Approval?, loan of instruments</td>
<td>1933</td>
<td>Labrador</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1432</td>
<td>Freya Stark</td>
<td>Approval, loan of instruments</td>
<td>1935</td>
<td>Hadhramaut, Yemen</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1533</td>
<td>Kate Ricardo and Janet Owen</td>
<td>Approval, grant of £20</td>
<td>1936</td>
<td>Central and East Africa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1634</td>
<td>Freya Stark, Gertrude</td>
<td>Approval, grant of</td>
<td>1937</td>
<td>Hadhramaut,</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

25 Meeting of Council 2 April 1928, Council Minutebooks vol. 12. p. 190 RGS-IBG Archives; Arthur Hinks to Gertrude Caton-Thompson, April 3rd, 1928, Correspondence Block 9 Gertrude Caton-Thompson 1925-40, RGS-IBG Archives; Gertrude Caton-Thompson to Arthur Hinks, Fayum. 28 April 1928, Correspondence Block 9 Gertrude Caton-Thompson 1925-40, RGS-IBG Archives.


34 Minutes of Expeditions Committee 1 February 1937, Committee Minutes, vol 1932-1938, p. 257, RGS-IBG Archives; Minutes of Expedition Committee 29 November 1937, Committee Minutes, vol. 1932-1938, p. 293, RGS-IBG Archives; Minutes of Expeditions Committee 31 January 1938, Committee Minutes, vol. 1932-1938, p. 309, RGS-IBG Archives. The confirmation of the decision came whilst the expedition was in the field, as had happened with the earlier Fayum expedition grant. The allocation of grants in such fashion seems to have been a relatively common practice during this period.
For all the applications for support, throughout my period of study, it was not necessary for every member of the expeditionary team to have direct contact with the RGS. Generally speaking, applications came from one or two members of the expeditionary team, and, except perhaps for its ‘own’ expeditions, the RGS did not need to have direct contact with other members of the team prior to departure, although it might enquire as to their suitability. The RGS seems to have primarily concerned itself with the credibility of applicants and leaders of expeditions; once satisfied with their expertise and judgement, it could then take their word for the suitability of other team members, in most circumstances. As a result, most team members technically accessed the resources which supported their expeditionary work through someone else. Their involvement became dependent on demonstrating their credentials to other members of the team, through more informal processes of network participation and accreditation.

During this period there were two main ways for women to participate indirectly in expeditions. The first was that of participating alongside a male spouse or relative; the second was participating as a credentialed expert alongside unrelated male colleagues. There was a great deal of overlap between these two categories, in that many of the married women had their own credentials and participated in the scientific as well as the logistical work. Of the 23 applications from women-participating expeditions between

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Application, Loan of Instruments</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1735</td>
<td>Miss Sproule</td>
<td>Approval?, loan of instruments</td>
<td>1938, Scotland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1836</td>
<td>Miss De Beer</td>
<td>Approval?, loan of instruments</td>
<td>1939, China</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1937</td>
<td>Olive Murray Chapman</td>
<td>Approval?, loan of instruments</td>
<td>1939, Madagascar</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1913 and 1939, where a woman did not make the application, 18 included women who were participating alongside their husbands or brothers; that is, 78% of all such applications (see Figure 7).

**Figure 7: women participating without directly applying**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name of male applicant, relation to female participants</th>
<th>Name of female participants</th>
<th>Form of support</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Destination</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>William Scoresby Routledge, husband to KR</td>
<td>Katherine Routledge</td>
<td>Approval, loan of instruments</td>
<td>1913</td>
<td>Rapanui (Easter Island)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>William Scoresby Routledge, husband to KR</td>
<td>Katherine Routledge</td>
<td>Approval, loan of instruments</td>
<td>1920</td>
<td>Pacific</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sir Kenneth Mackenzie/Major Douglas (St George Expedition), unrelated</td>
<td>Lucy Evelyn Cheesman, Cynthia Longfield</td>
<td>Approval, loan of instruments, no grant</td>
<td>1924</td>
<td>Pacific</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mr Rey, husband to Mrs Rey</td>
<td>Mrs Rey</td>
<td>Approval</td>
<td>1922</td>
<td>Abyssinia, East Africa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C A Barns, husband to Mrs Barns</td>
<td>Mrs Barns, Mary Steele</td>
<td>Approval, letter of introduction</td>
<td>1923</td>
<td>Congo, Africa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frederick Mitchell</td>
<td>Mabel</td>
<td>Advice, rather than</td>
<td>1923</td>
<td>Central</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

38 Minutes of Council June 24 1912, Council Minutebooks vol. 8 p. 243, RGS-IBG Archives; Routledge, 1917, 1919; van Tilburg, 2003. Although the preparation for this expedition took place before 1913, they did not set sail until May 1913, and so it has been included in the dataset.


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Hedges, unrelated</th>
<th>Richmond Brown</th>
<th>approval</th>
<th>America</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Frederick Mitchell, unrelated</td>
<td>Mabel Richmond Brown</td>
<td>Approval</td>
<td>Central America</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Victor Findlay, husband to Mrs Findlay</td>
<td>Mrs Findlay</td>
<td>Approval, grant, and loan of instruments. Expedition cancelled 1926</td>
<td>New Guinea</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Mr MacCallum, husband to Mrs MacCallum</td>
<td>Mrs MacCallum</td>
<td>No support given [requested assistance with transport arrangements]</td>
<td>Trans-Europe journey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Mr Rey, husband to Mrs Rey</td>
<td>Mrs Rey</td>
<td>Approval and large grant of £470. Expedition postponed</td>
<td>Blue Nile, East Africa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Stanley Gardiner (Great Barrier Reef Expedition)</td>
<td>Martha Jane ‘Mattie’ Yonge (husband also)</td>
<td>Approval and large grant of £500</td>
<td>Great Barrier Reef, Australia</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


47 Minutes of Council 7 November 1927, Council Minutebooks vol. 12. p. 142, RGS-IBG Archives; Minutes of Expedition Committee 8 November 1926, Committee Minutes vol. 1926-1929, p. 34, RGS-IBG Archives; Minutes of Expedition Committee 5 March 1928, Committee Minutes vol. 1926-1929, p. 107, RGS-IBG Archives.

48 Minutes of Council 23 January 1928, Council Minutebooks vol. 12. p. 168, RGS-IBG Archives; Royal Geographical Society. *Report of the Council, dated 13 May 1929, to be presented at the Anniversary Meeting of 24 June, 1929, 1929, p. 6, RGS Council Reports 1919-1947 [bound volume], RGS-IBG Archives. Spender, 1930a, 1930b; Yonge, 2004. This expedition is an interesting case, in that the RGS gave support to the Geographical Section of the expedition rather than to the expedition as a whole (Steers, 1929a, 1929b). The Geographical Section formally consisted of two men, J. A. Steers and Michael Spender, with assistance from E. C. Marchant. Whilst the Geographical Section was described as an independent unit, it is clear from the involvement of Anne Stephenson, wife of Thomas Alan Stephenson (one of the expedition’s biologists), who served as survey assistant to Steers and Spender, that the teams were integrated and worked closely together (Spender, 1930a, 1930b; Yonge, 2004).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No.</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Name(s)</th>
<th>Approval, Grant, and Loan of Instruments</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>1928</td>
<td>Louis Leakey, husband of Frida Leakey</td>
<td>Approval, grant of £50, loan of instruments</td>
<td></td>
<td>Rift Valley, East Africa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Frida Leakey, Mrs Cecely Creasey and Miss Elizabeth Kitson</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>1930</td>
<td>Edgar Barton Worthington, husband of Stella Worthington</td>
<td>Approval, grant, and loan of instruments</td>
<td></td>
<td>East Africa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>(Cambridge East African Expedition)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Stella Worthington</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>1930</td>
<td>German Swiss Kanchenjuna Expedition</td>
<td>Approval</td>
<td></td>
<td>Himalayas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Unnamed female climber</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>1932</td>
<td>J W Gregory, unrelated</td>
<td>Loan of instruments</td>
<td></td>
<td>Peru</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>1933</td>
<td>J R Baker (Oxford Expedition to New Hebrides), husband of I H Baker and</td>
<td>Approval, grant of £50, loan of instruments</td>
<td></td>
<td>New Hebrides, Pacific</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>brother of G I Baker</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>1933</td>
<td>Vivian Fuchs, Joyce Fuchs</td>
<td>Approval, grant</td>
<td></td>
<td>Central Africa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Approval, grant, letter of recommendation, loan of instruments</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Place</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1855</td>
<td>Laurence Wager, husband of Phyllis Wager (British East Greenland Expedition)</td>
<td>1935</td>
<td>East Greenland</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>Louis Leakey</td>
<td>1935</td>
<td>East Africa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2057</td>
<td>H. Quaritch Wales, husband of Mrs Quaritch Wales</td>
<td>1935</td>
<td>Burma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2158</td>
<td>Louis Leakey, husband of Mary Leakey</td>
<td>1937</td>
<td>East Africa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2259</td>
<td>H. Quaritch Wales, husband of Mrs Quaritch Wales</td>
<td>1937</td>
<td>Malaya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2360</td>
<td>Vivian Fuchs</td>
<td>1938</td>
<td>East Africa</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

60 Minutes of Expedition Committee, 1 February 1937, Committee Minutes vol. 1932-1938, p. 257, RGS-IBG Archives; Minutes of Expedition Committee, 28 March 1938, Committee Minutes vol. 1932-1938, p.
The participation of these women is often not mentioned in the official archives of the RGS, such as the Council and Committee minutes. Instead, evidence of their participation has been uncovered from brief references in subsequent lectures and reviews of publications, and from other published accounts of the expeditions. These mentions usually do little more than establish the fact of a woman’s presence, although occasionally they make reference to her role on the expedition. As a result it has been necessary to cross-reference with other secondary material, including obituaries and entries in biographical dictionaries, which has helped to provide more detail on the role played by these women.

*Expertise and education*

Many of the women who participated in RGS-supported expeditionary work during this period had high levels of expertise in their chosen subject area. One measure of this is their level of educational attainment, and particularly their participation in higher education prior to undertaking their expeditionary work, which was extensive. For example, Gertrude Bell read history at Lady Margaret Hall, Oxford, and was the first woman to achieve a first class degree in History from Oxford, completing her studies in two years (Birkett, 1989; Lukitz, 2006; Maddrell, 2009a). Like Bell, most of the other women for whom information on their educational attainment is available attended either Oxford or Cambridge, reflective of their upper-middle and upper class backgrounds, and of their social circles. As discussed in Chapter 5, the predominance of Oxbridge-educated participants extended to the wider database for this period, and also into the postwar

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61 Although the first woman to achieve these marks, Bell was not actually awarded the degree, in line with the gendered policies at Oxford University at this time. See Maddrell 2009a.
period. Not all of the women in this study attended Oxbridge, however; Freya Stark read history at Bedford College, University of London (Geniesse, 1999; Maddrell, 2009a).

Katherine Routledge read archaeology at Somerville Hall, Oxford (van Tilburg, 2003), while Stella Worthington read geography at Newnham College, Cambridge, although she left without completing her studies in order to join the Cambridge East African Expedition in 1930, working alongside her husband (Worthington, 1932, 1983; Worthington and Worthington, 1933; Anker, 2001). Similarly, Sydonie Manton had been educated at Girton College, Cambridge, and had extremely impressive intellectual credentials, obtaining the highest marks in her Part II [final year] zoology exams, although she was not awarded the appropriate university prize due to gendered restrictions. She went on to become the first woman awarded a doctorate of science by Cambridge in 1934, and to have a distinguished career in zoology (Harvey and Ogilvie, 2000). It is important to note that like Manton, each of these women, distinguished as they were in their intellectual achievement, had gendered restrictions placed on the recognition of that achievement. Both Bell and Routledge attended Oxford at a time when women were not awarded their degrees, although they were permitted to study for them (see Maddrell, 2009a). The same was also true for Cambridge until 1948, so that Worthington would not have been awarded her degree on full terms had she stayed to complete her studies, a factor that may have influenced her decision.

Interestingly, several of the women participating in RGS-supported expeditions were what would now be classified as mature students, older than the traditional undergraduate student by the time that they undertook their studies. An example of this is Gertrude Caton-Thompson, who was recognised during her lifetime as 'one of the most outstanding archaeologists of her generation' (Drower, 2006, p. 351). She began training as an archaeologist in 1921 at the age of 33, including taking classes in Egyptology at University College London with Flinders Petrie and Margaret Murray, and participating in Petrie’s excavations at Abydos in Egypt and Murray’s excavations in Malta. Caton-Thompson then completed a one-year Research Fellowship at Newnham College,
Cambridge, beginning in 1923, where ‘she enjoyed to the full the social and intellectual life of Cambridge’ (Drower, 2006, p. 356). This included training in surveying with the polar explorer Frank Debenham, who would also teach Worthington. Caton-Thompson had such demonstratively high level of subject expertise that she received RGS support for three expeditions. Her investigations into the stone ruins of Great Zimbabwe helped to establish definitively that they were of Bantu origin, in the face of strenuous opposition by the local colonial establishment, and she was the first archaeologist to conduct a scientific excavation in Arabia (Drower, 2006; Kirwan, 2004).

Lucy Evelyn Cheesman also came late to her studies in entomology, having first wanted to train as a veterinarian surgeon. When she was prevented from this choice of career by the gendered restrictions then in operation at the Royal Veterinary College, who did not admit women as students, she worked for a time as a canine nurse, before turning to entomology (Cheesman, 1957; Harvey and Ogilvie, 2000). She began working with the collections at the Zoological Society of London from 1920, gaining extensive experience and expertise, and attended classes in entomology at Imperial College London (Harvey and Ogilvie, 2000). While for Caton-Thompson there does not seem to have been explicit gendered opposition to her chosen career, as there had been for Cheesman, it is possible that implicit gendered expectations for a woman of her upper class social background meant that it had not occurred to her earlier that archaeology could be a possible career.

Not all of the women participating in these expeditions had subject-specific expertise or official qualifications before embarking on their expeditionary work. Some, like Cynthia Longfield and Phyllis Wager, gained expertise and experience during the expeditionary work in question, having studied other subjects previously. Haines suggests that Longfield joined the St George expedition at least partly as a companion for Cheesman, since it would not have been considered appropriate for a lone woman to be part of the team. However, this does not seem to have been insurmountable, given that Cheesman left the expedition in Tahiti to spend several months there engaged in her own

research, while Longfield remained part of the expedition (Collinette, 1926; Douglas and Johnson, 1926; Cheesman, 1927, 1957; Haines, 2001). Longfield was an amateur entomologist with experience of travel, who worked closely with Cyril Collinette on the expedition, beginning a long professional association (Douglas and Johnson, 1926; Haines, 2001). Meanwhile, Wager had trained as a ballerina before marrying her husband and accompanying him on his expedition to Greenland. As discussed further below, for Wager it was the familial connection that enabled her participation in this work, rather than her own credentials. This gaining of experience and credentials by participating in RGS-supported expeditionary work is also a forerunner to significant changes in the postwar period, and particularly a shift to undergraduate ‘training’ expeditions, discussed in Chapter 5.

There is also one example where the credentials of the woman in question did not assist her in gaining RGS support. In 1926 Winifred Blackman applied to the RGS for support for her anthropological work in Egypt. Blackman had strong intellectual credentials, with a Diploma in Anthropology from Oxford and experience of working in the Pitt Rivers Museum there. Blackman does not seem to have been a Fellow of the RGS, although she was a member of the Folklore Society, the RAI, the Royal Asiatic Society, and the Oxford University Anthropological Society. Nonetheless, Blackman’s application was refused on the grounds that it was outside the interests of the Society, although her subsequent book was later reviewed favourably in the Geographical Journal. A man, John Roscoe, was also denied support for similar work in Uganda at the same Council meeting. As a result, Blackman’s case probably tells us more about the norms around appropriate content and subject matter which governed RGS support than it does about gendered...

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63 Alison Petch, n.d. ‘Winifred Susan Blackman’. Available at: [http://england.prm.ox.ac.uk/englishness-Winifred-Susan-Blackman.html](http://england.prm.ox.ac.uk/englishness-Winifred-Susan-Blackman.html) [Accessed 11/12/13].
64 Alison Petch, n.d. ‘Winifred Susan Blackman’. Available at: [http://england.prm.ox.ac.uk/englishness-Winifred-Susan-Blackman.html](http://england.prm.ox.ac.uk/englishness-Winifred-Susan-Blackman.html) [Accessed 11/12/13].
conventions of expeditionary work. As discussed in Chapter 5, the RGS did police the boundary of what it considered to be appropriate subject matter, both implicitly and explicitly, although this boundary shifted over time.

**Experience**

Experience in expeditionary work and travel was also a key criterion for gaining RGS support, particularly in the case of the applicant or proposed leader. Again, Bell may be given as an example. By the time of her 1913 expedition she was a very experienced traveller, having undertaken several Middle Eastern expeditions in addition to extensive mountaineering experience in the Alps and at least one round-the-world trip (Birkett, 1989; O'Brien, 2000; Maddrell, 2009a). Likewise, Caton-Thompson had participated in a number of archaeological digs by the time of her first application to the RGS for support in 1925.

Meanwhile, Stark was already making a name for herself as a traveller in the Middle East by the time she first gained RGS support, receiving training in surveying from the RGS instructor Mr Reeves in advance of her 1931 expedition to Luristan (Stark, 1934a, 1975; Geniesse, 1999). Stark was also given a letter of introduction to assist with this expedition, as she wrote to her mother excitedly:

> The Secretary of the R.G.S., Mr. Hinks, is really extraordinarily kind: he has just sent me a note of introduction to the First Secretary of our Legation, saying that I am a serious student who avoids publicity and that they can safely [emphasis original] give me any assistance. I feel very pleased with this description. Really everyone now is ready to help – it is just marvellous what my one little Alamut trip last year seems to have done.67

Stark was awarded this support on the grounds that she was a ‘serious student’, who was unlikely to sensationalise her work. Her credentials were established through her prior

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experience of exploratory travel – her earlier ‘Alamut trip’ – and the skill that she had demonstrated in undertaking that journey and in communicating her findings.

There are parallels here with the experiences of Rosita Forbes. Forbes was an experienced traveller who received a loan of instruments for a journey to Mecca in 1921.\(^{68}\) It appears that Forbes was awarded this support on the basis of her exploratory expedition to Kufara in Libya in the winter of 1920-21, and, more importantly, on the basis of the evening lecture which she gave to the RGS on the subject in May 1921, shortly after she became a Fellow (Forbes, 1921).\(^{69}\) The Mecca expedition was ultimately unsuccessful – Forbes, dressed as a Muslim woman, as she had done on the Kufara expedition, was discovered at Jeddah and prevented from travelling further (Forbes, 1944).

Similarly, experience, or the lack of it, seems to have been at the heart of the rejection of an early application made by Ness, already discussed above as a formidable player in the networks of the RGS, and the first woman to sit on the Council. In 1920, Ness applied to Hinks for a letter of introduction whilst preparing for an adventurous journey in South America. Hinks refused on the grounds that the Society ‘makes a rule that it does not give general letters of introduction to a Fellow unless that Fellow is travelling on some mission directly for the Society’.\(^{70}\) Hinks did, however, offer to write to individual Fellows on Ness’s behalf to request letters of introduction from them, for example writing to Sir Maurice de Bunsen that Ness was ‘a very charming lady who is a Fellow of our Society’, and that de Bunsen ‘might have every confidence in’ helping her, as ‘she is, at any rate, particularly nice looking.’\(^{71}\)

Here, Hinks frames Ness in terms of her sociability, and conformity to gendered expectations of behaviour, rather than in terms of her expertise or experience. As a result

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\(^{68}\) Royal Geographical Society. Report of the Council. Read at the Anniversary Meeting of 25 May, 1922, p. 5, RGS Council Annual Reports 1903-88 [loose papers], RGS-IBG Archives; Arthur Hinks to Rosita Forbes, July 15\(^{th}\), 1921, Correspondence Block 9 Rosita Forbes (Mrs McGrath) 1921-30, RGS-IBG Archives.

\(^{69}\) Rosita Forbes to Arthur Hinks, Feb. 23\(^{rd}\), 1921, Correspondence Block 9 1921-30 Rosita Forbes (Mrs McGrath), RGS-IBG Archives.

\(^{70}\) Arthur Hinks to Wilhelmina Elizabeth [Mrs Patrick] Ness, 22 November 1920, Correspondence Block 9 Mrs Patrick Ness 1921-1930, RGS-IBG Archives.

\(^{71}\) Arthur Hinks to Sir Maurice de Bunsen, 23 November 1920, Correspondence Block 9 Mrs Patrick Ness 1921-1930, RGS-IBG Archives.
it is unsurprising that no help was forthcoming. This framing has clearly gendered overtones in dismissing her abilities, most particularly in that her being ‘particularly nice looking’ is offered as a credential to other Fellows. In the event Ness was able to rely on letters of introduction from her own personal network, demonstrating the importance of such network participation beyond the RGS itself.

The contrast with Stark’s experiences is quite striking. It is possible that Stark had already proven her credentials by the time of her request, whereas Ness’s were more of an unknown quantity at the time of her application. It is also possible that the reasons for rejecting Ness’s application, and supporting Stark’s, are linked to changes in policy in the years that separated them. It is unlikely that Fellowship was the deciding criteria, since Ness was a Fellow at the time of her request, whilst Stark did not become one until 1936 (Maddrell, 2009a).

Sociability and network participation

Although both prior expertise and experience played their part in gaining RGS support, by far the more important criterion was that of appropriate sociability and network participation. Just as there were a number of different spaces operating in and around the Society, so there were also a number of networks. These included: the people who helped to organise and run the RGS, and who served on the Council and various Committees; the staff employed by the Society, such as clerks, mapmakers, journal editors, and housekeeping staff; elite Fellowship groupings like the Geographical Club (see Mill, 1930); the London-based Fellowship who regularly attended evening meetings; the wider Fellowship who participated in the functions of the Society to lesser or greater degrees; members of other geographical and learned societies who might collaborate with the RGS; and university-based academics connected with the Society through research and refereeing. This is not an exhaustive list.
These were overlapping networks, with members of one often participating in several of the others. During this period, although women had begun to make inroads into the Fellowship of the RGS and into other learned societies and university departments, several of these networks remained strongly male-dominated. This was particularly true of those networks – around the Council and Committees of the RGS, and the closely linked network of the staff employed by the Society – that were central to decision-making, and which were closed to women until 1929/1930. As discussed above, during this period, successful applications generally came from the two groups who were able to navigate these male-dominated networks with greater ease. That is, male members of mixed expedition teams, and a handful of elite women who were already well-known to the Society and well-ensconced in its networks. While, as Figure 4 shows, there were very few such women who successfully directly applied for RGS support for their expeditionary work during this period, their experiences illustrate the importance of network participation for gaining that support.

Bell’s successful participation in the RGS networks was linked to her moneyed upper middle class background, and the social circles that this enabled her to move in. It is also possible that with her anti-suffrage, anti-feminist politics, and her self-positioning as an exceptional woman happiest in the company of men, Bell was not considered to pose a threat to the status quo at the Society, but rather classed as an exception who proved the rule. Bell did little to disrupt the previously homosocial spaces to which she was now admitted. The two particular elements which helped her gain RGS support – class background, and personal politics and positioning – are key components of fellowship and sociability. As such, they are useful for understanding how and why other women making direct applications to the RGS in this early period did and did not receive support.

Like Bell, Caton-Thompson came from a privileged upper middle class background. Alongside her impressive intellectual credentials, extensive experience of travel and archaeological excavation, Caton-Thompson also had close connections with the RGS, not least because from 1910 she kept an apartment in Albert Hall Mansions as her London
base, practically next door to the Society (Drower, 2006). She was awarded the Cuthbert Peek Grant by the RGS in 1932, one amongst a slew of medals and awards that she received from a number of learned societies and other institutions (Drower, 2006).\textsuperscript{72} She was also one of the first women to serve on the Society's Council and Committees in the 1930s.

However, in terms of personal politics and positioning Caton-Thompson was very different to Bell, being a self-described feminist with strong commitments to the emancipation of women. She first became involved with the female suffrage movement in the early 1910s, as part of a lifelong commitment to feminist politics and practice which saw her choosing consciously to work with other women and to support their careers (Caton-Thompson, 1983; Drower, 2006). This included friendships with Dorothea Bate, Dorothy Garrod, Winifred Lamb, and Mary Leakey, whose career Caton-Thompson helped to support (Leakey also participated in RGS-supported expeditions during the 1930s).

Aside from her long collaboration with Gardner, Caton-Thompson also invited a number of women to join her for all or part of her expeditions. This included the Zimbabwe expedition, where she worked with the young Kathleen Kenyon and a D. Norie (Caton-Thompson, 1983; Dever, 2006; Drower, 2006).

Stark did not share the wealthy, upper-class background of Bell and Caton-Thompson, and throughout her life was reliant on her pen to fund herself and her journeys; she was also often self-conscious about her background (Geniesse, 1999; Maddrell 2009a). What does seem clear is that during the early 1930s the RGS adopted Stark as ‘one of their own’, as they had done with Bell before her (Stark, 1953; Maddrell, 2009a). This is possibly linked to Stark's anti-feminist politics and positioning; like Bell, Stark also liked to be an exceptional woman in the company of men. During this period, Stark published a number of articles in the *Geographical Journal* on her Persian and Mesopotamian adventures (Stark, 1931, 1932a, 1932b, 1933, 1934b, 1935), and was

\textsuperscript{72} Meeting of Council 11 April 1932, Council Minutebooks, vol. 13 p. 244, RGS-IBG Archives.
awarded the Back Grant ‘for her journeys in Luristan’ in 1933. She also socialised with others who moved in the Society’s networks, including Ness, whom Stark met in November 1933 and who persuaded Stark to lecture to the Forum Club a month later. Such sociability was a key part of participating in RGS networks, as discussed further in Chapter 8.

Of the different criteria, therefore – expertise, experience, and fellowship – it seems to have been fellowship, in the sense of existing strong connections to the RGS and participation in its networks, which was most important for this group of women in terms of gaining support, although they all also had impressive educational credentials and experience. It was these credentials that no doubt helped to establish their membership of these networks in the first place. Whilst these connections were often eventually expressed in the form of actual Fellowship of the Society, having the status of Fellow does not seem to have been a necessary condition for these women to gain support for their work. Successful direct applications were also founded on participation in other networks beyond those of the RGS. Caton-Thompson and Gardner were both members of a number of other learned societies, such as the Royal Anthropological Institute and the Geological Society; the list of institutional subscribers to their Kharga Oasis expedition demonstrates the strength of these network connections (Caton-Thompson and Gardner, 1934).

Those women who received the most support for their expeditionary work during this period – Caton-Thompson, Gardner, and Stark – were closely networked with the RGS, with their participation founded on appropriate sociability and fellowship in terms of a shifting combination of class background and personal politics, as well as their impressive credentials, and with official Fellowship almost as a retrospective recognition than prospective condition. While these elements seem to have also been in play for men applying, what differs is the ability of women to conform to these standards, or more

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74 Freya Stark to Flora Stark, 26 November 1933, printed in Stark, 1975, p. 162; Freya Stark to Flora Stark, 12 December 1933, printed in Stark, 1975, p. 164. The Forum Club was a leading women’s club, and Ness was head of its Geographical Section. See Wilhelmina Elizabeth [Mrs Patrick] Ness to Sir Charles Close, May 8 1929, Correspondence Block 9 Mrs Patrick Ness 1921-1930, RGS-IBG Archives.
importantly, to be perceived as conforming to these standards. That is, their ability to appropriately perform clubbability and sociability, while also continuing to perform feminine social norms, highlighting the complex nature of appropriate sociability.

Women also made use of networks peripheral to the RGS in order to facilitate their expeditionary work, as can be illustrated by looking at examples of women who participated in RGS-supported expeditionary work without directly applying for support themselves. This included qualified women like Manton and Cheesman participating alongside unrelated men, on the basis of their own intellectual credentials and their professional network participation. However, there was another route to participation in RGS-supported expeditionary work which was very important for women’s participation between 1913 and 1939.

This was participation through familial-social networks, which accounts for the majority of women who participated in RGS-supported expeditionary work without applying directly themselves during this period. As discussed above, more than three-quarters of these women were participating alongside a male spouse or relative (see Figure 5). For women, familial network participation represented an important means of participating in RGS-supported expeditionary work during this period, in a clear continuity with the pre-Fellowship period. It was a particularly important route given the formal and informal barriers that remained to women obtaining their own formal credentials. This included formal barriers to education, such as those experienced by Cheesman, and formal barriers to participation, such as those preventing women from working in certain areas, for instance as in the case of Joyce Fuchs (who was forbidden from certain areas closed to European women when working alongside her husband Vivian Fuchs on his Lake Rudolph expedition). Fuchs, a keen climber, instead ‘climbed Mount Meru and Mount Elgon while the expedition worked at Lake Rudolf’ (Anker, 2001; Clarkson, 2004; Cox et al, 1935; Worthington, 1983).25 Barriers also included informal bars to higher education, such as those experienced by Worthington, whose father had at

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first refused to support her studies at Cambridge; it was only through the intercession of the headmistress of the girls’ school where Worthington was teaching that she was given permission to attend Cambridge (Worthington, 1983).

An interesting counter-example to this trend of women ‘accompanying’ male relatives and spouses on RGS-supported expeditions is provided by the experiences of Guy Gardner, who accompanied his sister Elinor on the expedition to the Fayum with Gertrude Caton-Thompson in 1927-28, and assisted them in their archaeological and geological work (Caton-Thompson, 1928, 1960, 1983). In an interesting parallel with the evidence for many women’s participation, Guy Gardner’s participation in this expedition is not mentioned in the official RGS sources, possibly because he was a later, somewhat informal addition to the party, with his sister suggesting him as a potential ‘useful all-round assistant’ when a vacancy arose in the expedition party (Caton-Thompson, 1960). As discussed above, Caton-Thompson and Elinor Gardner had gained the support of the Society in their own right for this expedition, through direct application based on their own professional expertise and status (Caton-Thompson, 1983). By contrast, Guy Gardner seems to have participated in this expedition more on the strength of his familial connection to Elinor, rather than his own professional credentials: in an obituary, Caton-Thompson later described him an ‘enthusiastic non-professional archaeologist’, whose skills as a mechanic were also of great help to the expedition (Caton-Thompson, 1960, p. 57).

There is one set of familial-social networks, in and around the University of Cambridge, which seem to have been particularly important for increasing women’s participation in RGS-supported expeditionary work between 1913 and 1939. These included a series of expeditions on the African Great Lakes. These began with the Cambridge East African expedition led by Edgar Barton Worthington in 1930-31 (Worthington, 1932), and included two expeditions led by Vivian Fuchs, to Lake Rudolph

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in 1933 (Fuchs et al, 1935, Clarkson, 2004) and Lake Rukwa in 1938 (Fuchs, 1939; Clarkson, 2004), and Kate Ricardo and Janet Owen's 1936-37 expedition. Stella Worthington, the first wife of Edgar Barton Worthington, was the only European woman to participate in the 1930-31 expedition; she had met her husband while studying at Cambridge, and, as mentioned above, gave up her studies in order to participate in this expedition. Vivian Fuchs was a member of the 1930-31 expedition, and led two subsequent expeditions to the region in a continuation of this research. His first wife, Joyce Fuchs, accompanied him on the Lake Rudolf expedition in 1933, shortly after they were married. Dora MacInnes participated in Fuchs' 1938 expedition to Lake Rukwa; she was married to Donald MacInnes, the expedition's palaeontologist, although her own role in the expedition is not clear from the surviving sources (Fuchs, 1939).

Both Vivian Fuchs and Donald MacInnes had also participated in a number of Louis Leakey's expeditions during this period, a further mark of the closeness of this Cambridge-affiliated network. These close social connections are also evident in the way that the Leakeys (Frida and Louis) and the Worthingtons shared tenancy of a converted oast-house in Foxton, near Cambridge, in the early 1930s (Worthington, 1983). Kate Ricardo was also affiliated to this network. She had worked as research assistant to Edgar Barton Worthington on the collections brought back on from his 1930 expedition, supported by a grant from the East African Governors Conference, gaining expertise and accreditation for her future work (Bertram and Trant, 1991; Worthington, 1983). Ricardo would also go on to marry another Cambridge-based academic, Colin Bertram, who himself participated in a number of men-only RGS-supported expeditions during the 1930s (Bertram and Lack, 1933; Roberts, 1935; Swithinbank, 2001).  

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What emerges clearly from this Cambridge-affiliated familial-social network is the importance of such work becoming normalised and therefore appropriate, and the development of social norms rendering it acceptable to 'take women on expedition'. The existence of the network at first seems ironic given that Cambridge did not award full degrees to its female students until 1948. However, it could be seen as reflecting the way that Cambridge provided unofficial opportunities to women (in letting them attend classes and sit examinations) whilst not formally recognizing their achievement. Some of the women, such as Mary Leakey and Anne Stephenson, continued working alongside their husbands on further expeditions, whilst others, like Worthington and Wager, concentrated instead on their familial responsibilities.

These familial-social networks, and the way that they supported the participation of women alongside their male relatives, may have also opened up opportunities for other unmarried women. It is possible that the married status of her two female colleagues legitimated the participation of Manton, a young unmarried woman, on the Cambridge Great Barrier Reef expedition. Similarly, the presence of Frida Leakey and Cecely Creasey on the first Leakey East African expedition in 1928 may have made possible the presence of Elizabeth Kitson, just as the presence of Mary Leakey on the 1937 Leakey East African expedition may have legitimated the presence of Mary Davidson and Molly Paine.

It is also important to note the class dimensions surrounding participation in these Cambridge-affiliated networks. In the cases of many of these women, their educational attainment is probably linked to their upper and upper middle class backgrounds, particularly those whose education was primarily at Oxford and Cambridge. Their attendance at these elite universities made them part of the official and unofficial networks that coalesced around these institutions, allowing them to make contacts with mentors and future colleagues, and in the case of some of these women, their future husbands.

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Conclusion

Between 1913 and 1939 there were a number of different routes to participation in RGS-supported expeditions for women. These drew on participation in different, if often interlinked networks, within and beyond the RGS. For both women applying directly to the RGS for support, and for women participating in expeditions without applying themselves, their expeditionary participation was dependent on their demonstrating personal credentials, and on their membership of key networks, although the particular credentials and the networks in question varied considerably.

Unsurprisingly, close affiliation with the RGS and participation in its networks were central to receiving its support for those women making a direct application, with their participation founded on appropriate sociability and fellowship in terms of a shifting combination of class background and personal politics, as well as their impressive credentials. For those women participating without directly applying themselves, it was participation in other networks that was most important, with membership of familial-social networks being particularly crucial for many. For both groups, university networks played an important part in their accessing expeditionary space. This would become even more important in the post-war period, as discussed in the next chapter. What is particularly interesting is the way that most of these women were involved in a number of these different networks, so that we have a system of overlapping and interlinked networks within and beyond the RGS. Given the hegemonic position of the RGS during this period, it is also likely that the symbolic importance of RGS support and patronage also helped some of the women to navigate these other networks.

Another interesting finding in this chapter is the fact that these applications demonstrate a number of different kinds of expeditionary practice, even if not all of them went on to be supported by the RGS. These include large scale multi-disciplinary projects, like the Great Barrier Reef and St George expeditions in the 1920s, or the Wager Greenland expedition in the 1930s; exploratory expeditions made by a single person or very small
group, like the treks made by Bell or Stark; and expeditions like the excavations carried out by Caton-Thompson and Gardner, or Blackman’s ethnographic fieldwork, which were focused on a particular topic or problem. Whilst the RGS did support the ‘classic’ expeditions, like Scott and Shackleton’s Antarctic expeditions in the 1910s, or the succession of attempts on Mount Everest in the 1920s and 1930s, they also supported a range of other, smaller projects. This demonstrates the multi-faceted nature of expeditionary practice during this period, and the relatively flexible nature of the term as it was being deployed by the RGS and by applicants. These examples also show that women were involved across the spectrum of these different kinds of expeditionary work; in terms of a wide range of types of expedition. The next chapter will explore the significant changes which took place in the postwar period, from 1945 to 1970.
CHAPTER 5: MAPPING TERRA INCOGNITA 1945-1970

Introduction

The break of the Second World War, and, more importantly, significant changes in how the RGS supported expeditions in the postwar period, means that it is appropriate to split the study into two distinct periods: 1913-1939, covered in the previous chapter; and 1945-1970, the subject of this chapter. The postwar period saw two significant changes in patterns relating to applications to the RGS for support of expeditionary work. Firstly, as can be seen in Figure 8, after 1945 there was a steady increase in applications, with a dramatic increase from the late 1950s onwards. Between 1944 and 1950, there were 56 applications; 323 between 1951 and 1960; and 779 between 1961 and 1970.

Figure 8: Overview of all applications, repeated

Secondly, this period also saw interesting shifts in the proportion of applications from projects with female participants, with a decline in the immediate postwar period followed by an upward trend from the early 1960s. This rise in women-participating applications did not just increase in line with the wider trend: the overall proportion was
increasing, and by 1970 the proportion of applications with women participants was at 36%.

This chapter will map out patterns of women’s participation in RGS-supported expeditions during this period, including a discussion of implicit and explicit gendered barriers to that participation. It will first discuss the increase in overall applications, set in the context of institutional changes at the RGS, including shifts in its policies around expeditionary support in response to the increase in applications. This will include examination of the three criteria – expertise, experience, and fellowship/Fellowship – which were closely linked to gaining RGS support in the earlier period, as discussed in the previous chapter. It will then consider the increased proportion of women-participating applications, and the ways in which this was linked to the overall increase in applications, including how women participants negotiated these three criteria during this period.

The chapter will also draw out key themes relating to the representation of expeditions during this period, focusing in particular on the persistent trope of physicality as it relates to the ideal type of an expeditionary participant. That is, the emphasis on youth and physical capacity as important elements for expeditionary work, such that the ideal expeditionary participant is presented as a physically able young man. This chapter will engage with that representation, showing how it relates to ideas about the production of geographical knowledge, and what counted as geographical knowledge. It will show how these ideas were present even in the accounts which show that other types of bodies could and did engage in expeditionary work; it will also discuss how women’s participation can be read as engaging with and subverting this trope.
Overall increase in applications

The increase between 1945 and 1970 was not merely the result of an increase in the kinds of applications that had been commonplace before the war – emanating largely from the Fellowship, dealing with exploration, research, and adventurous travel, and generally having informal links with universities by virtue of expedition members’ own affiliations, rather than operating under the official designation of a university – although the number of these applications did increase. Rather, the overall increase seems to have been driven by other kinds of applications becoming more important, with substantial increases in their numbers, particularly with regard to the number of official university-affiliated expeditions. This reprioritising of other kinds of application was the result of a number of shifts beyond the RGS, both in the universities and in wider society. It was also encouraged by a number of policy changes enacted by the RGS with regard to the way that they processed applications. While for the ‘traditional’ expeditions, the importance of Fellowship remained, the growing importance of other kinds of expedition served to sever the strong link between Fellowship, or of the applicant being otherwise well-known to the Society, and the likely success of an application for support, which had existed in the earlier period. Instead, it was participation in other networks, including those associated with the universities, such as university exploration clubs, which became increasingly important for gaining RGS support.

The most important driver of the overall rise in applications was a significant increase in the numbers of university-associated expeditions (see Figure 9).
This was itself driven by two major factors. The first is the increase in undergraduate expeditions from universities, in which teams were largely or entirely comprised of undergraduate and graduate students. In the earlier period, the majority of university-associated expeditions were led by research staff even where they included undergraduates, with a few notable exceptions such as the expeditions led by Gino Watkins (Savours, 2004; Scott, 2011). The growth in undergraduate-led expeditions is connected to the expansion in university expedition clubs in the later 1950s (possibly connected to the cessation of National Service requirements),¹ and can also be read as part of the wider cultural enthusiasm then current for expeditionary work. This shift to undergraduate, ‘junior’, training expeditions demonstrates how for certain kinds of expeditionary work, already possessing expertise or experience was no longer strictly necessary for all participants. Instead, a new criterion became important: that of potential ability to carry out the planned expeditionary work and to benefit from the experience.

The second factor is the expansion in the number of institutions from which these applying expeditions originated, which can be read alongside the wider expansion of universities, and increasing rates of university participation, in the immediate post-war period and beyond (Kynaston, 2007). Before the Second World War, with the exception of one application from Imperial College London (possibly because of Imperial's physical proximity to the RGS in South Kensington) and one from the University of St Andrews, all the university-associated applications were from Oxford and Cambridge. The applications were therefore coming from particular professional-social networks. This changed significantly in the postwar period. Whilst Oxford and Cambridge continued to dominate well into the 1960s, in the postwar period applications appeared from a number of other universities, including the London colleges (chiefly Imperial, UCL, King's, Royal Holloway, Birkbeck, and Bedford College), Exeter, Birmingham, Durham, Leeds, Edinburgh, Glasgow, Nottingham, and the Welsh university colleges at Swansea and Aberystwyth, amongst others. In addition to these more established universities, by the 1960s a number of newer institutions, including training colleges and polytechnics, were also applying, as were other institutions of further education, including those associated with the armed forces. As a result, the applications from university-associated or educational expeditions reflect wider changes in the higher education sector, and the broader expansion of universities in the postwar period.

Another early 1960s innovation was the resurgence of applications from schools and from exploration groups catering to school-age participants, such as the British Schools Exploring Society (BSES, formerly Public Schools Exploring Society (PSES), and now the British Exploring Society (Be)), and the British Girls Exploring Society (BGES). PSES, as it then was, had received support in the 1930s for expeditions to Lapland and other parts of the Arctic. The acceptance of applications from school parties after 1959 is an interesting development, because prior to that point, from about 1950, there seems to have been a policy of not accepting them, in favour of focusing efforts on undergraduate and other expeditions.
This was one of several policy changes enacted by the RGS between 1945 and 1970 with regard to its support of expeditionary work. Some of these, in the immediate post-war period, were in response to the impact that the Second World War had had on the Society’s resources. Later changes were in response to the substantial increase in applications from the late 1950s onwards, as driven by the changes in the kinds of applications coming in. In the immediate post-war period, there was a substantial reorganisation and formalisation of the process of applying for RGS support. The process was led by the Research and Expeditions Committee, who were now almost wholly responsible for receiving and deciding upon applications, with the Council responsible for choosing to accept or reject their recommendations.

In February 1947 a clear division between grants, for prospective work, and awards, retrospective rewards for work carried out, was explicitly made for the first time. The process of formalisation continued with the adoption of ‘a form of application for field workers applying for grants’, for facilitating ‘consideration of proposed expeditions by the Research Committee’ in May 1947, and in November that year, the adoption of a single annual submission deadline for such forms. In 1948, it was decided that emphasis should be placed on the geographical content of an expedition, so that ‘grants should not be made to expeditions with programmes no part of which was strictly geographical, unless those taking part in the expedition were sufficiently trained to relate the borderline subject to its geographical background’. In 1949 it was decided that support would no longer be given for projects outside the British Isles. Personal interviews of applicants were introduced in 1950, alongside the establishment of a separate sub-committee for interviewing them and for considering applications. Around this time, possibly as part of the introduction of the

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2 Between 1945 and 1970, the Research and Expeditions Committee went through a significant number of reorganisations, which served to separate them into two committees and then reunite them into one a number of times.

3 Minutes of Research Committee 24 February 1947, reverse of p. 19, Committee Minutes vol 1946-1949, RGS-IBG Archives; Minutes of Research and Expeditions Committee 12 May 1947, Committee Minutes vol. 1946-1947 p. 32 [3], RGS-IBG Archives; Minutes of Research and Expeditions Committee 10 November 1947, Committee Minutes vol. 1946-1947 reverse of p. 38, RGS-IBG Archives.

4 Minutes of Research and Expeditions Committee 26 April 1948, Committee Minutes vol. 1946-1947 reverse of p. 57, RGS-IBG Archives; Minutes of Research and Expeditions Committee 9 May 1949, Committee Minutes vol. 1946-1947 reverse of p. 85, RGS-IBG Archives.
official application form, references were introduced as part of the process. This reduced the need for applicants to be already personally known to the RGS, and helped them draw on their non-RGS network affiliations.

The developing programme of reforms was largely the result of the fact that ‘the total fund [then available for supporting expeditions was] so severely restricted’, due to the Society’s straitened financial circumstances in the postwar period. With reduced resources available, the committees responsible for overseeing RGS support of expeditions were trying to make the most of what they had, and to develop processes for rejecting unsuitable or surplus applications. However, the demands of necessity also provided an opportunity for committee members to think seriously about what kinds of work they wished to support, and to carefully target that support. While most of the early changes were procedural, and aimed at formalising the process, there are also hints that the committees were also beginning to define, explicitly or implicitly, the boundaries of what they considered to be worthy expeditionary work. Further reflections on this issue appear in the Council and Committee minutes throughout the 1950s, including a growing awareness of the role that RGS approval of expeditions was playing in their gaining support from other funding bodies and organisations.

In 1959, the Council began an internal consultation on its role in approving expeditions, which has been preserved in documents produced for discussion in Council by a number of its members, including the then Director, Lawrence Kirwan. In his

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5 Minutes of Research and Expeditions Committee 9 May 1949, Committee Minutes vol. 1946-1947 reverse of p. 85, RGS-IBG Archives. In 1954 an unknown Council member compiled a summary of pre-war (1933-1938) and post war (1948-1953) expenditure on expeditions in order to compare average expenditure on expeditions in each period, which usefully illustrates the increase in applications and decrease in available resources. According to this document, there were 36 expeditions given financial support in the earlier period, at an average grant of £80.13.10 per expedition (excluding the British Graham Land expedition which received a large grant of £1000). For the later period, there were 49 expeditions made a grant, with an average grant of £52.17.2 per expedition (excluding £500 to the 1953 Everest Expedition and £500 to the British North Greenland Expedition). Whilst this does not reflect the actual amounts awarded to expeditions, it gives a good idea of the changed circumstances in operation in the postwar period. See Minutes of Council 1 Feb 1954, Council Minutebooks, vol. 17, p. 7, additional notes bound between pp. 135 and 136. RGS-IBG Archives.

memorandum, Kirwan attributed the increase in applications to a wider enthusiasm for travel and ‘exploration’ after the war, driven in particular by ‘the growing number of university exploration clubs’\(^7\). Happily, at least for the finances of the RGS, he continued, this was echoed by an increase in public enthusiasm for expeditionary work, particularly in the wake of the ascent of Everest in 1953, which resulted in a growth of the sources of support of expeditionary work, whether financial or in the form of other supplies.\(^8\)

According to Kirwan, and echoed in the memoranda produced by Ian Cox and Alfred Stephenson, the firms and organisations providing this support relied on the RGS to vet applications for suitability and feasibility, ‘whether we like it or not’, with the Society regarded as a ‘national authority’, particularly after its involvement with high-profile expeditions like the ascent of Everest.\(^9\)

Kirwan, Cox, and Stephenson were all concerned that a narrow focus on supporting only ‘geographical research’, and thus not approving non-geographical expeditions, would be unfairly detrimental to well-founded non-geographical expeditions, as other bodies tended to take rejection by the RGS as a sign that an expedition was not properly organised. To counter this, they recommended that the RGS adopt two categories: ‘Supported’ expeditions, which included some form of geographical content or exploration, which would be approved and given further support in the form of a grant or loan of instruments; and ‘Approved’ expeditions, whose objects were outside the Society’s remit,


\(^8\) A good example is the establishment of the Mount Everest Foundation in 1953, which supported several expeditions during the 1950s and 1960s, and beyond. In financially supporting expeditionary work, the RGS drew on a number of different funds that were available to it, some resulting from bequests by women, and some of them provided by women like Mrs Patrick Ness, already discussed in Chapter 4. Because this information was not consistently given in the sources, I have chosen not to track precisely which fund was used to support which expedition, although this question could be an interesting follow-up to this research. There were also some expeditions which applied solely to the MEF and not to the RGS, which I have not included in this study.

but were recognised as 'bona fide expeditions, well-founded, properly organised and
capable in the technique of travel [emphasis original]'\textsuperscript{10}

The series of policy changes between 1945 and 1970 therefore made the Society’s
previously implicit role as arbiter of expeditionary work explicit. They show the RGS as an
institution consciously engaging with its hegemonic role with regard to the definition of
both expeditions, and of good, viable expeditions. In setting up the Approved category, the
RGS is reiterating its status as the expert body most capable of assessing these matters.
Interestingly, this system of approval was discontinued in 1962, on the grounds that no
other body undertook to ‘approve’ expeditions otherwise not eligible for support, that this
task was becoming too onerous, and that the large numbers of expeditions thus being
approved ‘was beginning adversely to affect the prestige and good name of the Society.’\textsuperscript{11}

At this point, support was also restricted to projects which contained some exploratory
element, with the term ‘expedition’ used to describe these; ‘fieldwork’ projects were
encouraged to apply elsewhere, either to the Royal Society in the case of postgraduate
‘scientific’ work, or to their university departments in the case of undergraduate
fieldwork.\textsuperscript{12} Here, we can see the RGS governing bodies seeking to preserve the Society’s
hegemonic status by trying to restrain the processes of dilution and devaluation which
they saw as taking place; they were also engaged in explicitly differentiating the terms
‘expedition’ and ‘fieldwork’. However, in 1969 the Society reverted to the former policy of
approving expeditions, reinstating the ‘two categories of expeditions; “Supported”
expeditions receiving financial help and priority in the loan of equipment; and “Approved”
expeditions, without of necessity any material support’, and stating that in ‘the case of

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\textsuperscript{10} Minutes of Research and Expeditions Committee 2\textsuperscript{nd} March 1959, Committee Minutebooks, vol. Vol.

‘Long-Term Policy for Support of Expeditions’, p. [1], Minutes of Council 9 July 1962, Council

\textsuperscript{12} ‘Long-Term Policy for Support of Expeditions’, p. [1], Minutes of Council 9 July 1962, Council
predominantly non-geographical expeditions, approval would be restricted to planning and organisation and to the geographical elements in their scientific programme only.13

The policy changes of the RGS during this period were not solely directed to preserving its hegemonic position. Those Council and Committee members involved in deciding on which expeditions were supported, and determining the relevant policies for guiding these decisions, were also concerned with maintaining the value of its support; and with ensuring that their vetting procedures actually aided in the preparation and completion of successful and comparatively safe expeditionary work. In 1961, and in response to a number of fatalities and serious injuries occurring on RGS-supported and approved expeditions, the RGS instituted changes to its interview procedures which aimed at further supporting expeditions in planning and preparation, including the avoidance of unnecessary risk.14

In relation to the key criteria of expertise, experience, and fellowship/Fellowship, the policy changes in the postwar period had an impact on all three. Depending on the kind of expedition being planned, expertise and experience no longer needed to be actual or existing, but could now be expressed as potential. With regard to fellowship, defined as participation in the appropriate professional-social networks, this was no longer explicitly linked to literal Fellowship of the Society, as it had been for many expeditionary applicants in the earlier period. Instead, participation in non-RGS networks, and particularly those around and associated with the universities, became key, especially for the new undergraduate expeditions. A new form of proxy participation, through the refereeing process, also became important, in that the people often listed as referees, such as Marjorie Sweeting, might themselves have strong connections with the RGS, as Fellows or through serving on its governing bodies like the Council or Committees (see Maddrell, 2009a). This can be read as proxy participation in that the actual applicants and expeditionary participants were using their RGS-networked referees as proxies for direct

participation in RGS-centred networks. The chapter will now consider how these changes affected women’s participation in RGS-supported expeditions, including how they both restricted some opportunities, and provided others.

**Women-participating applications, 1945-c.1959**

This section will discuss the changes in the rate of women’s participation in RGS-supported expeditions between 1945 and 1970, relating these to the policy changes at the RGS, and to wider social shifts with regard to higher education, women’s changing social position, women’s access to higher education, and changing gender roles. The section will discuss the implicit and explicit gender barriers to women’s participation, including the discourses around the perceived figure of the ideal expeditionary type. While none of the RGS policy changes were explicitly concerned with gender or with increasing or decreasing women’s participation, I argue here that they had an indirect impact on women’s participation in RGS-supported expeditions, particularly in the immediate postwar years.

Firstly, it is possible that the formalisation of the application process, and subsequent increased emphasis on siting supported expeditionary work within universities and university exploration clubs, had the effect of restricting women’s opportunities for participation in expeditionary work in the early 1950s. The question of how formalisation and professionalisation affect the participation of women in certain spheres, such as professional occupations and academia, is a complicated one. On the one hand, formalisation can help to remove or reduce the reliance on informal male-dominated networks – the ‘old boy’ networks – which have often proved an implicit barrier to women’s participation, by making admission and acceptance criteria explicit, and by opening up these processes to potential scrutiny.

On the other hand, the introduction of formal requirements can also serve to exclude women, even when they do not do this explicitly, in cases where other barriers
prevent women from accessing the networks and obtaining the credentials that are now required for participation. This is particularly the case when the processes of professionalisation are aimed at raising or preserving the status of the occupation, practice, or credential in question, so that feminisation is seen as equivalent to de-skilling, and masculinisation as re-skilling (Lewis, 1992; Fara, 2004; Maddrell, 2009a). That is, given the long-standing discursive association between women and low-skilled work, men engaged in a given occupation will seek to exclude and segregate women from it in order to argue that it is skilled work and deserving of status (Wallach Scott 1988; Lewis, 1992; Witz, 1992; Holloway, 2005; Bennett, 2006).

It has been observed that the institutionalisation and formalisation of academic subjects and research work led to an exclusion of women from opportunities that they had previously been able to access informally (Fara, 2004; Maddrell, 2009a). Barriers to participation can consist of explicit bans, but can also comprise more informal, socially constructed constraints with regard to appropriate gender roles. Examples include the institutionalisation of geology (Burek and Higgs, 2007); the nineteenth century professionalisation of medicine (Witz, 1992; Morantz-Sanchez, 1995); and the discipline of geography during the late nineteenth century, as it became professionalised into an academic discipline (Domosh, 1991a; McEwan 1998b; Maddrell 2009a).

As McEwan notes, this exclusion of women from the physical sciences and from physical geography in particular was based upon ‘the construction of the amateur/professional dichotomy and its strong association with the wider context of the gendered construction of separate public and private realms’ (McEwan 1998b, p. 217). Certain physical spaces of scientific knowledge production which could be positioned as extensions of domestic or private space, like the private laboratory, were considered acceptable for privileged, leisured women to use. Certain subject areas, such as botany, which could equally be allied to domestic responsibilities, were also considered acceptable as amateur pursuits for women, and in consequence were often broadly feminised. Women’s attempts to access scientific spaces which were constructed as public space,
such as the field, however, met with resistance, as did claims to professional rather than amateur status (McEwan, 1998b). McEwan links this to the fellowship debates at the RGS discussed in the previous chapter, describing how women ‘were excluded from an institution seeking to promote modern geography and provide an intellectual environment for professional scientific geography on the grounds that they were, *ipso facto*, amateur’ (McEwan, 1998b, p. 218).

In the late 1940s and early to mid-1950s, when these processes of formalisation were underway at the RGS with regard to its support of expeditionary work, there was a clear decline in the proportion of applications which had female participants, suggesting that, in tandem with wider social changes, these processes were perhaps having the unintended effect of excluding women and restricting their opportunities. It is possible that the decline in female participation was at least partly the result of a deliberate, if unrecorded, policy to give priority to the applications of returning servicemen, in line with the official policies of many other institutions at this time. However, there were also other factors which are likely to have been at least as important.

The most important of these is the new emphasis on university-associated expeditions, and in particular a significant increase in the number of undergraduate ‘junior’ expeditions that were being supported by the RGS. This new trend reached its height in the early 1950s, at the same time as the decline in female participation in RGS-supported expeditionary work. While open to a range of institutions, including new universities like Nottingham, successful applications were still dominated by Oxford and Cambridge undergraduates, who had made up the overwhelming majority of supported undergraduate expeditions before the war. This is important because there were significant institutional and departmental differences, in terms of access to supportive bodies like exploration societies, and also in terms of the discursive ethos which shaped what kinds of projects were encouraged and supported, between the different universities.

The first impact of this policy shift towards universities, and towards ‘junior’ expeditions, seems to have been a significant decline in the number of supported
expeditions involving women participating alongside their male relatives and spouses on the basis of their familial network participation as well as their own credentials. Although there remained a few such expeditions, including the Odell expedition to British Columbia in 1946 (Smythe, 1948); the British East Greenland expedition in 1960; and a number of husband-and-wife teams engaging in fieldwork during the 1960s. As discussed in Chapter 4, such expeditions made up a significant proportion of women-participating expeditions during the pre-war period, and represented an important opportunity for women to carry out expeditionary work during this earlier period. The decline may also be a result of the fact that a lot of the ‘experienced traveller’ category of expeditionary applications during this period were to places which were discursively constructed as ‘closed’ to women, such as the Himalayas and the Antarctic. Such regions were pre-emptively considered to be beyond the abilities of potential female participants, in one of the more important unofficial barriers to women's participation in this period, as discussed further below.

To fully understand the impact of the shift towards university-associated applications on opportunities for women's participation, it is necessary to first examine the broader social context in the United Kingdom at this time. During the Second World War, as had happened during the First World War, women had been heavily involved in the war effort, working in many industries and in many cases taking the positions normally filled by men (Lewis, 1992; Giles, 2004; Holloway, 2005; Kynaston, 2007). In the immediate postwar period, there was a tension between two competing policy desires: firstly, the desire for women to return home to their domestic responsibilities and thereby aid with processes of social reconstruction; and secondly, the need for women's continuing labour in the workplace as part of the demands of post-war economic reconstruction (Holloway, 2005; Kynaston, 2007).

This tension contributed to a mood of ambiguity and ambivalence around women's work outside the home, which is reflected in the fact that, unlike after the First World War, women's return to the home after the war was far from complete, with many women, both married and single, remaining in paid employment (Lewis, 1992; Giles, 2004; Holloway,
At the same time, women were regarded by government policy and wider social norms very much as a secondary workforce, and in many cases were squeezed out of the ‘male’ occupations in which they had been working, in favour of returning servicemen, returning instead to lower-status, and lower-paid, occupations designated as ‘women’s work’ (Holloway, 2005). Although many official marriage bars to the professions were removed during this period, the social expectation remained that paid employment would be a prelude to married life for most women, and that married women would concentrate on their domestic responsibilities, although these issues were discussed over the course of the 1950s (Holloway, 2005).

These trends had important repercussions in the sphere of female education, where emphasis remained on preparing girls for future careers as homemakers, rather than for paid employment (Holloway, 2005). Within academic geography, many women geographers had been drafted into supporting the war effort alongside their male colleagues (see Maddrell 2008). There had also been a process of feminisation of many academic departments as qualified women took over the bulk of teaching responsibilities for the duration of the war (Maddrell, 2009a). Consequently, the post-war period saw a re-masculinisation of many universities, and of geography departments, as male research and teaching staff returned, and in many cases were promoted ahead of their female colleagues (Maddrell 2009a).

In the immediate postwar period up to 1949, there was also overt discrimination against women entering university as undergraduates. For example, George Isaacs, the Minister of Labour, encouraged universities not to admit female school-leavers unless they were exceptional, in order to prioritise returning servicemen, as part of a wider policy of active discrimination against women (Briar, 1997, cited in Holloway, 2005). At this time, women made up around 27% of undergraduates, a figure largely unchanged since the 1920s (Pugh, 2000, cited in Holloway, 2005). Whilst the situation would change during the late 1950s and 1960s, women’s low rate of participation in higher education during the
immediate post-war period meant that they were badly placed to take advantage of the
RGS policy shift towards supporting undergraduate expeditionary work.

This was exacerbated by the fact that women undergraduates were often explicitly
excluded from the university exploration clubs, which were an important source of
support, in terms of both resources and advice, for undergraduate expeditions. That is,
women were excluded from important social and professional networks that were key to
gaining support for expeditionary work. The Oxford University Exploration Club (OUEC),
for example, did not admit female members until 1969. There is no evidence of female
involvement with any of the RGS-supported Oxford expeditions between 1945 and 1959,
with the exception of Joan Marshall and her RGS-supported research in Cyprus in 1949,
which appears to have had no connection with the OUEC. Where they were not officially
excluded, the homosocial cultures of these clubs may have made it difficult for women to
participate in them. This is particularly the case if they were focused around activities
which were gendered male so that women risked being perceived as insufficiently
feminine for participating.

Nonetheless, most women-participating applications to the RGS between 1945 and
1960 were university-affiliated, with the exceptions of the work of Joan Newhouse
(granted support for work in Lapland in 1948 (Newhouse, 1952));
Beatrice de Cardi,
(granted support for archaeological work in Eastern Kalat in 1957 (de Cardi, 1957, 1983,
2008)); and the 1956 Abinger Himalayan expedition led by Joyce Dunsheath, discussed
further below. Included in this were a small number of mixed undergraduate expeditions
during the immediate post-war period, where women were able to use the existing, male-
dominated networks to gain support, and where they therefore benefited from the post-
war boom in undergraduate expeditionary applications. These centred on a number of

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15 Minutes of Research and Expeditions Committee 19 January 1948, Committee Minutes vol. 1946-
1947, p. 46, RGS-IBG Archives; ‘Reindeer are Wild Too’ by Joan Newhouse. Review by: I. R. W.’ The
16 Applications from Expeditions 1957, p. 10, Expeditions 1963-195[6], Expedition Grants 195[6]-1975,
L. Evans, Interview with Beatrice de Cardi, at her home, 10 September 2013.
institutions, with Cambridge being particularly important in terms of the number of women-participating applications.

**Mixed undergraduate expeditions in the post-war period**

The first mixed undergraduate RGS-supported expedition was the Durham University Iceland expedition of 1948, at the start of the post-war expansion in RGS-supported undergraduate expeditions.\(^\text{17}\) It was organised by a team from King’s College, which was then part of the federal University of Durham, and was one of the first expeditions organised by the newly-formed Durham University Exploration Society.\(^\text{18}\) The team included four undergraduate men and two graduate women, Miss M MacDonald and Miss J Sutton.\(^\text{19}\) Demonstrating the ability of its female participants to withstand the rigours of fieldwork was one of the expedition’s stated aims, as seen in the subsequent expedition report:

> Many people were interested but few were available, so rather than choosing people, any really keen volunteer was welcomed, though it was hoped that in these people a compromise was made between qualification, experience, and availability in the future. Since not one of the men was a graduate and a girl displayed much enthusiasm in abstracting papers, we included two girls, graduates who were doing research work and who were outdoor enthusiasts. It was hoped that their qualification would give our party some prestige and help in the recognition we were then seeking. Again, it would be interesting to note how they responded to the work and conditions, to prove how much is prejudice and how much justifiable convention that generally excludes girls from work of this kind. They behaved admirably and though they cannot compare with men for sheer physical doggedness, they did a very fine job indeed.\(^\text{20}\)


\(^{18}\) In 1963, when the federal University was dissolved, King’s College became the University of Newcastle upon Tyne, and latterly, Newcastle University. See [http://www.ncl.ac.uk/about/history/](http://www.ncl.ac.uk/about/history/) Accessed 05.09.2014.


This section of the report was written by Harold ‘Hal’ Lister, the expedition’s geologist who also led the party; as a result, he held a comparatively high status within the expeditionary team, which may at least partly account for his patronising tone here.

The gendered language used, i.e. ‘men’ and ‘girls’, even where the ‘girls’ in question are older and more qualified than their male colleagues, is common to expeditionary reports of this period, and is in keeping with contemporary norms around language and description. It also contributes to a wider pattern of othering women in expeditionary work that can be seen in the naming conventions used in the Expedition Grants paperwork (and in that of other institutions, such as the Worts Fund paperwork held by Cambridge, relating to one of their grants programmes). In such paperwork, women seem to have been explicitly marked as female by inclusion of their title or first name, (whereas their male colleagues are generally referred to by initials and surname), or by a reference to women’s participation in the summary application, or in the total of participants, e.g. ‘Total participants 6, 2 women’. The use of ‘girls’ by Lister also echoes the similarly dismissive, diminishing use of ‘boys’ to describe African male team members drawn from local communities who contributed to Kate Ricardo and Janet Owen’s 1936 African expedition, even when the men in question were older than Ricardo and Owen. While this diminution through language draws on racist and colonial tropes rather than sexist ones, it involves a similar process of status-claiming and asserting of dominant position within the expeditionary team.

What is of particular interest in the Durham example is the way that these women’s participation was dependent upon convincing their less qualified male colleagues to include them, and upon conforming to gendered norms which required that they display a higher standard of competence and have achieved, by virtue of their graduate status, a higher degree of personal accreditation. The opinions of the two women on this matter are not recorded, although they did write the sections of the report dealing with their own areas of scientific expertise (MacDonald, [1948]; Sutton, [1948]). In the emphasis that he

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places on the value of ‘sheer physical doggedness’, Lister’s defence of his female colleagues’ abilities fits into established norms about what constitutes good expeditionary work. That is, Lister emphasises physicality, and the physical traits of endurance and capability, as being key to successfully performing ‘work of this kind’.

This plays into notions of the ideal expeditionary type as an able-bodied young man, notions which have been well documented and critiqued (Stoddart, 1986; Rose, 1993; Sparke, 1996; Maguire, 1998; Hall et al, 2002). Maguire’s contemporary research with female undergraduate students explores how they can feel excluded from and unwilling to participate in fieldwork and physical geography, because of what they perceive to be unachievably high standards of physical fitness necessary for such work. This was particularly the case when these physical standards were seen as set by their male colleagues, and if they played into masculine rituals around status-claiming and dominance (Maguire, 1998). Maguire also noted the similarly discouraging impact on mature students of such rituals and tropes around physical dominance. Similarly, research conducted by Tim Hall and his colleagues showed how perceived standards of physical fitness, especially when supported by imagery showing particular types of bodies engaged in fieldwork, could serve to exclude disabled undergraduate students from participation in fieldwork by making them feel unwelcome or incapable (Hall et al, 2002). It is possible that similar effects were in operation for many women attempting to participate in expeditionary work in the postwar period.

The 1948 Durham Iceland expedition’s explicit aim of examining and demonstrating women’s capacity for expeditionary work can be read as an intended intervention in the wider debates around expeditionary work then current, so that the attitudes of the male expedition members are both patronising and possibly intended as being progressive. However, and notwithstanding MacDonald and Sutton’s ‘very fine job’, after the 1948 expedition there was an apparent shift to single-sex expeditions from Durham during the 1950s, with no reference to this earlier experiment made in either the
recorded applications or the subsequent expeditionary reports. Of these, the women-only expeditions do not appear to have applied to the RGS for support.\textsuperscript{22}

The same emphasis on physicality and endurance is present in Joyce Dunsheath's published account of her RGS-supported Abinger expedition to the Himalayas in 1956. This expedition, and a follow-up expedition to Afghanistan in 1960, also led by Dunsheath and supported by the RGS, were part of a cohort of women-only expeditions in the postwar period beyond those associated with universities and with schools, which is discussed below (Dunsheath, 1957; Reid, 1957; Dunsheath et al, 1958; Dunsheath and Baillie, 1961).\textsuperscript{23} In her introduction, Dunsheath writes that:

Many times in my life have I wished that I was a man of strong physique and outstanding climbing ability who would be an acceptable member of a Himalayan Expedition. I have pored over the records of those who have been lucky enough to be chosen and I have gone with them in spirit to the fastnesses of that mighty range of mysterious and romantic mountains stretching for over a thousand miles across the north of India. But I am a woman, fifty-three years of age, tied by household tasks and social duties, so the idea remained among the lumber at the back of my mind to which it rightly belonged. Himalayan Expeditions, I told myself, were only for men, and for that small percentage of men who have outstanding physical strength combined with that steadfastness of purpose and determination which extends their powers and carries them even beyond the limits of human endurance. (Dunsheath et al, 1958, pp. 1-2).

Dunsheath engages explicitly with the gendered discourses around expeditionary work in general and around expeditions to the Himalayas in particular. Here, she has internalised the idea that such expeditionary work is 'only for men', and that there is an implicit gendered barrier to her undertaking such work. This is partly to do with physical prowess,
but also consists of more social elements – ‘tied by household tasks and social duties’. Interestingly, she also explicitly presents age as being an important factor in this exclusion – presumably because it set limits to physical ability, but also because an older individual is more likely to have accumulated social ties and corresponding duties.

Importantly, she presents that barrier as existing not merely for women, but also for all people except the superhuman, what Dunsheath later refers to as ‘the one per cent. of super climbers’ (Dunsheath et al, 1958, p. 2). However, it quickly becomes clear that her self-deprecating use of these tropes is more complicated and ambivalent, and part of a strategy of justification for her undertaking this kind of expeditionary work. She first presents the romanticised version of Himalayan expeditionary work, complete with superhuman heroic feats, describing both her own fascination with and longing for this particularly expeditionary space, and also how it is tantalisingly out of reach, far beyond her own capabilities. However, she then goes on to demonstrate how she was mistaken in this regard. Her actual argument is that with effort and careful preparation, the Himalayas are in fact open to ‘ordinary men and women’. She goes on to describe her gradual process of realisation on this point, and to begin to plan how she might achieve these ‘ambitious dreams’ (Reid, 1957).

Believing that ‘no woman had a chance of being included in an expedition organised by men, unless ... she was really outstanding’, and hearing of no other women organising such an expedition, Dunsheath proceeded to organise her own, drawing her colleagues Hilda Reid, Eileen Gregory, and Frances Delany from her existing networks of women climbers (Dunsheath et al, 1958, p 2). These included the Ladies Alpine Club, a long-running institution founded in 1907, of which all four were members (Reid, 1957). The team was therefore built on network participation, though networks that existed outside the hegemonic ones of elite male climbers. This women-focused network was also strengthened by participation in the 1956 expedition, as Reid went on to accompany Dunsheath on the Afghanistan expedition in 1960. Dunsheath makes clear the extent to which participation in Himalayan expeditions was not a level playing field, stating that
women have to be ‘outstanding’ in order to be considered for inclusion. She circumvented this implicit barrier by means of this strategy of deploying and negotiating women-focused networks. Dunsheath also drew on connections with the RGS. As well as securing approval for their plans, the team applied for a Mount Everest Foundation Grant, and Dunsheath attended training classes in surveying at the RGS alongside other ‘would-be explorers’ (Dunsheath et al, 1958, p. 8).

While the creation of women-focused networks was one means of circumventing and disrupting these gendered expectations and implicit barriers, those women wishing to participate in mixed gender expeditions still had to contend with these expectations head on. In addition to an emphasis on physicality and other masculine expeditionary tropes, there are other strong parallels between the Durham 1948 expedition and two consecutive RGS-supported mixed expeditions from Nottingham University in 1953 and 1954, not least in terms of their chosen destination, Iceland. The two Nottingham expeditions were primarily undergraduate expeditions, sent out by the newly founded Nottingham Exploration Society (NES). The NES had been inspired by the example of Oxford and Cambridge students, who ‘undertook arctic expeditions regularly’ (Ives, 2007: p. 85). At least at first, the membership of the new society was all male, although it is not clear that they placed an explicit ban on women. The 1953 expedition was to be led by Jack Ives, a final-year undergraduate who alongside Harry Greave, another undergraduate, had conducted a preliminary investigation of their chosen research problems in glaciology during a two-man expedition to Skalafell in Iceland in 1952 (Ives, 2007).

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Whilst planning the 1953 expedition, Ives discussed preparations with his undergraduate tutor, Dr Cuchlaine King, who had recently been appointed to the Nottingham faculty staff (Sack, 2004; Ives, 2007; Maddrell, 2009a). King’s father had been a renowned geologist, and King herself had studied geography at Cambridge during the war, specialising in geomorphology (Maddrell, 2009a). Her strong network connections with Cambridge and with other geologists were extremely useful in planning the expedition and in gaining financial support, advice, and other supplies and resources (Ives, 2007). Ives records that it was King’s father who first suggested that if they added a faculty member to the expedition, then they could apply for Royal Society research funding, something echoed in Helen Brash and Oonagh Fitzpatrick’s account of their expeditionary experiences (although Maddrell, drawing on interviews conducted with King herself, suggests that it was King who first approached Ives about her joining the expedition (Maddrell, 2009a)). Ives had not previously considered either including Faculty staff (Brash suggests that they might have done if Cuchlaine had been male), or the possibility of female participants, ‘but they did want to get money, so they agreed that it would be good if [King] went along’. With Ives having responded positively, King joined the team, alongside Helen Brash, a final-year geography undergraduate at Cambridge (Ives, 2007; Maddrell, 2009a). As Brash later recounted:

[King] thought it would be good to have another surveyor, and they didn’t do survey as part of the geography degree at Nottingham. So she wrote to Cambridge and asked if there were any women doing survey that year, and I was the only woman doing survey in Part II. So the offer came to me. I think it caused some discussion amongst the members of the Nottingham Exploration Society, but anyway, we were there, so that was good.
The 1954 expedition built on the work carried out in 1953. Brash had graduated just before the 1953 expedition, and on her return from Iceland took up a post with the Gold Coast Soil Survey on a ‘two-tour’ contract. This left a space for another surveyor, and King asked Oonagh Fitzpatrick, another female geography undergraduate at Cambridge, to join them in Iceland. Both Brash and Fitzpatrick were invited for their surveying expertise as well as to be company for King, so that she was not the only woman on the expedition; this was at Ives’ suggestion (Maddrell, 2009a).

It is interesting, and perhaps unusual for mixed expeditions, that Brash and Fitzpatrick were invited to participate specifically because they were women. In this, they present an interesting contrast with the archaeologist, Beatrice de Cardi, who was invited on the RGS-supported expedition to Musandun in 1971 under the mistaken impression she was male, having not met her colleagues before, and having only spoken to them over the telephone before joining them in the field.29 De Cardi speculates that the expedition leader, Falcon, had misheard her name as ‘Mr Cardi’ when she was being recommended to him, and that, owing to her comparatively deep voice, later telephone conversations did not correct his error. Falcon was so overcome with horror at having inadvertently invited a woman on his expedition that he had to go to the nearest city, Dubai, to recover.

There are several interesting parallels between the Durham 1948 expedition and the Nottingham expeditions. The first is the fact that on both expeditions, at least some of the female team members had higher status or better credentials than their male colleagues, and that these higher credentials and networks of the women were essential for securing support for the expeditions (Sack, 2004; Maddrell 2009a). The second is the ways in which the discourses and norms around expeditionary work, which constructed it as a solely-male enterprise, made it initially unthinkable, in both cases, for women to join the teams, in spite of their existing credentials. For at least for the Nottingham 1953 expedition, the idea did not occur to the male expedition leader, until it was pointed out to him by others.

29 Emily Hayes and Sarah L. Evans, Interview with Beatrice de Cardi, at her home, 10 September 2013.
These discourses and norms also shaped the response of male team members to female participation in these expeditions: according to Brash and Fitzpatrick, there was ‘a great hoo-ha’ amongst the other members of the expedition and among the NES when they found out that there would be women on the 1953 team.\(^{30}\) Interestingly, the objections seem to have been couched, if not explicitly, in fears that the presence of women would be detrimental to the masculine culture of the expedition. Brash and Fitzpatrick suggest that the men, many of whom had done National Service, felt that they would have to moderate their language and not swear, and would also be charged with taking care of the women.\(^{31}\) However, this disgruntlement does not seem to have affected team relations once they were in the field, and King suggested that although there was ‘some initial hesitation’, ‘this was soon overcome & women become a regular part of many similar expeditions’ (Sack, 2004, p. 448; Maddrell, 2009a). It is interesting that the newer explorations societies, such as those at Durham and Nottingham, appear to have been far more open to women members than the established exploration societies, at least at first.

This highlights the fact that there were significant institutional differences between universities during this period, and the importance of these differences for women’s expeditionary participation. Half of all the women-participating applications between 1945 and 1959 had an affiliation with Cambridge, whether directly originating from there, or, as in the case of Brash and Fitzpatrick, being undergraduates or very recent graduates at the time of their expeditionary participation. In another echo of the pre-war period, the majority of these applications seem to have been for mixed expeditions. The strength of this trend may be an artefact of my research process – as discussed in Chapter 3, several of the expedition reports housed at the RGS-IBG are currently missing, and I was able to make good use of the Cambridge archives. It is also likely, particularly given the Cambridge-centred network in operation during the pre-war period, that this pattern was real, and that there were particular reasons why Cambridge was a particularly supportive

\(^{30}\) Helen Sandison, in Avril Maddrell and Sarah L Evans, Interview with Helen Sandison (née Brash) and Oonagh Linehan (née Fitzpatrick), RGS-IBG, 17 June 2013.

\(^{31}\) Avril Maddrell and Sarah L Evans, Interview with Helen Sandison (née Brash) and Oonagh Linehan (née Fitzpatrick), RGS-IBG, 17 June 2013.
environment for women’s expeditionary work at this time, in spite of the fact that full equality in the awarding of degrees to women at Cambridge did not occur until 1948.

There does not seem to have been a ban on women joining the Cambridge University Expeditions Society (CUEX), although it is not clear from either the RGS or Cambridge paperwork which expeditions applying to the RGS had connections to CUEX; they were not named as CUEX expeditions in the way that OUEC expeditions often were. While active in the provision of advice and other forms of support, at Cambridge it seems to have been the Worts Travelling Scholars Fund which was of particular importance in gaining financial and other support for expeditionary work, rather than CUEX. The Worts Fund began operating in 1927, shortly after the introduction of research leave in 1926 (Heffernan and Jons, 2013). Several of the Cambridge-originating women-participating expeditions mentioned in the previous chapter received support from it, including Sidonie Manton towards her participation in the RGS-supported 1928 Great Barrier Reef Expedition; Elinor Gardner, towards her 1930 Kharga Oasis research; and Edgar Barton Worthington for the Cambridge African Lakes expedition in 1930.

In the post war period, the strong degree of overlap between Cambridge expeditions applying to the RGS for support and also applying to the Worts Fund continued. Although most of the expeditions that were thus jointly supported appear to have been all-male, there were a handful of women-participating applications, including Marjorie Findlay’s planned (but cancelled) West Greenland expedition in 1950 and H W

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32 Thanks to Heike Jons for providing unpublished material relating to the Worts Fund covering 1927-1939 which I draw on here. While a grant had been made in 1892-93 from the Worts Travelling Scholars Fund, it was not until 1927 that the Fund began regularly dispensing grants to Cambridge scholars for overseas travel and research.


36 Minutes of Research and Expeditions Committee, 17 April 1950, Committee Minutes vol. 1950-1953, reverse of p. 109, RGS-IBG Archives; Minutes of Research and Expeditions Committee, 5 June 1950, Committee Minutes vol. 1950-1953, reverse of p. 115, RGS-IBG Archives; General Board Paper no. 1328, Worts Fund and Bartle Frere Exhibitions 1950, GB 570 Box 738, 1946-1955, Cambridge University Archives. It is unclear from the surviving paperwork why this expedition was subsequently cancelled.
Underhill’s 1950 expedition to Algeria, upon which he was to be accompanied by his wife. More importantly, however, a number of Cambridge-based women, including Marjorie Sweeting and Jean Clark, applied themselves to both institutions for a number of different projects – sometimes to one, sometimes the other, and occasionally both, in an indication of the strength of the networks between and around these two institutions. Thus Clark received support from the RGS in 1948, alongside Glyn Jones and whilst an undergraduate, for research in an unspecified region. It is likely that this research was the precursor to a number of Worts Fund-supported glaciological expeditions in the early 1950s led by Clark, on which she worked alongside A T Grove, her future husband and colleague (Maddrell, 2009a). It is likely that if these were largely or even purely glaciological expeditions, then the team did not consider it worth applying to the RGS.

Similarly, and in spite of the cancellation of her 1950 plans, Findlay received RGS support for two further Greenland expeditions in 1951 and 1952, which did go ahead. There were also Cambridge-affiliated applicants, like Harriet Wanklyn Steers, who received RGS support for work in Czechoslovakia in 1946, but who did not apply to the

38 Minutes of Council 5 April 1948, Council Minutebooks vol. 17. p. 19, RGS-IBG Archives; Minutes of Research and Expeditions Committee 22 March 1948, Committee Minutes 1946-1947, reverse of p. 53, RGS-IBG Archives. Although the woman in question is named as ‘Joan’, I think that this is very likely a typo, and that this was Jean Clark.
39 General Board Paper No. 927. Worts Fund and Bartle Frere Exhibitions 1949, p. [1], Records of the General Board (of the Faculties) and several of its sub-committees and related bodies: 570 Worts and Bartle Frere. GB 570 Box 738, 1946-1955 (1 box), Cambridge University Archives; G B Notes Grants for 1950-51, Folder 3 Box 738, Worts Fund 1951, Records of the General Board (of the Faculties) and several of its sub-committees and related bodies: 570 Worts and Bartle Frere. GB 570 Box 738, 1946-1955 (1 box), Cambridge University Archives. Also bundle of correspondence relating to 1950 applications, in Records of the General Board (of the Faculties) and several of its sub-committees and related bodies: 570 Worts and Bartle Frere. GB 570 Box 738, 1946-1955 (1 box), Cambridge University Archives.
It is possible that Wanklyn Steers did not apply because at that time she did not have an official position at Cambridge; at some point around this time she turned down a Fellowship at Girton in order to focus on her young family (Maddrell, 2009a).

While many of the women in this study would go on to have families, there is no evidence of European women taking their young children with them on RGS-supported expeditionary work in the archival records used for this study, although adult children sometimes accompanied their parents.

This is in contrast to the experiences of Clark, who later took her young children with her on expeditionary work alongside her husband (Maddrell, 2009a). However, there are examples of team members from local communities bringing their families and children with them on RGS-supported expeditions. For example, on the British East Greenland Expedition in 1935, the Inuit families who undertook much of the logistical work brought their young children with them (Wager, 1937; Hargreaves, 1991). While marriage itself does not seem to have been a barrier to expeditionary participation during the study period – rather, as discussed in the previous chapter, it could open up opportunities for women – motherhood does seem to have been a barrier, at least when the children were young enough to require sustained care. As a result, those women who did go on to have families seem to have done so after their RGS-supported expeditionary work.

Returning to Cambridge and the Worts Fund, the pattern of female academics carefully selecting appropriate venues of possible support can be linked to the fact that the RGS and the Worts Fund had different aims in terms of what kinds of work they wished to support, and were thus operating within slightly different sets of discursive norms. It is also probable that their male colleagues were similarly strategic in their applications, a pattern beyond the scope of this thesis. The Worts Fund was framed in terms of granting support for overseas academic travel and research, and not explicitly for expeditions, whilst as we have seen the RGS concentrated on supporting what it defined as

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41 Minutes of Research Committee 11 November 1946, Committee Minutes 1946-1949, p. 7 (verso), RGS-IBG Archives.
expeditionary work. While these categories could and sometimes did overlap, they were different discursive formations which each encompassed different practices, tropes, and ideas. The category of academic travel could include attendance at conference and other forms of knowledge exchange, and research in settings such as archives, libraries, and laboratories which are usually contrasted discursively with ‘the field’ or expeditionary space. Just as the Worts Fund focused on other kinds of spaces, it also did not include the sense of a need for potentially dangerous or challenging elements, which was part of the discursive formation of expeditions. It is possible that the Worts Fund was considered to be a particularly likely source of support by female undergraduates (with preliminary research suggesting a higher proportion of Worts Fund applications coming from women or for teams involving them), because of this omission of ‘expedition’, and the associated discourses and norms, from its remit, particularly if these expeditionary tropes and discourses were associated with men and the appropriate performance of masculinity.

It is also important to note that not all university expeditions applied to the RGS during this period, perhaps because their subject area fell outside the remit of the RGS, or because they could secure sufficient assistance elsewhere. Some of these expeditions were mixed ones, an example being the Cambridge/London Iceland expedition in 1970, a primarily ornithological expedition involving personnel from both Cambridge and UCL, including two women (Morrison, 1977). Further investigation could uncover more evidence of women’s involvement in expeditionary work through universities during this period, beyond the RGS.

The 1960s rise in women’s participation

Beginning around 1960 there was a vast increase in the number of applications being made to the RGS for expeditionary support, with a total of 779 applications between 1961 and 1970, 151 of which included female participants. Alongside this overall increase, there was also an increase in the proportion of projects that included women, rising to 36% by
1970. There were a number of factors driving this increase in the proportion of women-participating applications. The first of these is likely to have been that women were gaining greater access to the male-dominated networks discussed in the previous section, including those around universities. Mixed university-associated expeditions, including mixed undergraduate expeditions, continued throughout the 1960s. They now included applications from a range of different institutions beyond those already discussed. This expansion also included newer institutions, as well as a number of technical colleges. Although women's participation rates in higher education would not take off until well into the 1970s, they were steadily increasing throughout the 1960s, and this gradual normalisation of women's presence in previously male-dominated institutions may have helped to improve their chances of participation in expeditionary work.

During this period one key strategy for navigating male-dominated networks and institutions, both within universities and around expeditionary work more generally, was the formation and growth of women-centred networks of support. These played an important part in increasing women's RGS-supported expeditionary participation in the 1960s. The creation of women-focused networks, and the importance of such networks for supporting women's geographical work, was not a new development. Alongside the Ladies Alpine Club mentioned above, groups like the Le Play Society and the Geographical Fieldwork Group provided routes to participation in fieldwork for many women during the early and mid-twentieth century (see Maddrell, 2009a). As Maddrell also notes, the expansion in women's colleges, and the women-focused networks that these consisted of and represented, was very important for women's career progression in academic geography. Such colleges provided both 'role models for students who were educated in the belief that women could achieve anything', and 'significant foci for female employment' (Maddrell 2009a 327). This could plausibly be translated to the case of women's opportunities for participation in expeditionary work through the RGS: role models of previous female achievement in this area, and female-focused opportunities for women where they, because these were not open to male rivals, might be more likely to succeed.
This section will now consider two examples of such women-focused organisations active in the 1960s and which were closely linked to increasing women’s participation in RGS-supported expeditionary work.

The first of these is the Oxford University Women’s Exploration Club (OUWEC). This was a sister organisation to the OUEC, and was founded in 1960 to circumvent the exclusionary effects of the OUEC ban on female membership. It sent out a number of women-only expeditions over the course of the 1960s, making up an important part of women-participating RGS-supported expeditions in the decade, with 10 applications between 1960 and 1969, nine of which were successful. There continued to be mixed expeditions from Oxford throughout this period, presumably involving research staff rather than undergraduates. OUEC and OUWEC were amalgamated in late 1969, with their first mixed expedition in 1970, marking the end of the official single-sex expeditions policy. There had been women-only university-affiliated expeditions before, including the Bedford College expedition to Iceland in 1952; however, the foundation of the OUWEC was a new development, particularly with regard to its developing institutional backing.

At the time of the foundation of OUWEC, and its first expedition, to the Azores in 1960, Oxford refused to condone or sanction mixed undergraduate expeditions. This approach was not shared by most of its peer institutions, and was by this point rather old-fashioned, and driven largely by the sexism of senior members of the university. However, the ban on mixed expeditions seems to derive more from gendered social norms – that women were incapable of undertaking expeditionary work, that it simply was not done that they attempt it, and that their presence would be a distraction to their male colleagues – rather than perceived threats to sexual protocol and etiquette (although, as these were undergraduate expeditions, it is possible that such anxieties also played a role

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42 Minutes of Research and Expeditions Committee, 31 March 1952, Committee Minutes vol. 1950-1953, reverse of p. 166, RGS-IBG Archives.

(see Maddrell, 2009a)). As such, it can be seen as an extreme expression and continuation of the gendered discourses around female participation in expeditionary work already discussed above. That is, the explicit bar to women joining the OUEC was at one end of a continuum of discourses making it unthinkable that they could undertake expeditionary work, with the surprise and later acquiescence of the Durham 1948 male team members, and of Ives and his male colleagues on the Nottingham Iceland expeditions, towards the other end. The exclusion of female undergraduates from the OUEC was one of a number of such barriers to women fully participating in the opportunities provided by the university at that time; women were also excluded from the Oxford Union, and could attend only as the guests of male members.44

Jenny Callender and Janet Henshall were then undergraduates in the geography department, who asked to join the annual undergraduate expedition run by the department, and supported by OUEC. They were refused permission on the basis of their gender and subsequent inability to join OUEC under its entrance rules.45 Their resulting anger and indignation at being denied the opportunities available to their male peers was shared by geologists Jane Bennell and Judith Milburn, and by zoologists Gillian Beeson and Lisette Coghlan. Whilst the others were undergraduates, Bennell and Beeson were graduate students, with Beeson having already undertaken zoological fieldwork in Norway as part of a mixed team.46 As Bennell recalls, ‘we sat there and we said “what can we do about it? It’s not fair.” And I said “Organise our own.”’47

In an illustration of the importance of senior academic women in sponsoring and supporting the expeditionary work of junior women members, the prospective team had a

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'great ally' in Marjorie Sweeting. Sweeting was the geography senior member at St Hugh’s College (see Maddrell, 2009a), one of the women’s colleges, and the college of both Milburn and Callender, as Callender recalls:

the person who was really most helpful to us, was Dr. Marjorie Sweeting, who was the geography don at St Hugh’s College, and she encouraged us very much, and she said to Judy and Jane, ‘not India I think’ [laughter], ‘go somewhere that’s more manageable’, and we’d heard that the Azores had had a recent volcano, so it was an excellent choice, because it was accessible.49

Sweeting served as a referee for the team’s applications to funders, including the RGS; by this time, this was a particularly important part of the RGS application process. In a mark of the importance of RGS support at this time, as discussed above, the expedition team recall that getting the support of the RGS – a grant of £50, loan of a measuring tape, and the all-important ‘approval’ – was crucial to their getting support from other institutions, and for finally getting the approval of the university, and grudging support from the OUEC in the shape of a list of firms to contact for support.50 The Azores team showed great ingenuity in applying to a range of firms beyond the usual list, including a firm which supplied them with suntan lotion to test, in addition to two new perfumes to test, ‘Tweeds’ and ‘Tiaras’, which proved rather less useful in the field.51

This first expedition marked the formation of the OUWEC, in which Sweeting continued to play a key role as senior member alongside Dr Audrey Butt of the Pitt Rivers Museum.52 As Sweeting described it in late 1963:

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52 Marjorie Sweeting to Christopher Perrins, 26 December 1963, Henrietta Hutton Memorial Fund Papers, RGS-IBG Archives.
At least one or two expeditions go out from the club every year. The expeditions are similar, though not as tough, as those of the men's club. They include ornithologists, anthropologists, geographers etc., and other naturalists. We have between 30-40 members each year, and usually about 12-15 of these go on expeditions each year and often more.53

The second expedition in 1961, to the Madeiras, was led by Catherine Delano-Smith (see Maddrell, 2009a).54 This included amongst its members Henrietta Cooke, whose untimely death in 1963 led to the establishment of the Henrietta Hutton Memorial Fund (HHMF) at the RGS by her friends and family. This fund was originally founded to support Oxford undergraduate women's expeditionary geographical work. Whilst it was held at the RGS and operated as one of their grants, it was also closely linked with the OUWEC, and supported many of the OUWEC expeditions during the 1960s.55 The first two supported were expeditions to Bijapur, India,56 and to Iceland, both in 1964.57 Both the OUWEC and the HHMF represent alternative networks and sources of support explicitly aimed at enabling women to participate in expeditions, which may have contributed towards the rise in women-involved expeditions (in both numbers and proportion) during this period.

The HHMF is also of importance as an RGS-based fund explicitly aimed at supporting

53 Marjorie Sweeting to Christopher Perrins, 26 December 1963, Henrietta Hutton Memorial Fund Papers, RGS-IBG Archives.
54 Applications from Expeditions 1961, p. 5, Grants 1963-1965, Expedition Grants 1965-1975, RGS-IBG Archives; Expeditions 1961, p. [1], Grants 1963-1965, Expedition Grants 1965-1975, RGS-IBG Archives; Catherine Delano-Smith to Gervais Huxley, 14 April 1964, Henrietta Hutton Memorial Fund Papers, RGS-IBG Archives. In this letter, Delano-Smith suggests that they were not officially an OUWEC expedition, and that it was their expedition that was at least partly the impetus for the OUWEC's formation. Whilst it is likely that the OUWEC was only formalised into a club over a period of months, from the accounts of Sweeting and the Azores team members it seems clear that the plan for its formation was set in motion upon the return of the Azores team, not least because they donated their equipment and remaining funds to the club for future use. See Report of the Oxford University Women's Azores Expedition 1960, [n.d.]. Printed by the Church Army Press, __wley, Oxford, [En]lan[dl] 3496 [worn, illegible in places], Somerville College Library.
women. Another example is the Lady Dorothy Mills Award. Rather than an ongoing fund, this was intended as a one-off grant of £1000 to a woman engaged in geographical work overseas; it was awarded to Milada Kalab in 1965 for anthropological work in Cambodia.58

Another women-centred network, which also began operating in the early 1960s, was the British Girls Exploring Society (BGES). Established in 1961, this was a sister organisation to the British Schools Exploring Society (BSES, now the British Exploring Society (BES)), and like the OUWEC, was explicitly set up to provide opportunities for ‘girls to go on expeditions to wild and remote regions’.59 Two of its expeditions, to the Faroes in 1963 and 1965, received RGS support during the 1960s.60 This was part of a wider pattern of the RGS supporting school expeditions which began in the 1960s, but seems to have been discontinued in the 1970s. Alongside the BSES and the BGES, a number of schools, including private schools, grammar schools, and comprehensives, applied directly for support for ‘junior’ expeditions, usually aimed at A Level students. As this coincided with a shift from supporting undergraduate expeditions, at least in comparison with the high point in the early 1950s, this provided an important new avenue of expeditionary support for young women. The BGES itself

was wound up in 1972/3 for the best of all reasons; it was no longer necessary. By then girls were being taken on expeditions equally with boys and it was especially good to realise that schools began to arrange exciting expeditions and boys and girls were involved right from the planning stage.61


For both the OUWEC and the BGES, then, it was a matter of years rather than decades for parity to be achieved, in the sense of both women and girls being given opportunities to participate on equal terms with male peers, with official barriers removed. The women-focused networks had allowed women to prove their credentials, such that there could no longer be official rationale for excluding them. The impact of second wave feminism during this period, in which the rise of women-centred networks and institutions was an important part, along with accompanying socio-cultural shifts, is also likely to have played an important part in this.

**Conclusion**

The postwar period saw significant changes in a number of different areas connected to the RGS's support of expeditionary work. The first of these concerned the RGS's actual process and policy for supporting expeditions, which underwent a significant formalisation and standardisation. These changes had two major aims, firstly of keeping RGS support within manageable limits, commensurate to their available resources, and secondly of preserving the value of that support, by only extending it to projects they deemed worthy. In this, the RGS seem to have been seeking to maintain its hegemonic position as the arbiters of good expeditionary practice during this period.

The second significant change was a shift in the types of expeditions applying to the RGS for support. This was rooted in wider social changes taking place during this period, and in particular the expansion of the higher education sector. Most importantly, this included a new emphasis on ‘training’ expeditions, focused on undergraduate and A Level students, and more aimed at equipping them with skills and knowledge than with producing new or original geographical knowledge. This had a negative impact on women's ability to participate in RGS-supported expeditions during the early part of this period, as it coincided with a narrowing of opportunities for women in higher education. However, this trend went into reverse around 1960, as opportunities for women in higher
education began to expand again, linked to the development of official and unofficial networks aimed at supporting women.

In terms of network participation, the rise in ‘junior’ or ‘training’ expeditions meant that a significant number of people involved in RGS expeditions during this period were in the process of gaining credentials and qualifications, rather than already possessing them as a pre-requisite to gaining RGS support. This represented an important innovation in the RGS’s support of expeditionary work. Another important innovation, related to this, was the introduction of formally taking up references to the process of applying for support. This meant that direct participation in the networks of the RGS was no longer key to receiving its support; in particular, Fellowship was no longer closely linked to receiving support, at least for the expeditionary participants and applicants themselves. The new emphasis on the role played by referees also helped the developing women-centred networks of support to flourish, with younger women able to draw on the credentials of their more established mentors and referees in order to receive support for their expeditionary work.

While more official barriers to women’s participation were overthrown in the postwar period, including access to exploration societies and clubs, implicit and informal barriers remained in place. These included the set of discourses and tropes associated with what constituted good expeditionary practice, including an emphasis on a particular embodied physicality which was strongly gendered masculine, and which could make difficult to imagine women undertaking expeditionary work. These ideas could also be internalised by women.

The last two chapters have examined the early stages of expeditionary preparation and planning, mapping out the previously unknown territory of women’s participation in RGS-supported expeditionary work. This discussion has focused closely on the RGS and its spaces and networks. The next two chapters consider aspects of women’s expeditionary experiences once in the field. For most expeditions the RGS did not maintain strong connections with them during this period, although there would have been some contact.
As a result, the discussion will shift away from the RGS for these two chapters, before returning to the spaces and networks associated with the Society for Chapter 8, which considers spaces of reception of geographical knowledge within and around the RGS.
CHAPTER 6: EXPEDITIONARY MOBILITIES

Introduction

This chapter will examine how the concept of mobilities can be used to explore and analyse women's experiences of expeditionary work, and their production of geographical knowledges on expedition. It will draw on the discussion in Chapter 2 of the discursive importance historically accorded to mobility in the validation of expeditionary knowledges, and the relationship between expeditionary place and expeditionary mobility; and on the discussion in Chapter 3 of the availability of rich source material for reconstructing the historical mobilities of past expeditions. The chapter will use reconstructed historical mobilities from a number of women-participating RGS-supported expeditions to discuss and examine a number of themes around expeditionary mobility and immobility, with particular regard to the relationship between gender, (im)mobility, and knowledge production.

Mobilities are fundamentally relational, and expeditions can be read as socially and culturally embedded 'constellations of mobility' (Cresswell, 2010, p. 18), geared towards geographical knowledge production, and evocative of the gendered mobilities, discourses, and embodied experiences which shaped that knowledge production. In this, the expeditions are also assemblages of people, places, objects, movements, and ideas (Deleuze and Guattari, 1980 [1988]; see Bennett, 2010; Gibbs, 2013), including non-human actants (Latour, 1990 [1996], 2005). This chapter is about the embodiment of knowledge production, and specifically about mobile and immobile knowledge-producing bodies on expedition (Driver, 2000; Powell, 2002; Bracken and Mawdsley, 2004). In discussion of these historical mobilities, the chapter will also draw upon the technologies of mobility that enabled and restricted them, including relationships with non-human animals as forms of transportation, and with machines of various kinds.
As stated in Chapter 1, in this thesis expeditionary space is understood as that space encompassed by being ‘in-the-field’, both in terms of the various places visited (expeditionary place), and the more diffuse and liminal discursive space encountered while on expedition. This was temporal as well as spatial. In the expeditionary accounts produced by many of these women, there is a sense of expeditionary time being unusual, or special, or distinct from ordinary time at home. This is despite the fact that time spent ‘in-the-field’ varied considerably, from a few weeks over the summer vacation between university terms, to several months or even years. This sense of expeditionary time as somehow different or privileged also reflects that for several of these women, throughout the period, this was either their only experience of fieldwork or expeditionary travel, or one of a handful of such experiences. Neither Oonagh Fitzpatrick nor Helen Brash participated in an expedition along the lines of their Iceland experience again, although Brash undertook fieldwork in West Africa for the Gold Coast Soil Survey, and Fitzpatrick used her experiences whilst leading school fieldtrips in her career as a teacher.¹

Similarly, neither Stella Worthington nor Phyllis Wager participated in expeditionary work again after their expeditions in the 1930s, although both their husbands did. This was a clearly gendered pattern; until the early 1960s middle-class women were expected to give up any work outside the home upon marriage and devote their times to their families, as discussed in Chapter 5. Thus it was largely the unmarried women – like Gertrude Bell, Gertrude Caton-Thompson, Elinor Gardner, Freya Stark, and Beatrice de Cardi – who participated in a number of expeditions over time. As a result, for several of the women in this study who were making the most of a rare chance to undertake expeditionary work, which might not come again, expeditionary time and space became enchanted because it was so out of the ordinary.

The examples given here are organised around the ‘life-cycle’ and rhythms of an expedition, from the outward journey, to movements around the expedition site, to the journey home. Furthermore, in common with the broader mobilities literature, the

¹ Avril Maddrell and Sarah L. Evans, Interview with Helen Sandison (née Brash) and Oonagh Linehan (née Fitzpatrick), RGS-IBG, 17 June 2013.
mobilities discussed operate at a range of different scales, from voyages across continents and oceans, to everyday movement around field sites, to questions of bodily deportment. Recent mobilities literature has examined patterns of mobility and immobility (and the ways in which these are gendered), in place of the valorisation of nomadic, mobile perspectives often associated with masculinity (see Hannam, Sheller and Urry, 2006). It also draws upon the relationship between mobility and temporality. This chapter will examine expeditionary rhythms and arrhythmias and their importance to the production of expeditionary knowledges in light of this developing literature. The argument that will be developed focuses on two levels of expeditionary rhythm, and draws on Lefebvre's concept of rhythmanalysis (Lefebvre, 2004; Edensor and Holloway, 2008; Edensor, 2010; Maddrell, 2011).

The chapter will argue that moments of both immobility and mobility are central to the operation and success of an expedition, and that expeditions represent an ongoing process of rebalancing between movement and stasis, a process that generates a sense of overall expeditionary rhythm. The success of a given expedition is tied to its ability to achieve an appropriate overall rhythm – in which the movements and stops necessary proceeded in a balanced and suitable manner – with unintended arrhythmias proving disruptive and even destructive. Enforced halts, and the resulting lack of mobility, as well as enforced movements, could result in severe frustration for expeditionary participants, and impact seriously on the success of the expedition and knowledge production. Similarly, disruption to the everyday rhythms of an expedition – the necessary repetitions and daily tasks - was often detrimental to its processes of knowledge production. Just as they are made up of a number of different mobilities, so over their life-cycle expeditions are composed of a number of different rhythms, which must be appropriately managed if an expedition is to succeed.

In analysing examples of expeditionary immobility from women-participating expeditions, this chapter does not seek to reify the discourses which associate femininity and immobility. Instead, it seeks to tease out how these women worked with and around
such discourses, resisting and subverting them as well as accommodating or according with them, and how these discourses shaped the reception of their geographical knowledge production. The discussion will also draw on recent work on the importance of moorings to mobilities, from the literal mooring points on docks and at airports to more figurative uses of the term (Cresswell and Merriman, 2011). As a result, the chapter also addresses the relationship between place and mobility, and the experiencing of place through mobility, with place and mobility intimately connected and assembled. That experiencing of expeditionary place included elements of enchantment, as well as more prosaic aspects.

The chapter will also consider the forms and intended audiences of the surviving texts used in this analysis, including the conventions and tropes which governed them, and, where possible, their silences. I now turn to consider a number of different themes relating to women's expeditionary mobilities, beginning with a discussion of the outward journey into expeditionary space.

**The outward journey**

Consideration of an expedition’s mobilities begins before an expeditionary team embarks from ‘home’, during the planning stages of the expedition where different mobilities and forms or transportation are considered and chosen. The outward journey, as well as the preliminary planning around it, before embarkation, is surrounded by particular expeditionary discourses and imaginaries, dealing with expectation, enchantment, fear, and dread (Blunt, 1994; Kulick and Kohler, 1996, cited by Driver, 2000; Driver, 2001). These can be approached through the forms of mobility used, and through an analysis of the pattern of mobility and immobility which forms part of a particular expedition’s journey. Analysis of descriptions of these outbound mobilities can also provide insight into the approaches of the women in question towards geographical knowledge production, and their preferred methods and epistemological perspectives. For many expeditions,
throughout the period under study, the outbound stage consisted of covering distance quickly through modern technologies of motion, made possible by the industrial revolution (Smith, 2001), particularly since these were often significant journeys in terms of distance travelled, often crossing oceans and continents. Using planes and ships, this stage was usually not particularly arduous in and of itself.

The impact of industrial modernity, and of the colonialism with which it was so closely intertwined, can be seen in the experiences of Olive Murray Chapman. In a lecture to the RGS, Murray Chapman described her recent exploratory and ethnographic expedition to Madagascar in 1939, and discussed the movements and mobilities of the expedition. Sailing from Marseilles to Madagascar in ‘just under four weeks’, Murray Chapman described how:

Disembarking a week later at Tamatave [in Madagascar], I reached Tananarive by rail. Forty-five years ago there was no railway and no roads: transport depended entirely on the filanjana or carrying-chair [that is, a chair, carried by bearers]; to-day, through French enterprise, although railways are still very few and far between, a newly constructed road runs the entire length of the island ... other roads, passable under good weather conditions, connect many parts of the country. Journeys off the beaten track and through the forests must still, of course, be made by filanjana. (Murray Chapman, 1940 p. 15)

Murray Chapman emphasises not only the speed with which she travelled, but also the speed with which these technological innovations had been made, in the space of less than fifty years. The connections between this rapid expansion and the French colonial effort that underpinned it are also made explicit.

There are parallels with the experiences of Kate Ricardo and Janet Owen on their 1936 African expedition, particularly with regard to the emphasis placed on the speed of change. Despite its being graded as an express, and consisting of ‘excellent rolling stock made in Manchester’ (the international, colonial connection and network of trade again), the railway on which they travelled had a complex interaction with the local landscape it was traversing. The features of this landscape – thick dust that kept getting in the engines
and causing them to break down, so they needed replacing, and topography resulting in a 'very twisty' line, slowing the train down – worked against this railway operating as a swift agent of modernity, and against the easy colonial exploitation of the landscape (Bertram and Trant, 1991).

Nearly twenty years later, the Abinger expedition to the Himalayas in 1956 combined a number of modern industrial mobilities in its members' outward journeys. Frances Delany flew from her geological fieldwork base in Africa; Eileen Gregory sailed from the UK to Delhi; and finally, their car heavily loaded with supplies and equipment, Joyce Dunsheath and Hilda Reid drove 8500 miles from the UK to their meeting place in the Punjab (Dunsheath et al, 1958), a journey which took them approximately two months. What is particularly interesting is the way that Dunsheath explicitly positions herself as an explorer, claiming that status for herself and for her team. When discussing how they should travel to the Himalayas, Reid had questioned whether two unescorted women with little knowledge of the inside of a car could undertake such an arduous journey [my emphasis]. Roads would undoubtedly be bad and garages few, the car would have to be specially equipped for the long desert stretches, and the way would lie through countries where riots and bloodshed were everyday occurrences. Supposing the car should break down in the loneliest spot? Supposing one of us got yellow fever or dysentery or any of the other plagues of the East? Suppose we should be attacked by bandits, suppose ... But explorers must be of sterner stuff than this, and there was magic in the names of Istanbul, Damascus, Baghdad and Isfahan. (Dunsheath et al, 1958, p. 5)

That sense of enchantment and mystery, with regard to the relationship between expedition team member and place, and particularly in shaping their perception of the places they travelled to, is a very common trope in expeditionary narratives, throughout the period. What is particularly interesting is that the enchantment is often intercut with more prosaic details and interludes – in Dunsheath and Reid's case, the itinerary produced for their car journey by the Automobile Association came as a 'typewritten sheet outlining the way just as if we had asked for a route to Brighton!' (Dunsheath et al, 1958, p. 15).
Many of these texts seek to balance the details which they present as beguiling or exotic with more everyday concerns, and often make use of self-deprecating humour, echoing the approach taken by earlier travellers such as Mary Kingsley (Blunt, 1994). Reid’s narration of the lengthy car journey takes up two chapters of the subsequent book about the expedition; an entertaining and conventional travelogue which covers the excitement, tedium, enchantment, and anxiety of such a long journey. They present themselves emphatically as two Englishwomen abroad, plucky and blithe in the face of discomfort, obstructive officials, threatening and incomprehensible locals, and the unknown.

Evidence of outbound mobilities helping to establish expeditionary expectations and reveal epistemological approaches can also be found in the differing descriptions given by two members of the Wakefield expedition of 1937 to 1938 of their experiences flying (as passengers) to the Hadhramaut (in the Yemen). In a letter to her sister, alongside detailed description of her enjoyment of the comforts and amenities of the plane, Elinor Gardner, the expedition’s geologist, writes that ‘Greece & its “drowned” coastline & islands was fascinating from the air – it would be a marvellous way to teach geography – all the structure of the mountains was so clear & one can see the river deltas running far out to sea’. This is a clear example of how modern technologies of motion, in passing by and through landscapes at such speed and at such distance, help to compress these landscapes through landscapes at such speed and at such distance, help to compress these landscapes

2 Elinor Gardner to ‘Beloved’ [Emilie Gardner], 24 October 1937, SSC/48 EWG 1, RGS-IBG. I have tentatively identified the unnamed recipient of some of these letters, ‘Beloved’, as Emilie Gardner, Elinor’s older sister. The tone of the letters suggests an affectionate and close relationship with the recipient. Throughout the letters, there are regular references to ‘The Bothy’ at ‘Borden Wood’, which appears to have been a shared residence, rented to tenants whilst Elinor was in the Hadhramaut on expedition. Details extend to discussion of which items in the larder the tenants were to have access to, and other such domestic details. In her memoirs, Elinor’s colleague on the Hadhramaut dig, Gertrude Caton-Thompson, makes explicit reference to Elinor and Emilie’s shared ownership of this property at this time:

‘She [Elinor] and her elder sister Emilie had been given in the early 1930’s by Mrs Lamb an old stone-built gardener’s cottage or bothy on the Borden Wood property for their lifetime. Emilie had brilliantly altered and added to it without damage to its charm, and made it into a comfortable four bedroom cottage with about ¾ acre of ground with lawns and old apple-trees. It had been a most generous and rewarding gift and gave them both a secure base both in peace and war. Many a happy holiday have I spent in it, and indeed rented it in 1939-40 for a year while recovering from Arabia-caused illness.’ (Caton-Thompson, 1983, p. 198).

Elinor also makes reference to ‘Beloved’ s cottage at Hedd in the letters; Caton-Thompson also refers to renting ‘Emilie Gardner’s seaside cottage at Hedd near Harlech’ (Caton-Thompson, 1983, p. 200).
into 2-dimensional screens, so that the actual view is experienced as a representation of itself, as if it were a map, painting, or photograph (see Schivelbusch 1977; Smith 2001). What is also fascinating about this passage is the way that Gardner is clearly thinking pedagogically, so that her previous experience and professional persona shape the way she experiences this aerial mobility.

In her published popular account of this expedition, Gardner’s colleague, Freya Stark, a travel writer and ethnographer, describes the ongoing flight from Aden to the Hadhramaut in ways which reflect her own background and professional interest:

We flew eastwards from Aden, in a cool air filled with early sunlight, a honey light over the sandy shore. We flew with the Indian Ocean on our right, puckered in motionless ripples, and upon it the broad white roadway of the sun. Seen from so high, the triple, lazy, lace-like edge of waves crept slowly; they did not turn all at once, but unrolled from end to end in a spiral motion, as it were the heart of a shell unwinding. Our aeroplane hung over the azure world with silver wings. (Stark, 1940, p. 1)

This is a lyrical and poetic passage, in keeping with Stark’s reputation as an evocative travel writer, and with the poetic travel writing tradition in which Stark positioned herself and her work, which focused on the aesthetic presentation of place. This presentation was also in line with probable audience expectations. Stark sees with an authorial, artistic eye, already shaping the landscape for her readers’ consumption. Evident from this passage is not just the movement of Stark herself, but the way that she moves through a landscape that is itself in motion. The landscape laid out like a painting beneath her is not seen as a static, controllable one to be easily framed and possessed, but rather one that is alive with its own possibilities. She also notes the material, tangible, thick nature of this landscape, albeit evoked in metaphors of suitably delicate, feminine textures, of lace and shells, appropriate to the delicate, fashionable femininity that Stark frequently sought to project.

These images are not the immediate work of a moment, but have been carefully weighed and polished, something true of the writing process in general and of Stark in particular. As Jane Geniesse notes in her biography of Stark (Geniesse, 1999), Stark used
her letters home as a rough draft to collect her thoughts and sketch out images, which would then be later polished up for publication. Stark had this strategy in common with other travel writers working in this period and earlier, such as Isabella Bird some fifty years before (Maddrell, 2009a). In letters from November 1937 to her mother, Stark is already mulling over the feminine images of shells and lace which would later be developed in the passage above. Here, rather than flight, she is discussing a drive in the Hadhramaut in the early stages of the expedition:

You can’t think of the loveliness of our drive along the sands towards the sunset: the shallow wave-water pink and brilliant like a seashell and rows of breaking waves like frills of lace beyond; the blue, tumultuous ranges running out to their wild capes: the grasses and rushes of the shore and some old boat with pointed prow or black quick-moving figure of a Beduin like an incarnation of the Night: and on the wet sand, millions [emphasis original] of crabs running from us as quick as drops of water.³

Again, the landscape is full of movement, with Stark finding beauty in its motion. Stark’s use of the tropes of the enchanted East in her writings is complicated, and rests on presenting herself as having privileged and authentic access to the ‘real’ versions of the places she visits and people she meets. Through this self-presentation, she gains authority and status, and authentication for the knowledge that she produces. Thus, she plays with the Orientalist tropes of the mysterious East; presenting herself as open to its enchantments and aware of its realities. The version of the East she presents in her writings is a constructed one aimed at bolstering her own status as a knowing traveller.

Expeditionary space could also be experienced as enchanted without playing into orientalist or othering tropes and discourses. One such way is that in which expeditionary time-space was experienced as liminal. That is, participation in an expedition could be experienced and perceived as entering into quite another place and time, not merely by travelling to a different place, but rather into a time-space which was experienced differently to ordinary life (Maddrell, 2011; Maddrell and della Dora, 2013). There are

hints of this in the outward journeys of Brash and Fitzpatrick on their respective expeditions to Iceland in 1953 and 1954. Commenting on the journey on a transport ship in 1954, in a much later oral history interview, Fitzpatrick recalled being delighted and astonished by the smorgasbord of meats and cheeses available at mealtimes. This was a distinct difference from the ‘fairly hard tack’ that she was used to at home, soon after the end of rationing, and helped to mark out the experience as being out of the ordinary, as taking place in expeditionary, rather than normal, time.4

A similar sense of liminality emerges from Lucy Evelyn Cheesman’s discussion of the outward journey of the St George expedition to the southern Pacific in 1924. Cheesman discusses the physical motion and capacities of the boat used for this part of the expedition in relation to opportunities for knowledge production and exchange. The St George had originally been a private vessel, ‘the former plaything of a millionaire’, which had been specially adapted for the expedition in order to accommodate paying guests as well as the scientific team. Unfortunately these changes had ‘interfered with the ballast’ and the balance of the ship, with the result that the St George was ‘painfully slow owing entirely to what the promoters had done to her’ (Cheesman, 1957, p. 87).

Subsequently, while there were only limited opportunities for gathering ‘quite useful knowledge’ at places visited en route, the slow pace of travel generated opportunities for knowledge exchange on board with the other scientists, which helped her on later solo expeditions. Cheesman comments how they held ‘lively discussions’ in the onboard laboratory, while she also assisted her colleagues with some of their research: ‘I skinned birds with Colonel Kelsall, the ornithologist; caught snakes and skinned big lizards; learnt to prepare and label botanical specimens’ (Cheesman, 1957, p. 88).

Cheesman left the St George in Tahiti, having found sufficient original material there to interest her for several months, thereby entering extended expeditionary space. The chapter will now turn to consider mobilities within expeditionary space and in expeditionary places.

4 Oonagh Linehan in Avril Maddrell and Sarah L. Evans, Interview with Helen Sandison (née Brash) and Oonagh Linehan (née Fitzpatrick), RGS-IBG, 17 June 2013.
Mobile ways of knowing and the body-environment relationship: experiencing place through mobility

This section discusses how embodied experience of expeditionary places through mobility helped to generate expeditionary knowledges for women on RGS-supported expeditions. In this stage of an expedition, expedition members were more likely to draw on older, more obviously embodied mobilities such as walking, climbing, and animal-riding, as well as mechanised mobilities including road vehicles and trains. It is also here that the impact of mobility and immobility on practices of knowledge production can be more readily observed, as it is in these spaces and places that knowledge was explicitly being pursued and produced. Here again, expeditions existed as a liminal time-space, and as potentially enchanted places.

In the traditional version of hegemonic fieldwork practice outlined and critiqued by Gillian Rose, the fieldworker is able to conceptually stand outside the othered (and often feminised) landscape in order to study it, even as he is literally standing within it (Rose, 1993; Sparke, 1996; McEwan, 1998). Rose describes this way of knowing as being predominantly visual, and encoded by two particular masculine geographical gazes: the scientific-objective dominating gaze; and the aesthetic-ambivalent admiring gaze. While Rose’s account has been itself criticised as overly reductionist (Bracken and Mawdsley, 2004; Maddrell, 2009a) – women are not ontologically excluded from participation in these hegemonic modes of geographical knowledge production, but can shape and subvert them – earlier feminist work on women like Kingsley (Blunt, 1994; Maddrell, 2009a) has shown that women travellers and geographers do display profound ambivalence in relation to these particular ways of knowing (Phillips, 1997).

By contrast, in the examples that follow, these women depict themselves as being very much within their expeditionary landscapes. As more recent work on fieldwork as both discourse and practice of geographical knowledge production has shown, the body-environment relationship is central to the production of expeditionary geographical
knowledges; it is also a complex and multifaceted relationship (Driver, 2000, 2001; Powell, 2002). This section will discuss knowledge production in terms of the embodied knowledge-producer moving through expeditionary space, and how the two interact with and shape one another, arguing that women’s uneasy relationship with the dominant knowledge-producing gazes makes them more likely to write explicitly about their engagement of other senses in knowledge production. Echoing the work of Donna Haraway and Luce Irigaray, this section will show how a number of different senses can be used to engage with the expeditionary environment and produce knowledge, beyond the visual sense that is traditionally privileged within discourses of knowledge production (see Haraway, 1991; Jones, 2011).

**Mobile ways of looking**

I turn first to mobile ways of looking, and the importance of recognising the embodiment, and thus embeddedness in the environment, of the knowledge producing gaze, and how this can provide a counter to the masculinist hegemonic gazes described by Rose (1993). I begin however with ways of looking which at first seem to demonstrate the god’s-eye-view mode of knowledge production, and of detachment from the passive, inactive landscape being surveyed. The previous section discussed Gardner’s image of the coastline of Greece laid out like a map below her. This is close to the god’s-eye-view associated with cartography and mapmaking, with its associations with the tropes of distance and objectivity found in the traditional discourses around fieldwork.

However, this image is embedded in a broader embodied account. Gardner describes her usual experiences of suffering from travel sickness and nausea whilst flying (although not on this particular trip). This is in addition to her descriptions of other embodied elements of passengering in a plane (that is, travelling in this mode of transport as a passenger rather than as a pilot – see Laurier et al, 2008 and Bissell, 2010), including the comfortable seats, and what it is like to sit in them, and consuming delicious food on
offer during the flight. Gardner’s perspective is therefore a deeply embodied one, even as she moves at a great distance from the landscape in question.

As well as being a means of reaching their chosen expeditionary sites, aerial mobilities could be important once in the field. A good example is that of Gardner’s Kharga Oasis expeditions with Gertrude Caton-Thompson. They had already been in the field at Kharga for three months when the ‘impending visit by plane’ of Lady Bailey was announced in February 1931 (Caton-Thompson, 1983). Bailey was a talented aviator with a string of achievements, the most recent of which had been a solo flight from Croydon to South Africa in spring 1928 (Cooksley, 2011). Caton-Thompson and Gardner, alongside their locally employed colleagues, scrambled to prepare a suitable landing ground. By the time of Bailey’s arrival, however, Caton-Thompson was still dissatisfied with the area they had prepared, and the dangers it potentially presented to Bailey and her plane. In her memoirs she recalled her terror as Bailey came in to land, describing how when Bailey:

dropped to landing level I was more petrified by fright than I have ever been. My heart was thumping. Then we lost sight of her in the dust-storm as she touched down. We all raced towards her … and found her calmly collecting herself. Her first words were “It was a very poor landing”. (Caton-Thompson, 1983, p. 149)

In its discussion of the embodied reactions of an observer watching a pilot land, and to the possibilities of disaster, this passage forms an interesting parallel to the work done by Dydia DeLyser on female pilots’ embodied interactions with their planes, reacting to the arrhythmias of flight that could portend catastrophe (DeLyser, 2010). Although Bailey’s perspective is filtered through Caton-Thompson’s remembered narrative, her assessment of the landing as ‘very poor’ could suggest her acknowledgment of the limits of her own skills, or of the unreliable nature of what was still very new technology. It is particularly interesting to see how Caton-Thompson frames her embodied reaction to the risks entailed by Bailey’s mobility as

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5 Elinor Gardner to ‘Beloved’ [Emilie Gardner], 24 October 1937, SSC/48 EWG 1, RGS-IBG Archives.
one of literal immobility, of being petrified, although this is hardly an unusual reaction to such an event. It is also possible that Caton-Thompson felt a sense of responsibility for the potential disaster, in that she had invited Bailey to join them.

After this inauspicious start, the planned programme of aerial survey and photography was rather more successful than might have been expected given conditions, allowing the team to cover far more ground than they might otherwise have done. The employment of the aerial gaze in this fashion saved Caton-Thompson and Gardner ‘weeks of foot slogging to identify areas of particular interest’ (Caton-Thompson, 1983, p. 150), and so directly shaped the knowledge produced by this expedition. Caton-Thompson, Gardner, and Bailey were able to access this technological advantage through an elite form of mobility, accessed in turn through their social mobility and participation in elite social networks. Caton-Thompson and Gardner would go on to deploy aerial survey during their later Wakefield expedition. These expeditions were among the first wave of projects which made use of aerial photography and observation as part of their fieldwork, so that the aerial gaze becomes central to their epistemologies, and to the results produced.

The aerial gaze was, however, not the only form of mobile knowledge production associated with the visual. I turn now to an example of two different walking gazes, drawn from accounts of the Wakefield expedition. Stark describes their journey driving between the little towns of the Hadhramaut (Stark, 1940). One day, their car temporarily immobilised by a puncture, Caton-Thompson went walking into the jol to continue an earlier search for palaeolithic flints, and thereby ‘improved’ their delay to an hour (Stark, 1940, p. 13). However, from Caton-Thompson's perspective this probably represented her making the most of an unexpected opportunity.

Recounting this and other incidents in a letter to her mother, Stark described how whilst she found the search for flints to be ‘a fascinating game’, she was concerned that ‘one will end by going over Arabia with nose fixed to the ground so
glued in the past as never even to see the modern landscape.' She added in another letter to her mother that she ‘shall never be an archaeologist’ as she was:

far too fond of living things and people. While Gertrude goes wandering with her eyes on the ground for potsherds I am inclined to gossip with all the neighbourhood which slowly gathers and drifts along with us offering bits of hopeful rubbish.7

In these examples, differences in their ways of walking, and the objects and direction of their embodied gazes, illustrate wider epistemological differences between Stark and Caton-Thompson, both in terms of what they found of interest, and in terms of the methods that they employed. In bending her neck to orientate her gaze downwards, and keeping her eyes on the ground, Caton-Thompson was not only walking in a particular way, but also looking and producing knowledge in particular ways. Having such different experiences whilst moving through the same space, ostensibly on the same journey, is not unusual, as can be seen from Avril Maddrell’s research on pilgrimage (Maddrell, 2011, 2013). In her study of pilgrimage walks on the Isle of Man, Maddrell describes how participants experienced the Manx landscape and their movement through it in very different ways, while at the same time also having a sense of shared experience or communitas (Maddrell, 2011). Their experiences are shaped and influenced by their own motivations, interests, dispositions, and previous experience; expeditionary time, as a similarly liminal time-space, can be seen and experienced in similar ways.

I turn now to an example of a knowledge-producing gaze enabled through the working relationship between a human woman and the animal that carried her, taken from the experiences of Gertrude Bell on her 1913 Hayyil expedition. For most of this journey across the desert Bell travelled by camel. Her knowledge production – mapping the physical terrain and political communities through which she passed – was enabled

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6 Freya Stark to Flora Stark, 11 November 1937, printed in Stark, 1976, p. 117
7 Freya Stark to Flora Stark, 22 November 1937, printed in Stark, 1976, p. 120
and inhibited, through a complex relationship between her embodied self, the camel that she rode, and the landscape throughout they moved. At the time that Bell undertook her journey across the deserts of Arabia, travelling by camel was a practical necessity, despite the incursion of the new Hejaz railway, with no roads suitable for mechanised transport. These deserts remained an inaccessible region, with Bell becoming only the second European woman to visit Hayyil. She also had clear practical reasons for avoiding the Hejaz railway, which was an instrument of Ottoman imperial control (Hogarth, 1927). Bell was travelling without the protection of either the British or Turkish governments, and knew that she was likely to be impeded by the Turkish authorities if she wandered within their reach.8

Bell’s strategic choice to travel by camel had three important consequences which helped to shape her experiences of the expedition and the geographical knowledge that she produced. Firstly, her route was shaped by the need to access water for both humans and camels, in a clear example of the way logistical issues could shape expeditionary mobilities and disrupt expeditionary rhythms. The second is that she developed an emotional attachment to the camels – grieving when an exhausted camel had to be euthanized – which influenced her overall state of mind, her responses to the landscape through which she travelled, and the knowledge that she subsequently produced. This also illustrates the importance of Bell’s embodied relationship with these non-human actants to Bell’s wider experiences and expeditionary work, as well as to her mobility. There is resonance here with Robyn Davidson’s later work with camels on her crossing of the Western Australian desert in the 1970s, in which her emotional relationship with her camels was central to her experience of place and the landscape that she traversed (Davidson, 1980 [2012]).

The third consequence is the way that the slow pace of movement across the landscape helped to shape Bell’s experiences of the desert, allowing her time to take bearings and to observe the landscape in great detail. Bell recorded her expeditionary

8 Gertrude Bell to Dick Doughty-Wylie, 16 January 1914, printed in O’Brien 2000, p. 43.
experiences in a diary, kept as a series of letters addressed to her married lover Dick Doughty-Wylie. In one letter she instructs Doughty-Wylie in the nature of the desert landscape as traversed by camel:

travelling in the Nefud is like travelling in the Labyrinth. You are forever skirting round a deep horseshoe pit of sand, perhaps half a mile wide, and climbing up the opposite slope, and skirting round the next horseshoe. If we made a mile an hour as the crow flies we did well.9

This slow pace makes for a highly visual form of engagement with the landscape. For example, in one letter she notes that 'we have ridden for two days over very desolate country and today it has been quite featureless. I got a bearing back for the first hour but after that there was nothing but my camel's ears.'10 Through this narrowed vision, and as a result of the sheer amount of time spent, Bell was able to engage emotionally with the desert landscape on a deep level:

In spite of the desolation and the emptiness, it is beautiful – or is it beautiful partly because of the emptiness? At any rate I love it, and though the camels pace so slowly, eating as they go, I feel no impatience and no desire to get to anywhere.11

Camel-riding allows Bell plenty of time to take bearings for her map, to observe the landscape in great detail, and to emotionally engage with its beauty – echoing Rose's figure of the gazing field-worker, and feeling the pull between objective distancing and aesthetic appreciation that Rose describes (Rose, 1993).

Bell also talks in details in these diaries and letters about the bodily discomfort she experiences from long aching days spent in the saddle. She also comments on how other forms of knowledge production – other ways of moving through and living in

expeditionary space – may be barred to her on account of her gendered position as a woman:

There are two ways of profitable travel in Arabia. One is the Arabia Deserta way, to live with the people and to live like them for months and years. You can learn something thereby, as he [Charles Montague Doughty] did; though you may not be able to tell it again as he could. It’s clear I can’t take that way; the fact of being a woman bars me from it. And the other is [Colonel Gerald] Leachman’s way – to ride swiftly through the country with your compass in your hand, for the map’s sake and for nothing else. And there is some profit in that too. I might be able to do that over a limited space of time, but I am not sure.12

Bell’s example highlights how expeditionary space operates in multiple ways to produce geographical knowledge. In particular, it emphasises how a field-worker or expeditionary participant does not move through an inert, ‘other’ landscape from which knowledge can be safely extracted. Rather, the landscape becomes a richly textured and dynamic space, one that is (re)shaped and (re)made by the presence of the expedition, and which (re)shapes and (re)makes the expedition members too. It also complicates Schivelbusch’s account of two-dimensional, visual engagement with landscape, as permitted by modern technologies of motion, and three dimensional immersion in the landscape, permitted by more traditional ways of moving, perhaps because Bell was not behind the glass of the railway carriage window (Schivelbusch 1977; Smith 2001).

Many of these themes are echoed in the experiences of Caton-Thompson and Gardner on their Kharga Oasis expedition, particularly the emphasis on the productivity of the slow pace of camels, and on the role of the visual in knowledge production. Caton-Thompson and Gardner turned to the use of camels as a form of transportation, rather than relying on motorised vehicles, which Caton-Thompson saw as having proven unreliable for desert work during their previous expeditions. Speaking to the RGS in May 1932, Caton-Thompson described how they had:

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used camel transport only, and have found it in every way preferable for our purpose to the motor trucks used in Faiyum. It takes one slowly but surely to the exact spot, and by the exact route, one wishes, permits of fixed camps in places absolutely inaccessible to any car yet made, and provides on its stately march opportunities to examine in continuous unhurried detail the terrain traversed [my emphasis]. It is certain that the prehistoric sites found on the Libyan Plateau, during our six days' march to Kharga from the Nile Valley, would have escaped notice had not one of us, generally both, continually been scouting on the flanks of a slowly moving caravan. (Caton-Thompson and Gardner, 1932, p. 370)

_Haptic immersion: other mobile ways of knowing_

Other senses could be brought into play in women's expeditionary work, in cases where the sense of embodiment is more apparent. Whilst conducting entomological research after leaving the _St George_ expedition, Cheesman spent time traversing the interior of Tahiti in order to survey insect species; following narrow trails over hills and through thickets 'of very dense scrub', and cutting her way with a machete through 'a jungle of undergrowth of a peculiarly stubborn kind' (Cheesman, 1927, p. 9). Figure 10, a postcard belonging to Cheesman, gives a sense of the kind of terrain described and traversed.
Cheesman preferred the slower, less dangerous routes through the scrub rather than risking the dangers of climbing alongside the steep, slippery river trails, and her progress was frequently impeded as a result. This preference stemmed from a frightening experience on an early trek:

‘There can be few more terrible sensations than when both feet suddenly slide away from under one, in the middle of a climb over slippery rock at a steep gradient. Indeed after three such experiences, each of which brought a period of intense mental agony – when for the time being I was all animal with just an animal craving for life and nothing more, and with scarcely the consciousness that there was only the support of two fistfuls of bracken between me and a sheer drop of many hundreds of feet – I decided that nothing, not even the discovery of fifty new insects belonging to fifty new
orders, could ever compensate for those hideous moments.’ (Cheesman, 1927, p. 63).

This passage is striking both in terms of the visceral immediacy of the writing in conveying her embodied experience, evoking the lived moment, even as it is mediated through memory and leavened by humour. Whilst clearly owing much to Cheesman’s own personality, her perspective also seems to echo similar ambivalence in earlier women’s travel writing, such as that of Kingsley, in which the status of explorer is both claimed and deprecated, as if the women in question could not claim it wholly, but must downplay their own achievements (Blunt, 1994; Maddrell, 2009a). The passage is also made striking by Cheesman’s own consciousness of having had all socialisation, thoughts of knowledge production – even her very humanity – stripped away. In addition, in keeping with the nature of popular travel books and the concomitant audience expectations, in narrating this death-defying scramble Cheesman appears to claim the heroic status often associated with the genre.

Yet in almost the next sentence, Cheesman rejects that heroic status: ‘Here let me note that I am neither an experienced nor a born climber: but can only lay claim to a certain lucky faculty for reaching the point which it seemed expedient to make’ (Cheesman, 1927, p. 63). This pattern is repeated throughout the book, and also appears in Cheesman’s discussion of this expedition in her later memoir. After describing a particularly challenging incursion into the interior on the Marquesas Islands, where she also ends up hanging over the edge of a precipice ‘holding only to the bracken roots’, she closes by noting it as an ‘unheroic episode’ with ‘an unheroic ending’, as, once she recovered a secure position, she was ‘sick, frightfully sick’ (Cheesman, 1957, p. 122). Cheesman presents herself as setting her own personal limits, as well as conforming to broader gendered notions of acceptable risk (Terry et al, 2014).

Her experiences interacting with the landscape of Tahiti and the other Society Islands, and the mobilities that this interaction permitted and prevented, had an impact on the extent of territory she was able to cover – as she comments, ‘plans that one makes with
a chart cannot always be carried into effect’ (Cheesman 1927, p. 46) – and thus on the
results she was able to produce. Her task was further complicated by the fact that:

Distances are very difficult to judge in the clear atmosphere. The jade-green, ferncovered slopes of the lower spurs, and the peaks behind them, purple, violet, mauve, or turquoise, appear to be so accessible and so enticing when you look up at them from the town: but there is first of all a hot dusty tramp to be managed, made hotter by the fine soil which works its gritty way persistently through shoes and stockings, to the great discomfort of the wearer, who might just as well discard them and wade through it. (Cheesman, 1927, p. 55)

Here Cheesman shows how the visual cannot be relied upon in terms of producing knowledge about the landscape, and in particular knowledge about how to move through that landscape. Instead, she becomes more conscious of other bodily forms of perception, other bodily ways of knowing, with the haptic and auditory parts of her embodied experience shaping her mobility, producing a different ‘map’ of the landscape, to contend with a different topography:

It is so unusual to be away from the sound of running water that, if a sharp turn of the hills should suddenly shut out the sounds for a time, I used to stop short under the vague impression that there must be something wrong with my direction. (Cheesman, 1927 p. 58)

Cheesman’s experience of and presentation of Tahiti as an enchanted landscape – Tahiti as a magical place, as island paradise, as fairyland – also emerges clearly from her vivid and colourful descriptions of its beauty. It emerges particularly clearly in how she presents the landscape, and the way that it is impossible to rely on visual knowledge of it, as beguiling and ‘baffling’ (Cheesman, 1927, p. 60): the distant slopes ‘entice’ her to explore further. However, if this is an otherworldly enchanted landscape, it is at the same time an uncanny, almost eldritch, and unwelcoming one. Cheesman describes the ‘grotesque forms’ of the vegetation, which were ‘elbowed, gnarled, corkscrew-shaped or twisted from fighting amongst themselves, and gripped and clawed at the slippery stones
as they climbed upwards, just as I was doing'; 'one instinctively looked for gnomes and pixies.' (Cheesman, 1927, p. 47). If it is a fairyland, it is not the safe or twee Victorian visions of fairyland that Cheesman may have known in childhood, but rather something older and more threatening, more like medieval tales of the Fae. Interestingly, Cheesman’s autobiography suggests that she was raised with fairy tales that were more frightening than comforting (Cheesman, 1957).

However, Cheesman also presents Tahiti as a fairyland in which the enchantment of unspoilt timelessness is slowly breaking, with the intrusion of modernity: a global, imperial modernity of shrinking networks and trade routes, as seen clearly in Cheesman’s portrait of Papeete, the capital of the island. It was here that Cheesman first arrived, and here that she made her base, in a palm hut on the outskirts of the town. She records her first impressions of Papeete as being ‘tinged with disappointment’ at the sight of what appeared to be ‘nothing but a very ordinary little settlement’ (Cheesman, 1927, p. 15). She comments that ‘if it were not for the white line of the barrier-reef and the ragged crests of the distant volcanic mountains, this might be some small town of Southern Europe.’ (p. 15).

Far from being otherworldly or eldritch, the comparison to southern Europe positions Tahiti as very much in this world, as mundane, and more importantly, as connected to the wider world, particularly with ‘men in European garb, and ladies in modish Parisian gowns’ [my emphasis] (demonstrating cultural connections, contact, and networks with the metropole), rather than the traditional dress of the island, the parieu. This was a ‘long strip of coloured cotton, worn very gracefully by both sexes: scarlet with a large white figured pattern’, and not permitted in Papeete (presumably at least partly a colonial policy, and a primary reason for the ‘European garb’ of the local people). Yet the traditional dress has its own links with the metropole, and with the sites of global power, in the form of participation in and connection with the global, colonial trade networks; as Cheesman comments that although ‘formerly these garments were of tapa-cloth, made from fibre of bark’, ‘the material at present in use [that is, cotton] comes from Manchester’
Cheesman is clearly depicting Tahiti as a colonial contact zone (Pratt, 1992), a theme developed further in Chapter 7. The emphasis on dress within her account is also paralleled in other women’s accounts of their expeditionary work, as also discussed further in Chapter 7.

In her account, Cheesman is working within and against a long tradition of writing about Tahiti as paradisiacal. Whilst she does depict it as romantic, enchanted, and beautiful, she also makes it prosaic, modern, and familiar. This is an interesting strategy which seems to be aimed at bolstering her credibility with her readers, and thus the authenticity of the knowledge that she has produced. That is, providing hints of realism and disenchanting the reader’s imagined version of Tahiti bolsters Cheesman’s implicit claim to have known the ‘real’ Tahiti, with her knowledge borne of being physically present in the field (a similar strategy to that employed by Stark). Cheesman negotiates carefully between including enough romantic material to maintain the reader’s interest and meet their expectations, whilst also equally carefully undermining such tropes in order to bolster her own status as having really been there, as having really seen Tahiti, and thus able to convey its reality.

The sense of haptic immersion in the expeditionary environment, as a way of knowing, is echoed in the experiences of Olive Murray Chapman nearly 15 years later on her 1939 expedition to Madagascar. Murray Chapman also depicts the jungles of Madagascar as an otherworldly, enchanted place:

As is usual in early winter, there was a thick damp mist, and, as the sun rose, I could only dimly distinguish the densely wooded hills on either side of the line: thick jungle, becoming tropical as we reached the lower altitude, with gigantic crags looming out of the fog, and tangled undergrowth covered with a filmy maze of countless spiders’ webs, glistening with dewdrops. (Murray Chapman, 1940, p. 16)

Traversing this tactile landscape by porter-carried chair, and explicitly casting Madagascar as a ‘fairyland’, Murray Chapman describes how:
My porters were amazingly skilful, carrying me in my chair up steep
mountain-sides and down again by precipitous rocky tracks, covered with
loose stones, while I was tilted at times right back and at others forward to
such an extent that I frequently found myself standing on the footrest, while I
was forced to cling on to the arms of the chair for safety ... But nothing
daunted, the porters, with steady balance, invariably landed me and my
baggage safely on the other side ... the forest scenery was a fairyland of palms,
giant ferns, and bamboo of all kinds (Murray Chapman, 1940 p. 17)

In another part of the island, through which she was also transported by chair, she
describes how:

a trail had to be blazed with axes. It was intensely hot and damp, and we were
rather troubled with leeches dropping on us from overhanging greenery. In
between patches of forest we had to cross deep gullies and valleys with bogs
and pools of stagnant water, very malarial and unhealthy. The porters
frequently sunk to their knees, and once they carried me across a wide stream
with the water above their waists, holding me sufficiently high over their
heads to clear my feet of the water (Chapman 1940 p. 22)

Here the Madagascan landscape is not only otherworldly but seems actively hostile,
haunted by leeches, stagnant water, and deep gullies. As we have seen, Cheesman appears
to have been ambivalent about assuming a heroic role, or claiming the status of
adventurous and skilful climber. Similarly, in depicting such a hostile landscape, while
Murray Chapman is implicitly claiming status as an explorer in having successfully
traversed it and lived to tell the tale, she also positions the heroism and the achievement
involved in other actors. She is explicit here about her reliance on her porters for her
ability to move through this landscape, and casting herself in a passive role, almost as
luggage herself to be carried. In explicitly crediting their ability, knowledge, and skill,
Murray Chapman is making visible something that other accounts obscure; it is possible
that this is part of a gendered strategy of self-deprecation. It is noteworthy that Murray
Chapman presents herself as an interested traveller and not a geographer making claims
to knowledge production. In addition, Murray Chapman is making explicit how she does
not conform to the popular trope (in terms of audience expectations) of the lone intrepid explorer, which Cheesman does claim for herself.

**Moored knowledge: expeditionary immobility and knowledge production**

Expeditionary immobilities and moorings could also be central to expeditionary knowledge production. Firstly, and rather obviously, all these expeditions had periods of rest, sleep, and recuperation without which they could not have carried out any of their chosen aims, although the importance of this immobility is not often explicitly referred to. However, other moments of immobility were more directly central to these women’s expeditionary knowledge production.

Whilst on Tahiti, Cheesman made a base in a palm-hut on the beach, on the outskirts of Papeete. Here, she stored her possessions and specimens collected during her time on the island. She comments that ‘it was a very peaceful spot to return to for writing up notes and taking breath after arduous experiences in the brush of the interior’ (Cheesman, 1927, p. 18). She also spent time in the hut sorting through, examining, and preserving her collected specimens, with these periods of immobility essential to her ability to produce knowledge. It is likely that sorting through and organising one’s work during quiet periods on expedition was a common strategy employed during this period.

In different ways, immobility was also central to Freya Stark’s knowledge production on the Wakefield expedition. In a letter to her mother, early on in the expedition, Stark comments that it was ‘far more useful in this climate to sit quiet and make other people to do things’.¹³ She continues the theme in another letter three weeks later, commenting that her colleagues ‘think to acquire merit by rushing about making their own beds (when Qasim stands by idle) in a hefty way’, whilst Stark herself knows better.¹⁴ Later still, she begins to suggest that the difference in styles comes down to a fundamental cultural difference between East and West: ‘the Eastern outlook which

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concentrates on *being* and the Western which concentrates on *doing*’ [emphasis original]. As discussed further in the next chapter, Stark identifies the immobile East with femininity and the West with masculinity. She positions herself as Eastern, appropriately immobile and feminine, in contrast with her heartily disliked colleague Gertrude Caton-Thompson, who Stark presents as usurping a masculine, active, and mobile role. Stark developed this theme further in *A Winter in Arabia*, where she sets out an elaborate defence of immobility as part of an essentially Eastern character.

It is, however, not necessary to agree with Stark’s reworking of oppositional Orientalist perspectives in order to see the value of her spending a great deal of time sitting and conversing with local people, learning about their customs, and forging friendly relationships. The importance of this approach is echoed by Beatrice de Cardi, in her experience of working with tribespeople on her expeditions in Pakistan:

> A lot depends on maintaining politeness … one wastes quite a lot of time in hospitality. But it’s essential to accept an egg, hardboiled and peeled in very dirty hands, to accept it gracefully. One also has to sit about and spend time on, waiting for a meal to be provided if they wanted to do so. You couldn’t say, ‘oh, no. I must go’.¹⁶

Immobility could also disrupt expeditionary rhythms, and the ways in which these rhythms shaped expeditionary knowledge production, to which this chapter now turns.

**Disruptions to expeditionary rhythm**

A number of factors could cause disruptions to expeditionary rhythm, and thus to expeditionary knowledge production. These included illness and injury; political unrest; weather and environmental conditions; mechanical failures; and logistical failure and poor planning. Both enforced immobility (especially when it involved being unable to reach the area where research was to be carried out) and enforced mobility (such as being forced to

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¹⁶ Emily Hayes and Sarah L. Evans, Interview with Beatrice de Cardi, at her home, 10 September 2013.
leave a particular expeditionary place earlier than intended or desired) could be disruptive. This is both in terms of the physical movement (or lack of) that may be involved, and in terms of the mental disruption that such unintended (im)mobilities could cause.

As documented in the secondary literature (Geniesse, 1999; Drower, 2006; Maddrell, 2009a; Henes, 2013), there were serious disruptions to the expeditionary rhythms of the Wakefield expedition, stemming from a number of different causes. Early on, the expedition was unable to reach their chosen dig site at Hureidtha, and were forced by a combination of poor planning, local religious customs, and ongoing political unrest to remain in another local town, Shibam, where there was little material to satisfy the team’s geologist and archaeologist. While both Caton-Thompson and Gardner used the opportunity to look for flints, and to conduct a cursory examination of the area, this was limited by the lack of interesting potential sites and material, which they could use to produce scientific results, such as ruins or particular geological features.

The situation exacerbated existing tensions within the team, with Caton-Thompson and Gardner’s accounts giving clear examples of their frustration with this enforced immobility, whilst Stark was able to continue her ethnographic work by adding information from Shibam and Seiyyun. Gardner was particularly unhappy, writing to her sister that she and Caton-Thompson were ‘bored beyond measure here. I have been trailing up stony & sandy wadis everyday in the mornings & finding absolutely nothing in my line or [Caton-Thompson’s]. I don’t know what I shall do if it’s no better further [west].’

The immobility had further consequences; Shibam was a ‘notoriously unhealthy’ place, with first Gardner and then the others picking up infections that would continue to plague them throughout the expedition, and in Caton-Thompson's case, for some years after their return to England, making this her last major expedition. In the same letter to her sister, Gardner commented that:

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17 Elinor Gardner to ‘Beloved’ [Emilie Gardner], 14 December 1937, SSC/48 EWG 1, RGS-IBG Archives.
I have for the last week been mainly a sick nurse. [Caton-Thompson] returned to bed as I told you last Friday & had a sharp tummy for 3 days. [Stark] was mostly in bed too, but would get up on the Sunday & drive to a place of pilgrimage where she took photos & was engulfed in a sea of some 7-8,000 people – all turning their attention to her. That didn’t improve her any & she went to bed again when she got back & stayed there insisting she had malaria & dosing herself with quinine, [Caton-Thompson] in another room on another floor insisting that it wasn’t malaria & both calling each other fools to me!\textsuperscript{18}

This kind of caring work is central to successful expeditions, and therefore to successful expeditionary knowledge production, as discussed in the next chapter. Gardner, however, seems to have quietly resented being pushed into this caring role, particularly as it limited her opportunities for the scant geological research available to her. Although the others seem unaware of her resentment – Stark praises her as gentle, kind, and accommodating, and makes no hint that relations might have deteriorated – Gardner regularly complained in her private letters home. She became particularly irritated with Stark, who she felt was not taking proper care of herself and thereby exacerbating the situation: ‘I’m getting fed up with these crises – as I have to deal with them.’\textsuperscript{19} In the same letter Gardner makes reference to the famous incident in which Stark had requested an emergency evacuation by air, only to turn the plane away on arrival as she then felt better (see Geniesse, 1999; Maddrell 2009a; Henes, 2013).\textsuperscript{20}

This immobility was a serious problem for Caton-Thompson and Gardner. They needed to be able to reach their dig sites, and, notwithstanding the support of local diggers, also perform hard physical labour in unhealthy conditions, particularly the ‘beastly’ cave tomb that Caton-Thompson was excavating, in ‘which there is practically no air, & what there is is thick with v. fine dust’.\textsuperscript{21} The illness and subsequent immobility was less of an imposition for Stark, as she was able to receive visitors, and thus continue her

\textsuperscript{18} Elinor Gardner to ‘Beloved’ [Emilie Gardner], 14 December 1937, SSC/48 EWG 1, RGS-IBG Archives.

\textsuperscript{19} Elinor Gardner to ‘Beloved’ [Emilie Gardner], 28 January 1938, SSC/48 EWG 1, RGS-IBG Archives.

\textsuperscript{20} Caton-Thompson immortalised the incident in her later memoir (Caton-Thompson, 1983) by reporting that the pilot had called Stark a ‘bloody bitch’. As Henes (2013) argues, this has come to dominate popular understandings and presentations of the expedition as a disastrous failure (e.g. Conefrey, 2011, who pluralises the epithet to include all three women). Henes also rightly notes the sexism inherent in this approach, which downplays the achievements of the expedition in order to focus on interpersonal drama and in particular outdated notions of women being incapable of working alongside one another.

\textsuperscript{21} Elinor Gardner to ‘Beloved’ [Emilie Gardner], 4 February 1938, SSC/48 EWG 1, RGS-IBG Archives.
ethnographic work, even whilst lying in bed (Stark, 1976). Enforced mobility, however, became a problem for Stark during the last phase of the expedition, when she rode for the coast in search of the lost city of Cana. Having arrived at Husn el Ghurab, which she believed to be the site of the old harbour at Cana, Stark and her guides were ordered away by heavily armed local people, and forced at gunpoint to retreat over very rough ground in the dark (Stark, 1940, 1976; Geniesse, 1999). Although she presents the incident as exciting in her subsequent publications, the discovery of Cana was the danger and disruption, the incident was frightening, and prevented her from gathering extensive evidence of her discovery, so that it was disputed by some, including Caton-Thompson.

Enforced immobility through illness or injury was a common problem. After a bad reaction to an ‘inedible’ fish, Lucy Evelyn Cheesman suffered from a badly swollen and abscessed foot, which made it impossible to make the most of a fortnight’s trip to Raiatea, another of the Society Islands:

only during the latter part of the time was I able to explore the heights; and rough climbing, which was necessary in order to reach the most desirable places for collecting, had to be abandoned … The wound was a long time in healing, so that work was sadly circumscribed, and for a fortnight only covered those distances which could be accomplished by limping on one foot – a tedious performance. (Cheesman, 1927, p. 84)

Similarly, Jane Bennell suffered from a broken foot during the 1960 Oxford Women’s Azores expedition, limiting the geological work she could accomplish, particularly since she and her colleague Judy Milburn were working on particularly rough volcanic terrain.22

Returning to the Wakefield expedition, the team was also cut off in Seiyyun and Shibam, and later in Hureitha, by local political unrest, and thereby immobilised from ranging further afield. As both Stark and Gardner comment in their letters home, the region had only very recently been ‘pacified’ by the British colonial

22 Sarah L. Evans and Avril Maddrell, Interview with the members of the Oxford Women’s Azores Expedition 1960, Cambridge, 18th June 2013.
administration. The simmering unrest throughout the area, barely contained by the British residency at Aden, meant that road-based mobilities were slow and unreliable at best, and often completely cut off. Mail, including letters for the expedition members, was brought by plane. Aerial mobilities were therefore important as a key, even vital, connection to the world beyond the Hadhramaut. How dependent the expedition was on these lines of aerial communication is made clear in the Gardner letters, which record Gardner’s ‘dreadful disappointment’ with every plane that did not bring her letters from home, and her growing sense of isolation and depression after weeks without letters in early 1938, as one of the planes had crashed and needed to be repaired.23

This form of expeditionary immobility is echoed in the experiences of other women on RGS-supported expeditions prior to the Second World War, and is linked to the wider political and colonial context. For example, Bell was trapped in Hayyil upon her eventual arrival, as a result of ongoing palace intrigues by the ruling Rashid family (O’Brien, 2000; see Maddrell, 2009a). In her letters to Doughty-Wylie, she records her frustration and anxiety about the delay, not least because having deliberately gone beyond the reach of both Ottoman and British authorities, she was in reasonable fear for her life. She describes how ‘then followed day after weary day with nothing whatever to do’, including ‘hours of considerable anxiety’, and that she had ‘spent a long night contriving in my head schemes of escape if things went wrong’.24 Similarly, Katherine Routledge’s work on Rapanui [Easter Island] was seriously disrupted by a political uprising amongst the local people (Routledge, 1919; van Tilburg, 2003). This disruption included instances of both enforced mobility and enforced immobility: the expedition had to transfer its work site and belongings to the other side of the island, but the move itself was disrupted by bad

23 Elinor Gardner to ‘Beloved’ [Emilie Gardner], 3 December 1937, SSC/48 EWG1, RGS-IBG Archives; Elinor Gardner to ‘Beloved’ [Emilie Gardner], 19 December 1937, SSC/48 EWG1, RGS-IBG Archives; Elinor Gardner to ‘Beloved’ [Emilie Gardner], 14 January 1938, SSC/48 EWG1, RGS-IBG Archives.
weather, so that a cart full of possessions was left where it risked being stolen by the rebels (Routledge, 1919).

The disruptions posed by weather could also be very dangerous, and in some cases fatal. During the Nottingham University 1953 Iceland expedition, two team members, Ian Harrison and Tony Prosser, died after being stranded on the ice-cap by bad weather conditions, unable to descend (Ives, 2007). The weather conditions also made it impossible for their colleagues to search for them for several days, by which time it was too late. This had a profound and traumatic effect on the other team members, shaping their remaining time in Iceland and colouring their memories of the expedition.

Mechanical failures could also prove disruptive. Recent work has emphasised the car as a habitable space, and on the ways that drivers and passengers share that space (Laurier et al., 2010). In the following example, drawing again on a journey during the Wakefield Expedition, the car in question is positioned by one of the participants as an uninhabitable space, leading to dispute and discord between them. Both sources - by Stark and Caton-Thompson respectively - agree that the car was in a state of disrepair, and that the last stage of the journey involved a descent into Terim along a narrow and steep road. Where they differ is in their attitudes to the potential dangers involved, in a way that encapsulates their ontological and epistemological approaches to expeditionary work. Caton-Thompson writes that:

The descent next morning [into Terim] looked to me so dangerous with doubtful brakes and an engine labouring under ten superfluous self-invited humans, that Elinor and I decided to walk down the ‘aqaba ... We were contemptuously termed cowards by Freya. (Caton-Thompson, 1983, p. 184)

By contrast, Stark describes the incident as follows:

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25 Avril Maddrell and Sarah L. Evans, Interview with Helen T Sandison, née Brash, and Oonagh Linehan, née Fitzpatrick, RGS-IBG, 17 June 2013.
26 Avril Maddrell and Sarah L. Evans, Interview with Helen T Sandison, née Brash, and Oonagh Linehan, née Fitzpatrick, RGS-IBG, 17 June 2013.
The driver fixed his brake, the crew crouched to turn the wheels by hand at the hairpin bends; the two sayyids and the Archaeologist [Caton-Thompson], equally mistrustful of Predestination, got out and walked ... All went well. (Stark, 1940, p. 18)

From this example of differing attitudes to appropriate passenger behaviour and acceptable levels of risk, it is possible to read differing attitudes to fatalism and to appropriate expeditionary behaviour and preparation, from which developed much of the conflict between these two women.\textsuperscript{27} It is also interesting to see how both remember Gardner's behaviour in this incident differently, with Caton-Thompson claiming that she also got out and walked, and Stark implying that only Caton-Thompson did so. This is also emblematic of their tussles over the allegiances of Gardner, as described by Gardner herself in her letters home (Geniesse, 1999). Gardner does not mention the incident in her letters, although it is possible that it was described on the missing page of Letter 4.\textsuperscript{28}

Caton-Thompson's behaviour in this example was probably influenced by her experiences with desert road vehicular travel some ten years earlier during her RGS-supported expedition to the Fayum in Egypt, discussed in Chapter 4, and the ways in which mechanical failure had resulted in disruptive immobilities and affected their work. During the 1927 season, the third they had spent digging in that area, they were reliant on two desert-equipped trucks which broke down repeatedly, with potentially deadly consequences:

One episode, the most serious of many, occurred while Elinor was away from our camp with three or four Quftis and the Ford truck some 20 miles away. The second day a messenger brought news from her that the Ford had broken down. I had been away from camp all day at the gypsum quarries with the six-wheel Morris, and on the return at sunset it also broke down, mercifully not far from "home". So we were left with no transport and the possibility that Elinor and party would run out of water. Karanis, the nearest place with a 'phone, was about 18 miles from a camp, so I resolved to make a night march

\textsuperscript{27} See Blunt, 1994 on Mary Kingsley and her attitudes to fatalism.
\textsuperscript{28} Elinor Gardner to 'Beloved' [Emilie Gardner], 16 November 1937, SSC/48 EWG1, RGS-IBG Archives. Many of the letters in this collection are missing a page or two.
to it following supper and a rest after a hard day. It was close on midnight when I started off with Nasr-ed-Din, my most trusted Qufti. (Caton-Thompson, 1983, p. 110)

This passage makes clear how enforced immobility could be not only disruptive but potentially dangerous. The strategy of switching mobility in the face of such immobility has clear echoes in Caton Thompson’s response to the incident outside Terim, where she again switches mobility in response to perceived risk of dangerous immobility as caused by unreliable technology, in an apparent attempt to adjust a failing expeditionary rhythm.

Poor relations between team members could themselves be disruptive to expeditionary mobility and to expeditionary rhythms. On the 1971 expedition to Musandun, the expedition leader Norman Falcon, disgruntled at having accidently invited a woman, Beatrice de Cardi, insisted that she be chaperoned by a male colleague at all times. As de Cardi later recounted

I was irritated that [Falcon] made it obligatory that I should not venture out alone, because I’d been venturing out alone since ‘48 and I thought that I had sufficient gumption to be able to manage. Also it was upsetting to feel that some other member of his team had to walk alongside me the whole time … Dr Cornelius was interested in lizards particularly, but at the time the team was supposed to be accompanying me, he had a stomach upset of some sort, so I urged him to search for his lizards underneath the bush shade, and have a little cat nap. That allowed me to wander about.29

De Cardi found ways of circumventing this particular gendered barrier, thereby quietly claiming for herself a degree of expeditionary mobility and the means to carry out at least some of her planned research. However, this restriction was very frustrating for her and limited the amount of work that she was able to complete. It is likely that de Cardi found it particularly irritating to have attention called to her gender so explicitly, and to be restricted in her movements as a result, because she had always considered herself to be an archaeologist first and female second when undertaking field research.

29 Emily Hayes and Sarah L. Evans, Interview with Beatrice de Cardi, at her home, 10 September 2013.
The journey home

Following Blunt's argument that 'travels themselves exist only when they are bounded by departure and return' (Blunt, 1994, p. 114), I turn now to consider aspects of the return journey home. Following Blunt's discussion of Kingsley's 'return', I focus on the embodied experience of travelling home. I will then discuss women expedition members' construction of 'home', and their reception by 'home' on their return in the remaining two chapters.

For many of these women, the journey home became its own kind of liminal time-space, marking the transition out of the liminal expeditionary time-space experienced while 'in-the-field'. This had both practical and more psychological dimensions. To begin with, the return journey often involved significant logistical preparation, as can be seen in Cheesman's experiences of packing up her expedition in order to sail home from the Society Islands:

Packing was a serious business, as the dried specimens were so fragile that the boxes had to be tightly wedged into the cases with wads of paper and cloth, to guard as far as possible against all jarring, although I was not going to let them out of my sight during the whole voyage. (Cheesman, 1927, p. 222)

Although this varied due to the length of an expedition, the types of scientific work carried out, and the kind of equipment needed, packing was an important task for the participants of many expeditions. Both Stark and Gardner wrote of the effort involved in getting the equipment and specimens of the Wakefield expedition packed up (Stark, 1976; Geniesse, 1999). Gardner commented in a letter to her sister that they had to be ready to leave at a moment's notice, ready for when the road reopened and they could make their way back to Aden.30

Stark continued on with exploratory work, and continued to exist in expeditionary time-space, while Caton-Thompson and Gardner instead entered the transitional time-

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30 Elinor Gardner to ‘Beloved’ [Emilie Gardner], 10 March 1938, SSC/48 EWG1, RGS-IBG Archives.
space of their journey home. Travelling back through the towns of the Hadhramaut, the two scientists met with the Ingrams at Mukalla, and then sailed for Aden. From Aden, they sailed north up the Red Sea, in a long, leisurely, and, at least by comparison with their Hadhramaut experiences, luxurious voyage home. They visited a number of places along the coastline of the Red Sea while en route, and the tone of Gardner’s letters notably shifts to one that is much happier and more contented. During this voyage, the two engage in travel as a form of play, and not as a form of knowledge-producing work, although Gardner did take lessons in navigation from the ship’s captain, as she described in a letter home to her sister:

> It seemed a heaven sent opportunity, so I’ve been learning to use a sextant & working out latitudes & longitudes by sun & --- meridian stars. I did a longitude all by myself this morning & landed us well on the coast, but no matter – its all practice! The sailor, who has to find his position quickly on a moving boat cuts all the frills out of his calculations, which is just what I want – the R.G.S. instructor would have been months getting me as far as I am now.31

Gardner was not alone in making the most of opportunities for further skills training and knowledge production while returning from expeditionary space. Her experience echoes that of Kingsley some forty years earlier, when Kingsley practiced piloting a boat during her travels in West Africa (Blunt, 1994; Maddrell, 2009a). Other women used the return journey to write up their notes and experiences, preparing the first draft for future publication, an example being Isobel Wylie Hutchinson on her expedition to the Aleutians in 1936 (Hoyle, 2001; Maddrell, 2009a).

The clear enjoyment of travel present in Gardner’s later letters underscores how for Gardner the previous few months had been work, and unfulfilling, unsatisfying work at that. However, it was a closed, completed time that was receding rapidly from her; she wrote to her sister that ‘Aden seems years away & the Hadhramaut centuries.’32 This experience is echoed in the writing of other women on their return from expeditionary

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31 Elinor Gardner to ‘Beloved’ [Emilie Gardner], 22 March 1938, SSC/48 EWG 1, RGS-IBG Archives.
32 Elinor Gardner to ‘Beloved’ [Emilie Gardner], 22 March 1938, SSC/48 EWG 1, RGS-IBG Archives.
time-space, who focus on the emotional and psychological differences between being on expedition and returning. In a letter home to her father, on her return from Hayyil to the comparatively safe haven of Baghdad, Bell wrote how 'it's queer and rather enjoyable at first, the sense of being in perfect security, but one soon loses the realisation of it' (Bell, 1927). Similarly, both the 1953 and 1954 Nottingham University Iceland expeditions arrived back at Reykjavik a couple of days before their boat back to the UK arrived, and so both expeditions camped at Reykjavik airport in the interim. For both Brash and Fitzpatrick, this added to their sense of still being out of ordinary time, although Brash’s experiences were overlaid by shock and distress at the tragedy which had befallen their expedition.33

This feeling is echoed in Routledge’s book about her Rapanui expedition. She describes their return journey, during which their first port of call was the island of Tahiti, where they picked up ‘the longed-for sacks containing a year’s accumulation of letters and newspapers’ (Routledge, 1919, p. 317). Making explicit the feeling of coming back into ordinary time, back into the ordinary world, she comments that ‘it was wonderful to return once more to the great world, even in its modified form at Tahiti, and the Rip van Winkle sensation was most curious’ (Routledge, 1919, p. 317). She also emphasises the fact that whilst they were in expeditionary time-space, isolated on Rapanui, the world outside had moved on, so that she found herself ‘with an indescribable thrill, at home once more in the strange new England of time of war; which was yet the dear familiar England for which her sons have found it worthwhile to fight and if need be to die’ (Routledge, 1919, p. 332).

There are parallels between the experience of expeditionary time-space, and the transition into and out of it, and the experience of pilgrimage, as explored in much of the recent literature on pilgrimage and mobility (Maddrell, 2011; Maddrell and della Dora, 2013; Maddrell et al, forthcoming). The parallels emerge, perhaps beyond those with more

33 Avril Maddrell and Sarah L. Evans, Interview with Helen T Sandison, née Brash, and Oonagh Linehan, née Fitzpatrick, RGS-IBG, 17 June 2013.
general travel or tourism, because both expeditions and pilgrimage are forms of more purposive travel, with specific aims related to increased knowledge, whether of the self or of the landscape traversed and explored (Maddrell et al, forthcoming).

**Conclusion**

This chapter has examined expeditionary mobilities and immobilities as a way of understanding women’s experience of and engagement with expeditionary time-space, showing how these practices were closely linked to expeditionary knowledge production. It has reconstructed these historical mobilities from the traces left behind in a range of archival, published, and oral history sources. While the texts used in this process of excavation and reconstruction are shaped by particular tropes, discourses, and audience expectations, it remains possible to find evidence of these embodied mobilities, as they were experienced by the women in question, and therefore to find traces of the embodied subjectivity of these women.

These (im)mobilities included a number of embodied sensory experiences, beyond the visual, including both auditory and haptic experience of place being used to help shape expeditionary knowledge production. Including these examples in existing understandings of the discursive practice of expeditionary work offers a useful corrective to the traditional hegemonic models of masculinist fieldwork outlined and critiqued by Gillian Rose, in that both those two models are dependent on a particular gaze – the objective, dominating, ‘scientific’ gaze, and the admiring, ambivalent aesthetic gaze. Paying attention to other sensory modes of knowledge production undermines these hegemonic models by demonstrating that they are neither necessary nor sufficient for geographical knowledge production. In addition, paying attention to these women using a number of different embodied modes of knowledge production, including a number of visual modes, expands on Rose’s critique (which has been criticised as reductionist), showing how women could engage with and subvert dominant forms of geographical knowledge production, so that
they were neither ontologically nor epistemologically excluded from participating in these. The women discussed in this chapter often relate moments of danger during their expeditionary work, but undercut them with humour, or downplay their performance of these masculine norms. In so doing, female expedition members show up how these are constructed, and not essential to expeditionary scientific work.

Another element which emerges from the foregoing analysis, and echoing a theme from the previous chapter, is the revealing of a number of bodies that do not conform to the ideal expeditionary type of an implicitly male, young, and able-bodied fieldworker, that nonetheless successfully engage in expeditionary work and knowledge production. The women in question subverted this type not merely by the fact of their gendered female bodies, but also because those bodies were frequently middle-aged, injured, unwell, and afraid, yet successfully performed expeditionary work. While the literature has shown clearly that this is the case for modern fieldwork – in that people with bodies that do not conform to the ideal type can still perform and take pleasure in expeditionary work (Maguire, 1998; Whitlock, 2001; Hall et al, 2002; Bracken and Mawdsley, 2004) – illuminating these particular examples shows that this is also the case for historic expeditionary work, in a period that is still often portrayed, in both scholarly and popular works, as the ‘golden age’ of expeditionary work where such tropes might be straightforwardly depicted.

Another theme which emerges from this chapter is the sense of expeditions as a kind of liminal time-space, a space between which is enchanted by its alterity, and by the fact that by its nature it is brief, transitory, and outside the everyday rituals of normal life. This sense may have been heightened by the fact that people engaged in expeditionary work also developed their own everyday rituals, and a sense of the expeditionary commonplace, so that it is not merely the sense of excitement or danger, commonly associated with expeditionary work, which helps to create and shape this liminal time-
space. Speaking to past participants in expeditionary work about their experiences, it becomes clear how they developed clear rituals which shaped their expeditionary everyday, including set mealtimes, set times to check on equipment, and so on. In exploring this sense of expeditionary time-space as somehow liminal, there are parallels with the recent literature on pilgrimage and mobility, a connection which emerges because they are both forms of purposive travel, which aim at forms of knowledge production, whether of the self or beyond. It is also possible that because opportunities for this participation were rare for women in this period – with a few exceptions, who were able to make careers of it, many of these women did not undertake additional expeditionary work, or very little of it – they may have felt their time on expedition to be particularly anomalous, rare, and precious.

The analysis undertaken in this chapter has also suggested that understandings of expeditionary mobility, its relationship to expeditionary place, and to knowledge production, also need to include examples of expeditionary immobility, and how this can be both disruptive and productive for knowledge creation. It is clear that periods of both mobility and immobility are crucial to expeditionary success, and that disruptions in the developing rhythm between these are detrimental to the production of expeditionary knowledges, and in some cases hazardous to expeditionary participants. Although it is not possible to completely eliminate the possibility of such disruptions in contemporary expeditionary fieldwork practice, awareness of this might help to mitigate its worst effects. Because of the discursive relationship between femininity and immobility, made explicit in the writings of Stark but elsewhere implicit, this is one of the valuable gendered discursive associations which making women visible in expeditionary space brings into play.

In this chapter I have focused on the relationship between mobility and place in expeditionary spaces. In the next chapter, I consider another element of these women’s

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34 Avril Maddrell and Sarah L. Evans, Interview with Helen T Sandison, née Brash, and Oonagh Linehan, née Fitzpatrick, RGS-IBG, 17 June 2013; Sarah L. Evans and Avril Maddrell, Interview with the members of the Oxford Women’s Azores Expedition 1960, Cambridge, 18th June 2013.
material, embodied, and discursive experience of expeditionary place; that of expeditionary relationships, and in particular female expedition members’ attitudes towards and relationships with local people, as well as with one another.
CHAPTER 7: EXPEDITIONARY RELATIONSHIPS

Introduction

This chapter will build on the discussion in Chapters 4 and 5 – of networks and the role that they played in helping women to participate in RGS-supported expeditions – to examine the role played by networks, relationships, and emotion work in producing expeditionary knowledge within expeditionary spaces. In so doing it draws on a number of key literatures, in addition to those already discussed in Chapter 2. This includes the recent work done by Lowri Jones, Felix Driver, and others on the ‘fundamentally collective’ nature of expeditionary work, and on the importance of collaboration between European team members and local people (that is, people who lived in the area being visited by an expedition) (Simpson, 1975; Camerini, 1996, 1997; Bravo, 1999a, 1999b, 2001; Rockel, 2000a, 2000b, 2006; Driver and Jones, 2009; Jones, 2010); the literature on emotion work and caring labour, particularly from a feminist perspective (Hochschild, 1983 [2012], 2003; Theodosius, 2008; McDowell, 2013); and the work done by Alison Blunt and others on the association between women, normative femininity, and home (Blunt, 1994, 1999, 2000a, 2000b, 2002, 2005; Blunt and Rose, 1994; Blunt and Varley, 2004; Blunt and Dowling, 2006).

As with the previous chapter, attention is focused upon expeditions where there are substantial women-authored accounts available for analysis. However, because it concentrates on exploring expeditions as a form of colonial contact zone (Pratt, 1992), seeking to use Pratt’s concept as a means of examining expeditionary relationships and roles, as discussed below, more of the examples are taken from the earlier part of this period. As elsewhere in this thesis, expeditionary knowledge is here defined broadly. It includes the various kinds of geographical or scientific research engaged in by these expeditions, as part of the expeditions’ official aims and programmes of work; knowledge about the process of undertaking an expedition itself, and the logistical undertakings that
this involves, which was often shared with other expeditions and with staff at the RGS; and
greater knowledge of the self, of the kind developed by and associated with many earlier
women travellers (see Domosh, 1991a; Pratt, 1992). Drawing on the work of Jane
Camerini, which demonstrated the importance of expeditionary relationships for
expeditionary knowledge production (Camerini, 1996, 1997), the chapter will explore
three major sets of expeditionary relationships, which overlap and are interlinked:
relationships with local people; relationships with other team members; and relationships
with home. It will also consider how establishing and maintaining these relationships was
crucial for the production of expeditionary knowledge, and how the ways in which
expeditionary participants negotiated these networks and built these relationships, and
their degree of success in doing so, could facilitate or obstruct their expeditionary
knowledge production. In particular, it will focus on the role that gender, as well as race
and colonial politics, could play.

The first set of relationships, which form the subject of the first section of this
chapter, are those between expeditionary team members and local people in the
expeditionary place in question, as expeditionary participants interacted with and became
part of existing networks, shaping and re-shaping them in turn. The chapter will consider
in particular how these inter-expeditionary networks and relationships operated in the
cases of expeditions to areas colonised by Europeans, including parts of the Middle East,
East Africa, and the Pacific. It will argue that such expeditions operated within and as
colonial contact zones (Pratt, 1992), with colonial power relationships – between
coloniser and colonised – exacerbating, shaping, and distorting the existing power
relationships between researcher and researched, and the possibilities for knowledge
production in these spaces. Importantly, whilst these were not balanced relationships
between equals, neither were they wholly one-sided impositions of power or extractions
of knowledge; there was room for the agency of local people and communities even in
colonised spaces, and on many expeditions there is evidence of ‘co-production’ of
expeditionary knowledge (Driver and Jones, 2009; Jones, 2010). Such co-production is
acknowledged to varying degrees in the sources, depending on the expedition and team members in question.

The second set of expeditionary relationships and networks with which this chapter is concerned are those between expeditionary team members before, during, and after an expedition. I will discuss both European team members, and the servants and porters drawn into the expeditionary team from amongst local communities (Driver and Jones, 2009). This chapter will argue that the successful formation and maintenance of these intra-expeditionary relationships was dependent upon extensive emotional labour, in addition to physical caring responsibilities and logistical support roles. The final set of expeditionary relationships and networks are those maintained over distance with home, and with people at home. These relationships – with friends and family members, with supporting institutions like the RGS, with the imagined home – could provide important emotional support and outlets. Being cut off from these could exacerbate feelings of loneliness, alienation, and culture shock, particularly if relationships with fellow team members or local communities could not fill the gap.

Relationships and networks with local people

This section will explore the importance – for the production of expeditionary knowledges – of establishing and maintaining good relationships with local people, as well as the barriers that may have undermined such efforts. There has been a great deal of recent research into the importance of these supportive relationship and collaborations, with local people making a range of different, and often crucial, contributions to Western expeditions (Camerini, 1996, 1997; Bravo, 1999a, 1999b, 2001; Rockel, 2000a, 2000b, 2006; Driver and Jones, 2009; Jones, 2010). Such relationships could help expeditionary participants gain access to a number of different spaces necessary for their planned research; help ensure necessary levels of logistical support, including access to food, water, equipment, postal services and so on; and provide emotional support and friendly
human contact in what were very often very isolating and alienating spaces and forms of work.

Relationships with local people were also essential to accessing local knowledges. This was particularly important for exploratory work, as in the case of Gertrude Bell’s 1913 expedition to Arabia, where she drew on the expertise of local guides in making her way across the desert to Hayyil (O’Brien, 2000). Building relationships with local people, and therefore accessing their knowledge about themselves and their history and culture, was also key for successful completion of ethnographic or anthropological work, such as in the case of Freya Stark’s expeditions, or Katherine Routledge’s research on Rapanui [Easter Island]. As Michael Bravo has shown, such local knowledges are often woven into European expeditionary accounts, used as a particular form of knowledge authentication and validation (Bravo, 1999a, 1999b, 2001). This was particularly important in the case of survey and cartography (Barnett, 1998; Withers, 2004).

As Jones demonstrates, these forms of expeditionary support and participation vary in the degree to which they can be easily excavated from the available, generally Western-authored, sources (Jones, 2010). Practical and logistical forms of support, such as porterage, tend to be more visible in the sources, unsurprisingly since in many cases expeditions literally could not take place without them. For example, as Stephen J. Rockel notes, ‘porterage was a fundamental institution in all parts of the world where animal power could not be utilized and waterways were inadequate’ (Rockel, 2006, p. 4; see also Burnett, 2002). Neither can the physical and intellectual forms of support be easily disentangled: as Rockel describes, in deploying various different techniques for carrying their loads, the porters active on the East African caravan demonstrated expertise as well as physical ability (Rockel, 2006).

There were many barriers to successfully cultivating relationships between local people and expeditionary participants, two of which are particularly important for the discussion in this chapter. The first of these, and perhaps the most obvious, was that of language. This did not necessarily present logistical problems, as most expeditions relied
on interpreters where necessary. However, the lack of a common language could make it
difficult for expeditionary team members and local people to develop empathic and
friendly relationships.

More important, however, was the fact that many of the expeditions were to
regions colonised by Europeans, including many British colonies, forming part of the
nexus between geographical knowledge production and imperial imperatives and
priorities that had by the period in question been operating for well over a hundred years
(see Livingstone, 1992; Godlewska and Smith, 1994; Bell et al, 1995; Driver, 2001). Other
expeditions were to areas under indirect colonial influence or of continuing interest to the
British colonial state; the colonial context to these expeditions also influenced their
geographical knowledge production, and the ability of team members to form good
relationships with local communities.

For some expeditions, largely in areas under direct colonial rule, the colonial
connection was explicit, with their planned research clearly contributing to colonial
interests. An example of this are the loosely affiliated Cambridge-based expeditions in the
late 1920s and 1930s to Central and East Africa, already discussed in Chapter 4. One
particular series of expeditions focused on the great African lakes, a region then under
European colonisation, wherein a range of imperial business and state enterprises were
busily expending vast efforts to extract and exploit the region's natural resources. There
were clear links between the scientific aims of these expeditions and the interests of local
colonial government and enterprise. They were instigated by the colonial governments of
Kenya, Uganda, and Tanganyika, to investigate the fisheries on these lakes and their
potential for commercial exploitation (Worthington and Worthington, 1933).

Topographical surveying of the lakes, a major part of the work of these expeditions, also
had the result of updating and improving maps held by British colonial authorities,
opening these areas up to deeper understanding and to potential exploitation.

Similarly, whilst the extensive biological and ecological surveys of the lakes carried
out on these expeditions had the primary aim of securing and preserving vast collections
of specimens for further study back in England, this also had the explicit aim of demonstrating their viability as exploitable fish stocks, potentially for export and to feed the growing colonial workforce. Providing for this workforce, especially the growing mining industries in Central Africa, was a growing problem for the British colonial authorities, particularly since many workers had migrated to the mines and plantations away from their homes and family support structures.

Collecting specimens also provided an opportunity for sampling fish as potential exploitable resources. In the introduction to their book about the expedition, Stella and Edgar Barton Worthington explain that 'by eating different kinds of fish, we could conjecture which were the best to exploit for commercial purposes, and so set about catching large numbers to decide what methods of wholesale fishing could be recommended' (Worthington and Worthington, 1933, pp. vi-vii). In their 1936 expedition Kate Ricardo and Janet Owen continued this research (Ricardo, 1939; Ricardo et al, 1943; Bertram and Trant, 1991).

In areas not under direct colonial rule, the applicability of research carried out by British expeditions to British colonial interests is often less clear, and the connection between geography and imperialism is more implicit. Expeditions to areas under indirect British influence tended not to have such explicit colonial aims. In some cases, such as the Wakefield expedition (1937-1938), colonial motives largely consisted of being the first Western scientific expedition to a particular place (Geniesse, 1999; Maddrell, 2009a). This pioneering expedition travelled to the Hadhramaut, a region of southern Arabia, now Yemen, which had then just become part of the Aden protectorate, under the indirect control of the British Resident at Aden, Harold Ingrams. This indirect control consisted of a series of uneasy alliances with local elites, and a programme of 'pacification' of rebellious tribes and villages through aerial bombardment. Despite the hopes of the local inhabitants, who saw Elinor Gardner's geological investigation of ancient irrigation systems as a
prelude to their restoration,¹ either by the local ruling family or the British authorities at Aden, there were no plans to apply Gardner’s research in this manner (see Geniesse, 1999). This had also been the case for her archaeological-geological work carried out with her colleague Gertrude Caton-Thompson at earlier RGS-supported excavations in Egypt, a former British protectorate where the British maintained a degree of indirect influence. In these examples, the particular semi-colonial context shaped interactions with local people, rather than the expeditions’ research aims and outputs.

The pioneering, exploratory interest in being the first European expedition to a particular place was also of importance for expeditions to areas that were not directly or indirectly colonised, but which were nonetheless of strategic interest to the British colonial state. In such expeditions, whilst the explicit research aims were scientific, covert work was often also carried out that was useful, either then or later, to British interests. En route to Hayyil, Gertrude Bell travelled through the territory of the Turkish Ottoman empire, and through areas under the control of different Arab dynasties and nomadic tribes. On this expedition, she conducted surveying, ethnography, and archaeological research, mapping out the terrain and communities through which she passed. In so doing, she drew together a great deal of intelligence on the region, particularly on its political networks and alliances, which she later put to use during the First World War, in her position as Oriental Secretary to the British war effort in the Middle East (O’Brien, 2000; Tuson, 2003; Lukitz, 2006; Maddrell, 2009a).

Freya Stark carried out similar programmes of research in her exploratory expeditions to Luristan in Persia, to Iraq, and to Yemen in the late 1920s and 1930s, some of which were supported by the RGS. Stark also went on to use this research, and the relationships and networks that she had forged, in her war work during the Second World War (Geniesse, 1999; Tuson, 2003; Maddrell, 2009a). Margaret Hasluck, who was lent instruments by the RGS for her research in the 1930s into the historical geography of

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¹ Elinor Gardner to ‘Beloved’ [Emilie Gardner], 4 February 1938, SSC/48 EWG 1, RGS-IBG Archives.
various lakes in Albania, also conducted covert intelligence gathering during her official research (Hall, 1999; Stocker, n.d.). There were also expeditions, such as the Wager Greenland expedition (1935-1936), or the Routledge expedition to Rapanui, where there was no explicit or implicit colonial link, but where the pioneering nature of the work added to the prestige and status of the British nation-state.

Women’s RGS-supported expeditionary work therefore encompassed a broad range of different colonial spaces, interests, and objectives. The existence of specific colonial aims, interests or applications, however, is perhaps less important than the fact that working in colonised areas created a particular environment for the production of geographical knowledge, and had important impacts on how expeditionary participants related to the people around them. Interactions between expeditionary participants and local people can illustrate how, as colonised spaces, these areas operated as, and can be characterised as, colonial contact zones (Pratt, 1992). Furthermore, the expeditions themselves can also be thought of in such terms – creating a space for interaction between colonising and colonised, which operates according to particular power dynamics, and which also contains (limited) room for the agency of the colonised.

The colonial dimension to so many of these expeditions exacerbated the potential power dynamic that exists in the researcher/researched relationship. In particular, it could often increase the tendency for that relationship to operate in subject/object terms – with the researching expeditionary team member as knowledge producing subject, and the local communities as object of research. This could be the case even when the local people were not literally or officially the subjects of research; i.e., when ethnography or anthropology was not one of the expedition’s research aims. Expeditionary team members’ responses to local people can be characterised as operating on a spectrum between objectification of local people, and identification with them. This spectrum was negotiated over the course of an expedition over a number of interactions, with responses and

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attitudes towards local communities – and from local communities – understood as dynamic rather than static. There were also significant differences in the ways that expeditionary team members related to and interacted with members of local elites, and with ordinary local people. Crudely, expeditionary team members are more likely to identify with local elites, and to objectify ordinary locals. Perhaps obviously, responses which tended towards objectifying local people formed significant barriers to building successful relationships between expeditionary teams and local communities, whilst more ‘identifying’ responses were more helpful. This section will now turn to considering objectifying responses, and how these were often bound up with the visual and the imperial gaze.

Looking back: distance, gaze and silence

A common theme in a number of different women’s accounts of their expeditionary involvement is a tendency towards a particular gaze, which encodes some of their descriptions of local people (Urry, 1990). This gaze is shaped by and draws upon particular narratives and imaginaries, some of which emerge from travel writing conventions, both from women’s travel writing and more broadly. Foremost is that this gaze is presented as being objective and distant, even when it may have not been experienced in such terms. In the particular context of expeditions to the Middle East and Asia, this discourse, particularly when it involves descriptions of local women, also has long Orientalist roots. Whilst there is usually some other evidence of connection and conversation with local people elsewhere in these accounts, the presence of this gaze is still important, and illustrative of the objectifying response under discussion. In such descriptions, which tend to focus on appearance, costume, and bodily adornment, and which tend to be of ordinary local people rather than local elites, the local people themselves become silent, voiceless curiosities, almost living specimens for the totalizing imperial gaze. This gaze, and the objectifying tendency which it supports and is
symptomatic of, can also lead towards attitudes of detachment, callousness, and dehumanization towards local people. It emerges particularly clearly when there is no shared language between European team members and local people, which makes it harder to forge a connection; the importance of language skills and such connections will be discussed in detail in the next section.

This gaze is evident in some of the descriptions of local people in Gardner’s letters home from the Wakefield expedition. She often describes local people in terms of their clothing, focusing on its bright colours and, more importantly, on its otherness. In one passage she describes the make-up used by the local women in Terim, saying that their ‘hands & feet are patterned with henna – they have khol under their eyes - but so far I’ve only seen the peasant women with bright yellow on their faces.’ In another passage about the women of Terim, Gardner writes that:

‘Freya [Stark] is collecting dresses. The women’s are much more amusing [my emphasis] than the Egyptian. The peasants have an underdress of flowered stuff on a black background, with the edge trimmed with bright strips of magenta, green, yellow etc & pattern made by sewing on cowries. Over that they wear a toga like garment of coarser stuff dyed a lovely rich orange, green or blue. Each district has its dominant colour. Both dresses are short in front, just below the knee, and trail on the ground behind. Over their heads they have a black thing, which covers up their hair & mouth. The women of the richer men have brightly coloured flowered dresses – orange, green & pink with a dark spangled scarf on their head and shoulders. A good many dress like Indian & Malay women & have Malay faces as they are wives married in Singapore.’

Here, Gardner appears hardly to engage with the women themselves at all, either as individual people or even as physical bodies. Even where reference is made to the faces of these women, their faces are not personalised, but described simply as ‘Malay faces’, as types not individuals. Instead, the women become mannequins, clothes-horses for their beautiful, strange, ‘amusing’ costumes, which are to be ‘collected’ as potential museum

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3 Elinor Gardner to ‘Beloved’ [Emilie Gardner], 16 November 1938, SSC/48 EWG 1, RGS-IBG Archives.
4 Elinor Gardner to ‘Beloved’ [Emilie Gardner], 22 November 1938, SSC/48 EWG 1, RGS-IBG Archives.
exhibits or curiosities. This tendency is possibly exacerbated by the fact that the clothing obscures part of their faces, including their mouths.

There is a parallel here with the ethnographic work carried out by Olive Murray Chapman on her expedition to Madagascar, also in the late 1930s. In a lecture to the RGS upon her return, she described the people that she met in terms of their conforming to various ethnic types, particularly as regards their appearance. Here attention is paid to physical characteristics, as a means of classifying the local people, by hair type, skin colour, and facial features (Murray Chapman, 1940).

Returning to the Wakefield Expedition, Stark’s role in ‘collecting’ such dresses is perhaps more complex than it might at first appear, and in ways that speak to ambiguities around her role on the expedition, and tensions in her relationships with her colleagues Gardner and Gertrude Caton-Thompson. It is not clear whether she was undertaking this collection as an explicit part of her ethnographic work, or whether it was connected to her own personal interest in clothes, fashion, and self-presentation (see Geniesse, 1999; Maddrell, 2009a). It is likely, however, that both motives are concerned, in ways relating to Stark’s self-positioning to Western audiences not only as an expert on ‘the East’, but one whose expertise drew from a close empathetic connection with ‘Eastern’ people, and as being somehow of the East herself. As discussed in the previous chapter, in her accounts of her travels Stark sometimes chooses to associate herself with the tropes – such as immobility – that she has ascribed to the East. Stark engaged in some of these local beautifying practices, having her hands and feet painted with henna, to the amusement, and perhaps mystification, of her colleagues. These themes will be explored in more detail in the next section.

Earlier in the 22 November 1937 letter, Gardner had also described the local Bedouin people. Again, she focuses on physical appearance and clothing in particular, and on the otherness of that appearance, writing that:
The bedouin are wild looking people – naked except for a short loin cloth, a cartridge belt full of bullets with a large dagger stuck in it & a piece of cloth slung over one shoulder. Their hair is rather long & some have ringlets. They are mostly good looking & have a very independent air. They live in caves in the wadis – occasionally rob cars & demand blackmail. The Englishman who was fired on not so long ago refused to pay it, but none of these excitements happened to us.5

Here the otherness being described is associated strongly with the potential danger to the expeditionary team, a danger that is closely tied into the semi-colonial local political context. That sense of danger is exacerbated by their status as unaccompanied women on a pioneering expedition, but makes explicit the sense in which all such expeditionary work was dependent on local goodwill. As is common in women’s accounts of their expeditionary work, Gardner undercuts the danger of the situation, and their potential bravery and heroism in encountering it, with humour: ‘We slept peacefully until C.T. said she heard stones clinking & then we lay awake for a bit watching for raiding Bedouins, who turned out to be donkeys.’6 Later in the same letter, Gardner returns to the story of the Englishman shot at for refusing to pay blackmail:

the tribe was bombed as a punishment. According to the officials people like being bombed & and send in deputations of thanks after it! It apparently does not offend their amour proper to give up blood feuds on compulsion, but it does by negotiations on blood money. The bombing is done with great care after the people have left their villages & the R.A.F. come down afterwards to help the inhabitants dispose of the unexploded bombs; all apparently with the greatest goodwill on both sides!7

The detachment, callousness, and lack of empathy here stems from the objectifying, othering response discussed so far. Even if, as Gardner states, the bombing did not result in loss of life, ‘only’ that of property, displacement from their homes in this violent fashion must have been traumatizing. A similarly careless and dismissive attitude is on display in Kate Ricardo and Janet Owen’s much later account of their East African expedition in 1936,

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5 Elinor Gardner to ‘Beloved’ [Emilie Gardner], 22 November 1938, SSC/48 EWG 1, RGS-IBG Archives.
6 Elinor Gardner to ‘Beloved’ [Emilie Gardner], 22 November 1938, SSC/48 EWG 1, RGS-IBG Archives.
7 Elinor Gardner to ‘Beloved’ [Emilie Gardner], 16 November 1938, SSC/48 EWG 1, RGS-IBG Archives.
where they comment that the Belgians – whose treatment of their Congo colony is now a byword for colonial cruelty and excess – ‘may be brutal to their natives (though we have not seen any signs of it), but they do see to know how to develop their country’ (Bertram and Trant, 1991, p. 102).

However, when Gardner returned to the subject in a later letter in February 1938, by which time the expedition had been effectively trapped in Hureidtha by local Bedouin feuds for two months (see Caton-Thompson, 1983), the somewhat airy, careless tone of earlier letters has been replaced by one which is far more ambivalent:

the bombing is to stop robbery & murder between the inhabitants, as its only of property, no lives are lost. I don’t think it’s a good thing, but granted that we’re here at all I don’t see what else is to be done in the absence of any police or any force of law & order ... I think the bulk of the people are genuinely thankful to have an end of the innumerable little wars, which they could not stop themselves, & certainly Ingrams’ one thought is the good of the people. He hates [emphasis original] Europeans coming in – British or other.8

Whilst Gardner continues to ascribe only benevolent motives to the colonising efforts led by Ingrams, the resident at Aden, and takes a paternalist, infantilizing attitude to the local people who could not stop their ‘innumerable little wars’ themselves, there are hints of doubt about the rectitude of Ingrams’ actions, and about Gardner’s own moral stance on the matter, a change in opinion which may possibly stem from spending time amongst the local people, and socialising with some of them.

A similar ambivalence marks Gardner’s descriptions of the local female children, which at first appear to conform to the objectifying gaze discussed above. In February 1938, by which time they were settled at Hureidtha, Gardner and Stark went to watch the annual procession, part of a local religious and cultural festival, ‘a most colourful affair’.9 Gardner again sketches out the costumes, dwelling on their bright colours:

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8 Elinor Gardner to unknown [letter missing first page], probably ‘Beloved’ [Emilie Gardner], internal date of 24 February, SSC/48 EWG 1, RGS-IBG Archives.
9 Elinor Gardner to ‘Christine’ [surname unknown], 4 February 1938, SSC/48 EWG 1, RGS-IBG Archives.
the little girls ‘in the vividest greens, oranges & magentas & loaded with amulets & every other thing & on their heads little flat caps of small beads with silver ornaments hung around the edge – their faces & shoulders the brightest yellow with red & green & black patterns on them.10

She also describes the little girls as looking ‘more like dolls than anything else’.11 The children are objectified into ‘dolls’, wearing doll-like clothes and referencing rituals around dressing up dolls which also make these girls’ bodies into display stands for their ornamental costumes. Yet elsewhere in the letters, there are hints of the personalities of these children, as Gardner describes their curiosity about the European strangers, and shyness about actually engaging with Gardner and her colleagues.12

Even more interestingly, in Gardner’s account evidence emerges of a kind of reversal of the imperial gaze, in which the expedition members appear themselves as objects of curiosity for the local people, and in which there are hints of the agency of local people. In one fascinating passage, Gardner describes an exchange that the expeditionary team had with a group of small boys on the road into Terim, whilst waiting for the expedition’s transportation to be fixed:

We exchanged names – “Gertrude” they could make nothing of, but managed mine when it was transliterated to “Alinoor”. One imp then told [Caton-Thompson] her hair wanted brushing – which indeed it did! They thought I was a man – because of my short skirt and zip blouse I suppose.13

The boys were also wearing zip blouses, and so clearly perceived commonalities between themselves and Gardner, (mis)taking her for someone like themselves. The boys emerge in this passage as gazing subjects as well as gazed-upon objects, who speak to Caton-Thompson and Gardner as something like equals, and who have their own set of expectations about gender and appropriate dress. Gardner also responds positively to

10 Elinor Gardner to ‘Christine’ [surname unknown], 4 February 1938, SSC/48 EWG 1, RGS-IGB Archives.
11 Elinor Gardner to ‘Christine’ [surname unknown], 4 February 1938, SSC/48 EWG 1, RGS-IGB Archives.
12 Elinor Gardner to unknown [letter missing first page], tentatively dated to January 1938, SSC/48 EWG 1, RGS-IGB Archives.
13 Elinor Gardner to ‘Beloved’ [Emilie Gardner], 22 November 1937, SSC/48 EWG 1, RGS-IGB Archives. “Alinoor” is, incidentally, the pseudonym that Stark uses consistently for Gardner throughout her own account of the expedition.
their comments, with amusement and something like agreement, even as she characterises them as impish for making these statements. There is a definite sense of connection here, as well as something of a sense that Gardner and Caton-Thompson are themselves conscious of being the objects of the boys’ gaze. Elsewhere, Gardner describes the members of a local harem coming to visit her in bed whilst she was ill – in an interesting reversal of the common trope invoked by women travellers of visiting harems – in which she is very conscious of being the one gazed upon:

All Abu Bekr hareem came visiting that night & insisted on coming in to see me in bed – small boys, small girls, slaves & all! They all stared at me behind my mosquito net, as at an animal in a cage – but that happens so often here we’re beginning to get used to it.14

In her theory of feminine embodied experience, Iris Marion Young discusses how women experience their bodies as both capacities – as transcendence, as lived fluid action – and as object-things, which are looked at (Young, 2005). Young focuses on how this double consciousness inhibits women’s movements, and comfort in their own bodies, but I am interested here in using women’s consciousness of being looked at as a productive way of reading gazes in expeditionary space. It is possible that owing to their gendered lived experience at home, these women were more accustomed to be looked at, and to be conscious of being looked at, than their male colleagues, and so found it easier to express it in their accounts of their expeditionary experience. This consciousness of being looked at, or this openness to being conscious of being looked at, thus opens up this space for, or the possibility of recording, the gaze of local people, and the agency and personhood – subjectivity – that that gaze represents.

This self-consciousness is also present in Kate Ricardo and Janet Owen’s later joint account of their expeditionary work in East Africa in 1936. On their expedition, Ricardo and Owen often found themselves the objects of local people’s curiosity, being watched

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14 Elinor Gardner to ‘Beloved’ [Emilie Gardner], 28 November 1937, SSC/48 EWG 1, RGS-IBG Archives.
brushing their teeth and preparing for bed (Bertram and Trant, 1991). In one passage they comment that:

> in some of the villages, our arrival is really rather an event. They had seen white men from the occasional visits of the Government officials, but they told us that only one white woman had ever been there before. This always surprises me, because one always thinks of oneself as just an ordinary and everyday sort of person [my emphasis], and it genuinely startled me to find that one is such an oddity! Our hair, again, seemed to interest them very much, and there was a murmur of surprise when we took off our hats to comb the hair back out of our eyes with our fingers. (Bertram and Trant, 1991, p. 77)

This passage demonstrates the speaker’s becoming conscious of how her body is not only gendered but raced within this particular colonial contact zone, and is all the more interesting for her open admission that she was far more accustomed to thinking of herself as the neutral norm – an ‘ordinary and everyday sort of person’ – against which local people were othered, constructed, and raced. The focus on hair as a marker of difference, particularly difference in and between women, can also be seen in the examples from the Wakefield expedition. It also demonstrates a consciousness of raced identity, in that Ricardo and Owen’s hair, as white women, was likely to be quite different in texture to that of the African women observing them. To be the object of curiosity, and some confusion, was surprising and strange to the speaker, and possibly added to her feelings of alienation and some disconnection within the fieldwork setting. Ricardo and Owen are also conscious of being placed by local people in the group or category of white women, comparing themselves, as, presumably, their audience of local people was doing, with the other white women in the area:

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15 Their joint account of their experiences, self-published at a distance of over fifty years from the events in question for the amusement and information of their grandchildren, draws upon their earlier letters home and on photographs taken when in the field. It is not made explicit whose letters are being quoted in particular passages, although it is suggested that most of the letters are Ricardo’s and most of the photographs Owen’s. As a result, the ‘me’ here could be either woman, as this is not made clear, but is more likely to be Ricardo.
At Zimba, there are the White Sisters; but they do not move about much, and they are all dressed like nuns, hidden and draped in long white robes. Certainly, the natives did not seem to know what to make of us in well-worn trousers, shirts and short hair. (Bertram and Trant, 1991, p. 53).

Returning to the Wakefield expedition, another anecdote that Gardner recounts from the same journey to Terim in the early part of the expedition brings in other, more disturbing ambiguities in the power relationships expressed in these gazes. Caton-Thompson, Gardner, and Stark had been accompanied by two male Seiyyids [local religious figures], travelling in the same transport, a lorry. These men are mostly a silent presence in both Gardner and Stark’s accounts of the journey, but there is an interesting passage in Gardner’s letter, which is suggestive of their gaze, and of the complicated and gendered dynamics which govern these gazes. Gardner writes that during their evening encampment, ‘the lorry stayed near in fear of raiders so we had to dress in the morning in our sleeping bags – not an easy occupation – watched with much interest by the Seiyyids!’

Here there is a far more obvious consciousness of the gendered male gaze of the Seiyyids, and of their curiosity. Even when remaining voiceless, they become a presence, through this introduction of their gaze into the narrative. Whilst the image of the three women dressing inside their sleeping bags is a comical one, and humour must have played a part in the interest shown by the Seiyyids, there is also an undercurrent of sexualised anxiety– on the part of the Western women– which speaks to wider concerns about ‘unaccompanied’ women out in the field, in the wilds, which have been internalized, if not often explicitly articulated. There are anxieties here about modesty and appropriate dress and exposure, and an element of sexualised danger. This element is also present, although mostly implicit, in Ricardo and Owen’s account. Whilst on the whole the two European women present themselves as ‘perfectly happy and comfortable to be walking about amongst’ the local people (Bertram and Trant, 1991, p. 2), there is a telling passage which suggests the undercurrent of anxiety and danger:

16 Elinor Gardner to ‘Beloved’ [Emilie Gardner], 22 November 1938, SSC/48 EWG 1, RGS-IBG Archives.
'Being alone in our hut [at Mpika] that night, with no other white people near, felt a little bit strange, and, for the first and only time, I slept with a loaded rifle by my bed.' (Bertram and Trant, 1991 p. 9)

_Ears and voices: language barriers, building relationships, and attitudes to local people_

For an expedition to succeed, it was essential for expeditionary team members to have some means of communication with local people, even where language barriers existed. This is perhaps obvious, but nonetheless important. Communication aided in the development of supportive relationships, in terms of both logistical and sometimes emotional support. Communication of this kind took place through the use of a common language, whether via the use of English by local people, by the employment of interpreters, or by expeditionary participants having developed a degree of proficiency in local languages. The mediating role of interpreters is key to the production of expeditionary knowledges (Driver and Jones, 2009). This section of the chapter will consider in more detail the efforts made by European team members to communicate in local languages. The strategic choice to use local languages rather than English could potentially demonstrate a respect and a degree of empathy for local people which might also facilitate the building of relationships, and a greater degree of acceptance by local people. It is possible that language ability was assessed by the RGS when deciding to support an application, but as such discussions do not generally survive in the records it is impossible to say this with certainty.

The strategy of learning and using local languages was employed by several of the women on RGS-supported expeditions, to varying degrees of success. For example, Gertrude Bell was proficient in many languages, and had published translations of Persian poetry into English in her twenties. Although she had originally struggled to learn Arabic during her first visits to the region around the turn of the century (Bell, 1927 p. 117), by
the time of her RGS-supported Hayyil expedition in 1913, she was sufficiently fluent to be able to communicate with both her expeditionary team and many of the locals she met in the course of her travels, although she still used interpreters who spoke particular dialects of Arabic where necessary. Freya Stark also demonstrated and developed a gift for languages during her many journeys in the Middle East. Similarly to Bell, this facility also aided her in developing warm and useful relationships with those that she met, which aided her significantly in the combination of ethnographic and archaeological work that she carried out on her expeditions.

This expertise with languages was one of the reasons why Stark and Gertrude Caton-Thompson first agreed to collaborate on the Wakefield expedition of 1937-38. Stark was to act as fixer for the expedition, using her existing contacts in the region, and understanding of local cultures and of Arabic, to facilitate matters for Caton-Thompson and Gardner, who intended to carry out their usual programme of archaeological and geological excavation and research. These were skills that Stark had developed in particular on her previous RGS-supported expedition to the Hadhramaut.

One of the many bones of contention between Caton-Thompson and Stark that developed over the course of the Wakefield expedition were their different attitudes to, and behaviour towards, the local people around them. Stark was fiercely critical of both her colleagues for adopting what she called the ‘Egyptian model’ of treating their workers and local people: standoffish, not wishing to develop social relationships, and ‘browbeating’ them, and in short, wanting ‘the Hadhramaut without its inhabitants’. In a letter to her mother in November 1937, Stark wrote that:

*A little chat [with local people] about their own family affairs does more to get willing and efficient helpers than all the ordering about in the world: I think Elinor Gardiner [sic] still considers it a waste of time, being used only to Egyptians who can be browbeaten. The Arab has the charming attitude that anything he does is done as a kindness, so it is no good chivvying him about for it.*

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Stark underlines the importance of not only empathy, but of appropriate degrees of socialising with local people in order to build supportive relationships. Again, Stark presents herself as an expert in local culture and the ways of socialising with Hadhrami people, drawing on her considerable experience of expeditionary travel, and of local people, customs, and norms in the region. Observing local social norms and customs was crucial to ensuring the support and help of local people; this was a point also echoed by Beatrice de Cardi with regard to her later expeditionary fieldwork with tribal people in Baluchistan, Oman, and elsewhere.\(^\text{19}\)

Whilst it is important to recognise Stark’s expertise, it is also important to be conscious of the ways in which her authority and expertise was something that she consciously constructed and promoted, a self-image and a self-positioning that should not be taken wholly at face value. Stark was something of a self-made woman, who did not have the more privileged class background of, for example, Bell or Caton-Thompson, and this careful self-positioning is key to her success. Her assessment of the situation is also clearly gendered, and laden with ideas about appropriate performance of femininity as well as appropriate performance of expeditionary work in this particular colonial contact zone. Positioning herself in opposition to her colleagues, Stark comments that her colleagues ‘think to acquire merit by rushing about making their own beds (when Qasim stands by idle) in a hefty way. I wonder why women always think so much of their physical strength, as if it were a merit?’\(^\text{20}\)

Caton-Thompson and Gardner were established academics, and Caton-Thompson in particular was well-established at the RGS at this time, having served on its Council and committees: it is possible that Stark was envious of their position as such. This positioning is not just in regard to their relationships (or lack of them) with local people, and Caton-Thompson and Gardner’s ‘shoving’ local people off ‘as they are insects’,\(^\text{21}\) but also with

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\(^\text{19}\) Emily Hayes and Sarah L. Evans, Interview with Beatrice de Cardi, at her home, 10 September 2013.
regard to their capabilities as expeditionary geographers. Part of Stark’s self-positioning is in conformity to the tropes of endurance, stoicism, and risk which are generally associated with adventurous travel during this period, and which are often associated with men and masculinity. She writes of how ‘even these women who have done a lot of what they call roughing it are down and out at what I barely call discomfort’, adding that she had ‘quite decided in my own mind not to take them into any sort of even remotely dangerous country’ [all emphasis original]. This is particularly interesting in light of her criticism of her colleagues for trying to ‘acquire merit’ by fending for themselves and relying on their own physical strength.

The same point about the importance of engaging in local social customs can be seen in Kate Ricardo and Janet Owen’s much later account of their expeditionary work in East Africa, in which they describe how ‘there is nothing like “ulendo” [safari] for getting to know these people’ (Bertram and Trant, 1991 p. 27). Of course, whilst Ricardo and Owen understood ulendo as an authentic local practice, it was one that was mediated by the colonial context, and as such forms a particular colonial contact zone. Earlier in the book one of them describes going hunting with local people as part of the ulendo:

I aimed, fired, and the darned thing never moved. I fired again, and this time he was off. I felt horribly ashamed and sad because meat means so much to these people, and it was a very quiet party that began to go home; it was really a rotten bad miss, and they all knew it.’ (Bertram and Trant, 1991, p. 25)

They also described their attempts at communicating with local people who did not speak English, lamenting that they wished they ‘could make more headway with the language; it is extremely difficult’ (Bertram and Trant, 1991, p. 22).

To navigate local norms and customs, good language skills were particularly useful. The particular context for an expedition, and the particular colonial contact zone within which it was operating, are also seen to be key to the development of these relationships,

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as Gardner apparently struggled to translate skills learnt in the Egyptian context to those needed in the Hadhramaut, at least according to Stark. There is some disagreement in Gardner and Stark's accounts about the degree to which Gardner and Caton-Thompson attempted to engage with local people, a disagreement that might be expected given their differing epistemological perspectives and attitudes, and the interpersonal conflict between them. From her letters, and despite her sometimes objectifying attitude to local people expressed there, as discussed above, it is clear that Gardner did make an effort to speak Arabic and to practise these skills.²³ For parts of the expedition, when Stark was convalescing at Aden (see Geniesse, 1999; Maddrell, 2009a), Gardner became responsible for communicating with local people, and, according to her letters, rose to the challenge, although she remained very modest about her abilities, describing her spoken Arabic as 'execrable'.²⁴ She remarked that

Caton-Thompson now rather looks to me to talk Arabic - which is again a reversal of our former positions! We are rather glad to have settled in without Freya, for tho [sic] our Arabic is atrocious we are at least dealing direct with the people, & should never have got to know our charming Hassan so well if [Freya] had been here.²⁵

In Gardner's reading of the situation, although Stark's skills are useful to her colleagues they also form a barrier to the others developing their own relationships with local people. This may have also been related to Stark's self-positioning as Arabian expert, which may have become that of gatekeeper. Sayid Hassan was the leading member of the local ruling family, and had strong European affiliations and connections. He was cosmopolitan and well-travelled, a 'scholarly creature' whom Gardner described as having 'the Arabic equivalent of the Oxford manner.' Whilst Gardner also describes him

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²³ Elinor Gardner to 'Beloved' [Emilie Gardner], 22 November 1937, SSC/48 EWG 1, RGS-IBG Archives.
²⁴ Elinor Gardner to 'Beloved' [Emilie Gardner], 4 February 1938 SSC/48 EWG 1, RGS-IBG Archives.
²⁵ Elinor Gardner to 'Beloved' [Emilie Gardner], 22 December 1937, SSC/48 EWG 1, RGS-IBG Archives.
physically, as a ‘strange and rather fascinating looking being’, his voice and a sense of his personality emerges, as she relates their conversations.²⁶

Throughout their time in Hureidtha, including after Stark joined them, the Europeans spent a lot of time socialising with local people, at a variety of functions. One particularly important occasion was the local holiday festival, which Gardner and Stark attended as guests of Hassan's party. By this time Gardner was getting more used to local customs, and more practised with the language, as can be seen from one of her letters:

After washing our hands our plates were heaped with rice & meat – the grilled stuff being excessively tough! Honey in the comb was provided, & the thing to do was to dip your piece of meat in that before eating. There was some extremely good spiced bread, onions in vinegar, peppers & dates. I am getting more expert at eating rice with my fingers – it's not at all easy to do without dribbling it all over you ... I have taken 2 [medicine] to ward off possible evil effects & [Freya] has gone straight to bed!²⁷

This passage presents Gardner as growing familiar with the local cuisine, and with the customs around sharing and eating it, whilst remaining cautious of its ‘possible evil effects’ (the letter is illegible at this point but the missing words are probably the name of an anti-diarrheal medicine or similar). This stance is quite understandable given how unwell they had all been throughout the expedition. There are also other moments towards the end of their stay in Hureidtha where Gardner is clearly aware of and working within local social norms:

I had lunch by the water – it was examined carefully by the man who had chiefly taken me about - & pronounced very little. They politely sat at a distance while I ate – for if they'd been close I should have need to offer them some & 1 eggs & 4 bits of bread would not have gone far. Amir – the man with me – baked loaves in embers for himself & a venerable old man of 90 who came along with him. On the way back I was invited into his cave – another old tomb with 2 sets of ledges - & given very gingery coffee & haudal. This is

²⁶ Elinor Gardner to ‘Beloved’ [Emilie Gardner], 22 December 1937, SSC/48 EWG 1, RGS-IBG Archives.
²⁷ Elinor Gardner to ‘Christine’ [surname unknown], 4 February 1938, SSC/48 EWG 1, RGS-IBG Archives.
roasted watermelon seeds & v. good. We all keep some in our pockets to chew at odd times. I shall want some when I come home.28

Again, with the haudal seeds, Gardner is becoming comfortable with previously unfamiliar foods, to the extent that she wants to translate them into her own cultural context, although it’s not clear whether ‘want’ in this context means ‘I shall get some’ or ‘I shall miss them.’

Another important group of local people in some expeditionary contexts, with whom expeditionary team members needed to build good and supportive relationships, were white Europeans who were present as a result of their colonial roles and position. Contact with other white women was considered particularly important, especially in the case of expeditions that involved long sea voyages, and which were to places with very small colonial European populations. Katherine Routledge, in her account of the voyage to Rapanui that preceded her expeditionary work there, writes that upon arrival at Rio de Janeiro, ‘to my disappointment, for I had been looking forward for weeks to some feminine society, Lady Haggard was in England, and everyone else seemed to be a bachelor’ (Routledge, 1919, p. 45). Similarly, on the St George expedition, also to the Pacific, some ten years later, Evelyn Cheesman and Cynthia Longfield, on arrival at Coiba, made friends with Mrs Lemastus, the only white woman of the island. The later account of the expedition stated that:

there was not another woman on the island, except among the natives, and even of these there were very few. Her delight at welcoming Miss Cheesman and Miss Longfield from our ship was quite pathetic, and she loaded them with gifts and kindesses. (Douglas and Johnson, 1926, p 75)

In her own account of her work on Tahiti, after she had left the St George, Cheesman discusses her relationship with the local colonial authorities, who ‘greatly facilitated’ her entomological research (Cheesman, 1927, p. 9). However, she also went to

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28 Elinor Gardner to ‘Beloved’ [Emilie Gardner], 4 February 1938, SSC/48 EWG 1, RGS-IBG Archives.
reasonable lengths to avoid socialising with local colonial society, choosing a temporary base that was ‘within a reasonable distance of the town, and yet of sufficient insignificance to exempt a scientist from social obligations’ (Cheesman, 1927, p. 17). She argued that this course of action was the ‘only possible course for anyone to adopt who, like myself, has serious intentions of carrying out a definite piece of work’ (Cheesman, 1927, pp. 16-17).

Unlike Cheesman, Ricardo and Owen were far more reliant on the hospitality and help of local white colonial society in the parts of Africa through which they travelled and worked. In their later account, they wrote that they were:

beginning to feel just like the Empress of Africa, for wherever we go we are met and helped, and everyone knows all about us. Of course, everybody does know everybody else in Africa, but still it is extremely flattering when people meet every train, and introduce themselves and offer every kind of help and say that they have heard from so-and-so that we were coming. It seems so odd for us that, having felt so much abroad for what seems like a very long seven days, we are now surrounded by English people again and able to use English money! (Bertram and Trant, 1991, p. 7)

Being able to rely on this help, and being surrounded by familiar contexts in a very unfamiliar setting, helped to ground Ricardo and Owen, so that they could feel secure in their expeditionary work. To gain this help, Ricardo and Owen consciously performed vulnerable, young femininity: ‘We find that it pays to play the innocent young women who hold out lists vaguely and smile at everybody’ (Bertram and Trant, 1991, p. 6). However, Ricardo and Owen were sometimes ambivalent about these people and their preferred forms of socialisation. At Elizabethville, ‘everybody was very nice to us, but we could sense the snobbish little set where everybody knows everything about everybody else, and they all pay great attention to etiquette’ (Bertram and Trant, 1991, p. 6). In places they gently ridicule the social customs of the colonial society, such as dressing for dinner and playing tennis in the heat.

This ambivalence was tempered somewhat by strong relationships built with particular women. They describe escaping to dinner with Dr Hope Trant, a medical doctor
who was later to become Owen’s aunt-in-law, who they described as ‘a perfectly splendid person; large, with short grey hair, veldt shoes and absolutely oozing capability and kindness’ (Bertram and Trant, 1991, p. 33). They also built strong relationships with their host, Lorna Gore-Browne, a contemporary from Cambridge who had suggested the project to them in the first place, offering them a potential base at her home in central Africa. As a result of her studies in land economy at Cambridge, Gore-Browne was also very interested in research relating to agriculture and fisheries, not least because her and her husband ran a plantation and so were directly interested in the research problem of how to feed the colonial workforce. Gore-Browne herself was engaged in research, conducting village surveys, and joined Ricardo and Owen on one of their smaller expeditions into the Bangweulu swamps, where Gore-Browne’s language skills proved very useful.

**Team relationships**

This section will consider the importance of maintaining good and cohesive relationships between expeditionary team members. Drawing on Driver and Jones’ work on the hidden histories of exploration, it uses a broad definition of expeditionary team members, to include both European and local team members (Driver and Jones, 2009). It is important to note that the boundaries of an expeditionary team could be porous, and its composition quite fluid, with many team members, both European and local, participating for only part of the expedition. An important consequence of using this broad definition, however, is that it becomes very difficult to speak of ‘women-only’ expeditions before the postwar period. Prior to this, the norms of expeditionary practice meant that practically every expedition enlisted local people into the expeditionary team: as porters, cooks, and general servants; as interpreters; as guides; as excavators and diggers; and so on. In the postwar period, this began to change, with the logistical and support work taken on by European team members, although teams continued to work closely with local people in order to benefit from their expertise.
This seems to have occurred for a number of reasons, some of which are closely connected to the expansion and changes in what was defined as an expedition. For example, the change is probably linked to the rise in ‘junior’, ‘training’ expeditions, in that these were younger people from a wider range of class backgrounds, who were less used to having servants, or did not have expectations of being waited on (and even in the earlier period, some European team members were less than comfortable with this, as discussed below). The change in expeditionary practice is also probably linked to wider socio-political changes in the places visited by expeditions in the period during and after decolonization. It is also possibly connected to the fact that by this time, expeditions were largely building on the work of previous exploration – pioneering exploration now generally taking place in uninhabited areas like Antarctica or the high Himalayas – with the fruits of the earlier work, including existing maps, available to them. One way to examine the ways in which intra-team expeditionary relationships are built and sustained is to look at the actual labour that goes into expeditionary support work. This has two major elements, both of which needed to be carried out regardless of the gender composition of the expedition: logistical labour and support; and emotional work and support.

(Logistical support work)

The first of these involves securing food, supplies, and resources, including scientific equipment, and its importance is reflected in the fact that many expeditions had someone to play the explicit role of quartermaster. In the previous chapter I have already discussed the important role played by porters on Olive Murray Chapman’s 1939 expedition to Madagascar, in terms of how they enabled her to access expeditionary spaces. As documented by Driver and Jones, porters played a crucial role on most expeditions in the nineteenth and early-to-mid-twentieth centuries, carrying expeditionary equipment and supplies into and through expeditionary space, although not
always literally carrying the European team members as occurred on Murray Chapman’s expedition (Driver, 2001; Driver and Jones, 2009; Jones, 2010). While porters seem to have usually been male, the use of female porters on Frank Kingdon Ward’s RGS-supported 1924 expedition to Tibet was recorded in The Geographical Journal’s ‘Monthly Record’ for April 1925, and it is possible that female porters were present on other expeditions. Porters often acted as guides and interpreters; in some cases, such as the Ricardo and Owen expedition in 1936, they also acted as cooks and more general servants. Although often drawn from amongst the local population, sometimes these people came from further afield, being asked to participate on the basis of their existing expertise and experience, or existing strong relationships with European team members (see Driver and Jones, 2009). A good example of this is Gertrude Bell’s close and supportive relationship with Fattuh, her servant on many expeditions (see O’Brien, 2000).

On their 1936 expedition, Ricardo and Owen employed male servants who were drawn from the local community. In their account, they describe each of their servants by name, presenting them as distinct individuals with clear personalities:

Sondashi and Chanda, are very nice people, and we have great fun with them. Most of the time they are in tremendous high spirits and shout and yell and sing, and everything is a joke. But they are a bit moody and can be extremely cross and depressed; and, if they speak at all, it is to sing monotonous dirges with great sighings. We take no notice of these, and very soon after they are as gay as ever; and one is never in the least afraid of them. They have great proper pride, and, however hard they have been working, they don’t like us to go out in the boat without them; and, however much they have to carry, they won’t let us carry anything at all.’ (Bertram and Trant, 1991, p. 20)

In this passage, and elsewhere in their account, there are also hints of the way that these men gained local status from their position working with Ricardo and Owen, something seen in other expeditions during this period and earlier (Driver and Jones, 2009). Kinani, the expedition’s ‘waiter, washer, ironer and houseboy’ was employed earlier than his

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29 Minutes of Council 7 December 1923, Council Minutebooks vol. 11 p. 156, RGS-IBG Archives.
other local colleagues, and given a thermos from the expedition's stores in order to perform his duties (Bertram and Trant, 1991, p.13). Although this reading is filtered through Ricardo and Owen's presentation of the situation, and shaped by their perspectives, it seems that Kinani used his possession of this expeditionary object, and his position as a member of the expedition team, to garner status with his fellow employees and with other members of the local community: 'he is terribly grand now, and little crowds collect round him when he pours himself tea from it’ (Bertram and Trant, 1991, p. 13).

Similarly, Sondashi, the expedition's boatman, appears to have used the high status of his employers, and their raced and classed position as white women engaged in a colonial enterprise, to bolster his own status. Ricardo and Owen relate how he refused to give way to a local government official who wanted to cross the river where Ricardo and Owen had just begun collecting specimens:

Sondashi scornfully said, “Only Bwana Bush!” [Government official], and indicated that his Bwana was in the boat and not to be hurried with her nets, and took no notice of the excitement whatever. (Bertram and Trant, 1991, p. 27)

There are also interesting age and gender dynamics, in addition to those of race and class, operating in this particular expeditionary contact zone. Although, in keeping with colonial norms, they refer to them as ‘boys’ throughout the account, Ricardo and Owen do acknowledge that their servants are 'men really with large families, although they look about sixteen' (Bertram and Trant, 1991, p. 14). As such, they were at least as old as Ricardo and Owen, if not older; this dynamic was potentially exacerbated by the fact that Ricardo and Owen were not only young women, but young unmarried women. One of their servants, Nduarty, was told by Lorna Gore-Browne 'to look after us and be our father, as she could not go to Rukwa with us, so she was sending him to take care of us instead.' (Bertram and Trant, 1991, p. 31). Thus we have a paternalistic relationship between expeditionary team members that goes against colonial norms and discourses, in that it is
the African team members who are placed in a position of authority, and the European team members who are infantilised. This can be seen in this passage from Ricardo and Owen's later account, where Owen is treated explicitly as a child:

"We borrowed a couple of canoes and went out to look at them [rocks], Janet insisting on going in a small, unstable canoe – much to the amusement of the local inhabitants, and to the disapproval of Sam [one of the servants], who treated her like a naughty schoolgirl for the rest of the morning. Of course she fell in; it was only up to her waist, but she went in with a good splash and got soaked." (Bertram and Trant, 1991, p. 80)

Their ambivalence about the relationship, and particularly about its power dynamics, is present throughout the account, with the authors stating that 'I can never make out whether they think one precious or merely a hopeless fool' (Bertram and Trant 1991 p. 115). At one point, they describe how Kinani, was 'very good indeed [at his job]; he makes us very ashamed by seizing the clothes off our backs and saying they need washing; he also tells us what to do and what not to buy and what prices to pay' (Bertram and Trant, 1991, p. 13). Some of this stemmed from Ricardo and Owen’s unfamiliarity with the colonial system in place, whereas their employees were far more familiar with it. They describe how Kinani:

"seems quite pleasant, but I am not used to personal servants and don’t know what to do with him! I have since given him some washing to do – but, I asked him to do it instead of told him, which is apparently wrong" (Bertram and Trant, 1991, p. 7)

In this particular colonial contact zone, therefore, it was the white women who were being introduced to and encountering the colonial system that they were ostensibly agents of. Interestingly, Ricardo and Owen also describe a kind of learned helplessness that they developed over the course of the expedition, in response to being waited on hand and foot:

"After being waited on hand and foot for nine months, it is quite difficult to get into the way of doing things for ourselves. Indeed, I don't know how we shall..."
get on without someone to wash and iron our shirts every day; it is much too expensive to send them to the laundry. (Bertram and Trant, 1991, p. 118)

On the Wakefield expedition, which took place within a year of the Ricardo and Owen expedition, the European and local team members also had an uneasy and ambiguous relationship and power dynamic, stemming from race, class, personality, and language differences, as well as different epistemological stances. Caton-Thompson and Gardner regularly quarrelled with Qasim, whom they had employed as a cook, and this was an additional source of contention between Stark and the other team members (see Stark, 1940; Caton-Thompson, 1983; Geniesse, 1999). The relationship between Lucy Evelyn Cheesman and her Tahitian servant Tiho Vahine was similarly fractious, although it also seems to have been marked by genuine affection, with Vahine showing emotion at Cheesman's departure (Cheesman, 1927).

In addition to these logistical and 'domestic' responsibilities, local people were also often employed to provide technical support of various kinds, although this was dependent on the kind of work being undertaken. For example, Caton-Thompson and Gardner employed a number of local diggers and excavators on their Fayum and Kharga Oasis expeditions, and on the Wakefield expedition (Caton-Thompson, 1944, 1952, 1983). Similarly, and in addition to the crew of the *Mana*, who were employed for their seafaring expertise, the Routledge expedition to Rapanui employed a number of islanders in their excavation work. The progress of the work suffered greatly during the uprising, as local people refused to work for the pay offered. Another example can be found on the 1930 Cambridge East African expedition, as the local guides and porters employed also assisted with its survey work, as seen in Figure 11.

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31 See also SSC/48 EWG 1, RGS-IBG Archives.
Figure 11: ‘Stella Worthington and two Kenyans, operating a plane-table survey on the shores of Lake Rudolf, Rift Valley’. (RGS-IBG) Used with permission of the publisher

This image makes explicit the cultural differences between the team members, in that Worthington is fully clothed and the two unnamed Kenyan team members are naked, showing very different standards of propriety in terms of what clothing was considered appropriate for the climate and for the work being undertaken.

Meanwhile, on the 1935 Wager expedition, local Inuit people were employed for their expertise in hunting, and in preparing sealskins and preserved food, which overlapped with providing logistical support for the expedition (Wager, 1937; Wager et al, 1937; Hargreaves, 1991). Whilst Phyllis Wager took responsibility for preparing food for the European members of the team (Wager, 1937; Hargreaves, 1991), she and her sister in law Kit Wager also spent a lot of time socialising with the Inuit women.
This dimension of expeditionary practice changed in the postwar period, with a number of expeditions keeping these logistical and ‘domestic’ responsibilities largely within the European team. However, many of these expeditions continued to rely on the help and support of local people, although in an informal rather than formal capacity. For example, on the Nottingham Iceland expeditions in the early 1950s, a local Icelandic farmer was of great help in providing logistical support (Ives, 2007). Similarly, the Oxford Women’s Expedition to the Azores in 1960 were assisted by local people in procuring food and other supplies, including fresh fruit and fish. Meanwhile, the report from the Oxford University Women’s Expedition to Iceland in 1964 comments that ‘we were aided greatly by the local people, who were always friendly and helpful, being willing to provide us with transport whenever it was possible, and showing considerable interest also in our work and activities’.

Although logistical support work had always been recognised as an important part of an expedition, this was made explicitly clear in the postwar period, in that it became a recurring theme in the reports collected from supported expeditions by the RGS. Most of these, alongside thanking their benefactors and supporters, include extensive lists of their provisions, and occasional commentary on what proved effective, as well as advice on how to plan logistically in terms of transport and accommodation arrangements, and so on. This information was often presented explicitly as advice to future expeditions. Again, this development was probably partly driven by the rise in ‘junior’ training expeditions, on which learning these things and developing these skills were aims of the expedition. It is also linked to the RGS’s decision to require expedition reports from their supported expeditions. Whilst these appear to have begun as an attempt at ‘quality control’ – that supported expeditions did the work they had said they would do, and proved that they had deserved the support received – they developed into a useful collection. One of the stated

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32 Avril Maddrell and Sarah L. Evans, Interview with Helen T Sandison (née Brash) and Oonagh Linehan (née Fitzpatrick), RGS-IBG, 17 June 2013.
33 Sarah L. Evans and Avril Maddrell, Interview with the members of the Oxford Women’s Azores Expedition 1960, Cambridge, 18 June 2013.
34 Report of the Oxford University Women’s Expedition to Iceland 1964 (Scott Polar Research Institute Library), p. [i]
aims of this collection today is to help expedition members research and prepare their own expeditions, and as such it sits as heir to the RGS’s own *Hints to Travellers* series published in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

*Emotional support work*

The second key component of expeditionary support work is that of caring labour and support, underpinned by emotional work. In terms of caring and nurturing labour, including nursing through illness and ensuring the maintenance of healthy bodies, this is about the production of capable knowledge-producing physical bodies and psyches. In terms of emotion work, this has to do with maintaining good relationships with each other, as well as with local people. Elinor Gardner undertook a great deal of this caring work on the Wakefield expedition, nursing both her colleagues through illness. A very important element of expeditionary work, several expeditions, including some of the women-participating expeditions, deliberately included members with medical training in order to cater for this perceived need. An example of this is the British Expedition to the Great Barrier Reefs in 1928, where Mattie Yonge served as medical officer as well as photographer.

Caring work on expedition, however, did not solely consist of nursing those who were already ill or injured. Producing bodies that would in turn be capable of knowledge production was also an aim of the logistical support work discussed above, particularly in the case of preparing meals, and of maintaining clothing and equipment in good working order. Other aspects of bodily maintenance, including provision of facilities for cleaning the body, and for grooming the hair, were also important. An example of this kind of work has been preserved in a photograph taken on the Durham University 1948 Iceland Expedition, reproduced in the expedition’s subsequent report (see Figure 12).
This was a mixed expedition comprising male undergraduates and female graduates. In keeping with what would become common practice on such ‘junior’ expeditions, the team members each took responsibility for an aspect of the expeditionary support work, alongside their chosen subject area, with Miss J. Sutton serving as the
quartermaster, an important logistical role. As presented in the expedition report, the photograph in question shows the other female team member, M. McDonald, cutting the hair of an unidentified male member of the team, with a caption describing the haircut as part of the luxuries of a return to base camp. This is an interesting and complex image. In some ways it reproduces stereotypes about appropriate gender roles, in that it is a woman performing the caring work, and so being discursively associated with domesticity and ‘luxury’. However, other visual representations of women and men on similar expeditions during this period do not tend to depict this kind of expeditionary support work being carried out, focusing instead on team members carrying out scientific work, or on the landscape that they were working in. Instead, the Durham Iceland photograph is more reminiscent of the iconic photographs from earlier all-male expeditions, which depict men performing similar tasks for one another (see Figures 13-15).

35 This pattern can also be seen, for example, in the preparations of the Oxford Women’s Azores expedition 1960. See Bennell et al, n.d.; Sarah L. Evans and Avril Maddrell, Interview with the members of the Oxford Women’s Azores Expedition 1960, Cambridge, 18 June 2013.
Figure 13: ‘Anton and Keohane hair cutting’, Herbert Ponting, taken on the British Antarctic Expedition 1910-1913 (RGS-IBG) Used with permission of the publisher

Figure 14: ‘Lieut Rennick cuts Lilley’s hair (off New Zealand)’, Herbert Ponting, taken on the British Antarctic Expedition 1910-1913. (RGS-IBG) Used with permission of the publisher
This leads into a wider point about the potential gendering of expeditionary support work. It is possible that where alternatives were available, such as when local people or female team members were available to carry out this work, European male team members did not undertake it. However, and as throughout this thesis, my intention here is not to reproduce essential assumptions about gender and expeditionary roles, but rather to highlight the importance of this form of expeditionary work, and the fact that it is crucial to wider expeditionary knowledge production. In addition I suggest that it should not be assumed that such work was the sole province of female team members, or that women were not engaged in scientific work on mixed expeditions. What is also important to recognise is the fact that on many expeditions, multiple roles were played by each person, whether willingly or reluctantly.

Another important aspect of the emotional work carried out on expedition is the conscious attempts to build and manage good expeditionary working relationships. In the
postwar period there were explicit attempts on some expeditions to do this, beginning with team meetings and bonding exercises prior to departure. For example, prior to the British Girls Exploring Society expedition to the Faroes in 1963,

A three day training meet was held at the Outward Bound Mountain School, Ullswater, immediately prior to our leaving Britain. This enabled everyone to get to know each other and the team spirit which quickly developed was to prove invaluable during the weeks that followed.37

This shows the extent to which it was recognised that such preparations were useful, and indeed necessary, to the formation of good expeditionary relationships and therefore to the successful completion of expeditionary aims. Similarly, the report of the Oxford University Women's Expedition to Iceland in 1964 noted that:

The expedition, as far as personnel were concerned, was an unqualified success. All the members had already got to know each other well during the preceding year in Oxford, and even while almost completely isolated, tempers were very rarely frayed. A sense of humour was never far from the surface, particularly under the most difficult circumstances.38

This example highlights one particular strategy for maintaining relationships: that of humour, which could help to undercut tension even at particularly difficult moments.

Networks over distance: relationships with and at home

Emotion work and maintenance was also important in expeditionary space in terms of mental self-care. It could also play a part in developing the kind of self-knowledge associated with many women travellers during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries as discussed by Mona Domosh, Mary Louise Pratt, and others (Domosh, 1991a, Pratt, 1992). While this kind of maintenance of the self, and of one’s own emotional, mental, and

38 Report of the Oxford University Women’s Expedition to Iceland 1964 (Scott Polar Research Institute Library), p. [i].
physical health could be sustained through relationships with others in expeditionary space, another important means of doing this was through the maintenance of relationships with home. The importance can be seen in terms of the pain, homesickness, and alienation suffered by my research subjects when these links were temporarily sundered over the course of expeditionary work.

This can be seen clearly in Elinor Gardner’s letters home to her sister from the Wakefield expedition. This expedition worked in and moved through areas which were isolated, and often cut off from modern lines of communication and the outside world. As we have already seen, Gardner struggled to forge supportive relationships with local people due to the language barrier, as well as there being problems of personal conflict between her two colleagues Caton-Thompson and Stark. The situation was exacerbated by long periods of time, particularly in the earlier part of the expedition, when they were unable to move on to Hureidtha for a number of logistical reasons as explored in Chapter 6. This meant that Gardner was unable to get on with any geological work, the purpose for which she had come to the Hadhramaut. She wrote in December 1937, whilst they were still at Seiyyun, that she was glad of any work:

We found a rock covered with Himyaritic inscriptions today & must go tomorrow to photograph & trace them – at least something to do! Please do not fail to write every week. I could not bear not to get a letter. The mail is the one thing we live for. [all emphasis original]39

Whilst I have explored how their enforced immobility affected their expeditionary work in Chapter 6, here I wish to draw out how it contributed to Gardner’s feelings of alienation, homesickness, and even despair, and as a result strengthened Gardner’s imaginative geography of home, and emotional longing to return there. The boredom and lack of purpose that she felt meant that contact with her friends and family at home was particularly important to her, and she repeated the plea for more letters to her sister Emilie and friend Christine throughout the expedition, chiding them when they did not

39 Elinor Gardner to ‘Beloved’ [Emilie Gardner], 14 December 1937, SSC/48 EWG 1, RGS-IBG Archives.
write for a while: ‘Do write soon both the others had letters waiting for them & none for me’; ‘Don’t forget to write long letters’.\(^{40}\)

At one point Gardner described what a ‘dreadful disappointment’ it was when no letters came, saying that she ‘could have wept’ when no letters came in on the plane.\(^{41}\) Throughout the expedition the situation was exacerbated by logistical problems which often meant getting their mail was particularly difficult, as their area of work was far from the lines of communication. Letters were not delivered on time, might be held up at other places, or were not forwarded properly. Whilst the situation and Gardner’s mood did improve when they finally got to Hureidtha, she remained dependent on communication with home to keep her spirits up, and logistical problems remained. At Hureidtha, letters had ‘to go in & out by camel’, as well as being brought by plane.\(^{42}\) In early 1938, the combination of local unrest which cut off the roads, and a plane crash marooned the team in Hureidtha, cutting off the meagre flow of letters and links with the outside world.\(^{43}\)

Gardner was also deeply concerned and anxious about her opportunities for future employment, particularly after the murder of her colleague Starkey, which caused the cancellation of her original plans to join his dig out in Palestine on her way home from the Hadhramaut.\(^{44}\) This grief and anxiety quite understandably contributed to Gardner’s emotional distress, and exacerbated her feelings of loneliness. Nor was she alone in this. Stark shared Gardner’s feelings of anticipation followed by disappointment with the mail, as she described in letters to her mother:

I am hoping for letters tonight and can hardly wait – so is Elinor: they begin to feel very cut off from Europe. Oh dear B., they ought not to be here: if I get them safely out next spring I shall put up a little water-temple in this land for thank offering to the local gods! ... Of course one feels cut out if one sits in isolation, suspended like Muhammad’s coffin in mid air. Elinor would be all right if alone, but I think Gertrude is consumed with jealousy and can’t bear

\(^{40}\) Elinor Gardner to ‘Beloved’ [Emilie Gardner], 1 November 1937, SSC/48 EWG 1, RGS-IBG Archives; Elinor Gardner to ‘Beloved’ [Emilie Gardner], 22 November 1937, SSC/48 EWG 1, RGS-IBG Archives.

\(^{41}\) Elinor Gardner to ‘Beloved’ [Emilie Gardner], 3 December 1937, SSC/48 EWG 1, RGS-IBG Archives.

\(^{42}\) Elinor Gardner to ‘Beloved’ [Emilie Gardner], 28 November 1937, SSC/48 EWG 1, RGS-IBG Archives.

\(^{43}\) Elinor Gardner to ‘Christine’ [surname unknown], 4 February 1938 SSC/48 EWG 1, RGS-IBG Archives.

\(^{44}\) Elinor Gardner to ‘Beloved’ [Emilie Gardner], 28 January 1938, SSC/48 EWG 1, RGS-IBG Archives.
not to boss the whole thing, and of course I can’t let her do that except for the actual archaeology.\footnote{Freya Stark to Flora Stark, 2 December 1937, printed in Stark, 1976, p. 128.}

Here, Stark emphasises the extent to which it was lack of contact with Europe that made her colleagues miserable, in the context of isolation from the people around them. Stark presents herself here as being proficient at forging such links with the local people and thus staving off disappointment, and using the comparison to criticise her colleagues. Nonetheless, later on in the expedition Stark wrote that the absence of letters was

\textit{Such} a disappointment. The runner from Mukalla has come and brought \textit{nothing} for us: what the devil has happened to our month’s letters goodness knows, and the news has also come that the road is still shut and damaged so that here we are marooned: I feel it is almost as bad as being married to Gertrude [all emphasis original].\footnote{Freya Stark to Flora Stark, 24 February 1938, printed in Stark, 1976, p. 170.}

On their expedition in 1936, Kate Ricardo and Janet Owen had experienced similar feelings of desire for contact with home, which they also expressed in terms of wanting letters from home:

\begin{quote}
Oh. How I hope it will bring some mail! We do look forward to having letters from home, for, although we are always pretty busy, there is a constant longing for contact with home, and with people there doing the things which were our life before we came out here. I suppose the “out” gives away our feelings. (Bertram and Trant, 1991, p. 41).
\end{quote}

Interestingly, on her expedition some twenty-five years earlier, Gertrude Bell had taken a strange kind of comfort in ‘cutting the cord’ with civilisation and casting herself adrift in an unknown land, making a deliberate choice to cut contact. Writing to her married lover Dick Doughty-Wylie, Bell commented that:

\begin{quote}
But there was nothing and I, crossing the little thread of rail that binds me here to the outer world, felt like the Fate with the shears – Clotho, to whom...\end{quote}
we bow the head. I have cut the thread. I can hear no more from you or from anyone, and what is more, do you know that I am an outlaw?⁴⁷

At the same time, she remained beset with a longing to communicate with Doughty-Wylie, and kept a diary for his perusal on her return. At one point she comments that ‘I longed for you to look with me – it was a sight that filled the eyes and satisfied, for the moment, even the most restless mind’.⁴⁸

This desire for connection was also strongly present in Gardner’s experiences of the Wakefield expedition. Starved of contact, and missing home dreadfully, at one point Gardner lamented that ‘I wish I were home – this place seems a devilish long way off & there are not even any decent flowers to console me!’⁴⁹ While writing these letters, Gardner focused closely on home, and on particular symbols of home, to the extent that she was half-imagining herself there again. The Bothy, the home which she shared with Emilie, her sister, when she was in England, was being let out to tenants whilst Gardner was in the Hadhramaut, and Gardner spends a lot of time in the letters advising Emilie on how to proceed, particular with regard to her beloved garden and its produce:

No – I don’t want to sell the jams. I much prefer homemade to bought & there is not a great quantity there. And be sure they don’t get the bottled raspberries – to which I look forward with delight. Such a simple thing as an orange would be like the nectar of the gods to us here & when I get back I shall eat nothing but fruit, vegetables & fish. ⁵⁰ [emphasis all original]

Food becomes a potent symbol of home and the familiar, as set against the strange, unfamiliar and uncomfortable milieu in which she found herself. A similar process of finding comfort in the familiar can be found in the following quotation, about a visit to the home of a local dignitary whilst they were in Seiyyun:

⁴⁷ Gertrude Bell to Dick Doughty-Wylie, 16 January 1914, printed in O’Brien, 2000, p. 43.
⁴⁸ Gertrude Bell to Dick Doughty-Wylie, 28 January 1914, printed in O’Brien, 2000, p. 58.
⁴⁹ Elinor Gardner to ‘Beloved’ [Emilie Gardner], 14 December 1937, SSC/48 EWG 1, RGS-IBG Archives.
⁵⁰ Elinor Gardner to ‘Beloved’ [Emilie Gardner], 19 December 1937, SSC/48 EWG 1, RGS-IBG Archives.
We visited the chief man’s hareem several times – & the last night went to the very modern house of one Seiyyid Omar, where we kept on our shoes, sat in chairs & drank iced syrup & soda water off glass topped tables! We listened to the English news on the wireless & it was a weird sensation to hear Big Ben booming forth in the middle of Arabia!³¹

Ricardo and Owen report a very similar incident during their expedition, which had a similar emotional effect on them, writing that:

His wireless is the first we have heard for a long time, and it was absurdly exciting last night, in the middle of the bush to hear "London Calling" and then Big Ben. We were sitting, after dinner, in the little grass shelter in the middle of Africa, listening to the account of the proclamation ceremony for King George VI. The wireless made the whole thing so unreal: one was neither in one place nor another .. I have never felt so detached, and yet so conscious of Africa and all the miles of swamp around. (Bertram and Trant, 1991, p. 78)

Conclusion

In the foregoing discussion I have highlighted a number of examples of the co-production of expeditionary knowledges from RGS-supported women-participating expeditions between 1913 and 1970. It seems clear that working alongside local people was the dominant form of expeditionary practice during my research period. However, the kinds of work undertaken by local people, and the depth of their participation in and involvement with the expeditionary team varies and is shaped by the particular context of a given expedition. These also seem to have shifted over time, as part of the much wider pattern of decolonization in many expeditionary places, and as part of other changes in expeditionary practice, including the nature and aims of the chosen expeditionary work, and the composition of the European team.

Before the Second World War, and before mass decolonization in the postwar period, many to most of the expeditions discussed were informed by a colonial context. As such, they operated within existing colonial contact zones. In this chapter, I have

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³¹ Elinor Gardner to ‘Beloved’ [Emilie Gardner], 22 November 1937, SSC/48 EWG 1, RGS-IBG Archives.
suggested that the expeditions themselves also functioned as time-limited colonial contact zones, embedded in wider colonial networks of support. As in Pratt's original discussion of contact zones, these were not unidirectional. Even within the surviving texts about these expeditions, which are nearly all authored by the European team members, it is possible to uncover traces of agency on the part of local people. The power relations within relationships between local and European team members were also not wholly one-sided, with other dynamics including age, gender, and familiarity with the expeditionary space and its social norms also influencing it.

In this chapter, I have also highlighted the importance of logistical and emotional support work to successful expeditionary knowledge production. Whilst emotional support could be supplied at a distance from home, in this period this was a potentially risky strategy, as networks of communication could be easily disrupted. It was therefore important to develop emotional reserves of one's own, and to carefully manage relationships with other team members. While serious personality clashes could not be entirely avoided, with conscious effort attempts could be made to mitigate their worst effects. It is possible that the shift towards larger expeditionary teams in the postwar period also had a beneficial effect in this area; sufficient people meant that clashing individuals could spend time apart, with other team members, and were not continually thrown together.
CHAPTER 8: GENDER AND THE SPACES OF GEOGRAPHICAL KNOWLEDGE RECEPTION

Introduction

The relationship between expeditionary fieldwork and home has already been examined in the previous two chapters, considering the mobilities of the return journey home, and the relationships maintained at a distance between expeditionary team members and their homes respectively. This chapter considers another dimension of the return home from expeditionary space: the reception of knowledges produced in expeditionary space, and in particular the reception of the work and findings produced by the women involved with RGS-supported expeditions. Women’s presence once again highlights the gendered nature of proceedings – which are gendered whether or not women are present – and this chapter will examine in particular the relationship between gender and the reception of geographical knowledge production. It is important to recognise that the gendered norms and discourses that governed that reception also shifted over both time and space, as well as having also been shaped by class and racial dimensions.

The chapter will maintain a tight focus on the RGS, and the matrix of interlinked and overlapping networks that constitute the RGS, as established earlier in the thesis. As discussed in earlier chapters, expeditions, in terms of both their physical, literal, and more metaphorical mobilities, can be understood as being cyclic. That is, they often had close connections with the RGS during the preparatory and planning stages, while applying for and receiving RGS support, but in the field contact was greatly reduced. On their return to the UK, they often re-established closer connections with the RGS, for the purpose of disseminating their findings. While the levels of contact varied, the pattern is consistent across many of the expeditions in this study, providing justification for once again focusing on the RGS in this chapter.

The chapter will consider one major space within the RGS for the dissemination, reception, and co-production of geographical knowledge. This is the set of lecture spaces
associated with the RGS during this period, and in particular the earlier part of the period, between 1913 and c.1940. These lectures were generally printed in the Society’s publication *The Geographical Journal* (GJ), which is an important source for understanding and in some cases reconstructing these lectures. This chapter will examine the practices of lecturing with regard to disseminating the findings of women-involved expeditions. It will also consider how this knowledge was disseminated further by being printed in the GJ, examining the transition from lecture to printed article, and the processes which shaped this transition, set within the context of the GJ as a set of spaces for the dissemination, reception, and co-production of knowledge.¹

Not only is there sufficient and manageable material available for focusing closely on this particular space of reception, it was a space in which issues relating to gender were visibly present, made so by the embodied presence of both speaker and audience. As such, it is of particular interest for the themes discussed throughout this thesis, including what happens when women and their embodied gendered experience are brought into histories of geographical thought and practice. The discussion in this chapter builds on the groundwork laid in two related strands of the literature: the earlier and more recent work by feminist historical geographers like Alison Blunt and Avril Maddrell into the reception of women’s geographical work (Blunt, 1994; Maddrell, 2009a); and the recent literature on aurality and orality within the reception of geographical work more broadly, as well as in the wider history of science literature, and the focus in particular on lectures as a particular form of knowledge dissemination (Naylor, 2002; Alberti, 2003; Livingstone, 2005; Keighren, 2006, 2010).

¹ The GJ also printed a broader range of content during this period, including shorter articles, book reviews, announcements, library and map acquisitions, advertisements, and other news of interest to the journal’s readership. There is much scope for further research examining this content, and the ways in which its presentation and dissemination was gendered; however, I have chosen not to include it here. This is because a detailed examination of the book reviewing practices of the GJ, including gender, would have required that I consider a wider set of reviews than just the reviews of books published by women involved in RGS-supported expeditions, and so necessitate going far beyond the parameters of the current study. In addition, the authorship, editorship, publication, circulation, and reception of the GJ are to be the subject of a new Collaborative Doctoral Award between the RGS-IBG and Royal Holloway, University of London beginning in autumn 2014, which will no doubt explore some of these issues.
Methodological issues and missing expedition reports

This discussion will concentrate on the period between 1913 and 1940. This focus on the earlier part of the period is due to changes in the format and content of the GJ after the Second World War. Paper shortages in the immediate postwar period led to the GJ becoming a quarterly rather than monthly publication, with a resulting sharp reduction in available space for pieces, and a change in priority in terms of what was included. Prior to 1940, most supported expeditions had their work disseminated in some form in the GJ, whether through printed lecture, short article, mention in the Monthly Record or other Society announcements, or by having their book reviewed. In the postwar period, this was no longer the case. The change is probably also connected to the significant increase in applications, and numbers of expeditions being supported, during the latter part of my research period, from 1945 to 1970, as discussed in Chapter 5. Instead, expeditions were encouraged, and later required, to submit reports to the Society about their supported work. These now form the basis of the Expedition Reports archive held in the Geography Outdoors department. This collection is an important resource for tracing the history of supported expeditions, and for planning contemporary expeditions.

The Expedition Reports archive has been extremely helpful in terms of mapping out the extent of Society support of expeditions during the postwar period, for uncovering the presence of women on these expeditions (as they generally give far more detail on team members than the brief applications submitted to the Society), and, in some cases, for providing a rich array of detail about day to day expeditionary life. However, there are a number of methodological issues which have prevented me from considering them as sites of knowledge dissemination and reception in more detail. Firstly, and most


\(^3\) Contemporary expeditions which are supported by the Society’s grants programme are still required to submit reports, while other expeditions are encouraged to also submit brief reports. As a result, the collection continues to grow and expand, and is available for reference for those planning their own expeditions today. See http://www.rgs.org/OurWork/Fieldwork+and+Expeditions/ExpeditionsDatabaseAndReports/Expedition+Database+and+Reports.htm Accessed 04/09/2014.
importantly, as already discussed in Chapter 3, a significant number of these reports are currently missing within the collection. Whilst it is likely that they have been moved into another part of the collection, without this being registered in the catalogues, I have been unable to locate them within the time frame of this research. Enough are missing that it would entail serious gaps in my discussion of them and ability to compare them.

Secondly, the themes and information within them are both at once too similar and too diverse to meaningfully compare them. The expeditions in question undertook a very wide range of scientific investigation, in terms of its subject matter and their practices of knowledge production, so that it is difficult to discuss their dissemination of these expeditionary knowledges, particularly without having subject-specific knowledge for all of them. As these parts of the report are usually written for specialists, it is particularly difficult for those without subject expertise to follow along. With regard to their general reports which, as discussed briefly in Chapter 7, often contain details of their logistical preparation, this is generally in the forms of lists of equipment and supplies, with little commentary offered. Beyond noting that these expeditions were often given free supplies by firms, and that many of them had a liking for Cadbury's drinking chocolate, it is therefore difficult to say much more about this.

Thirdly, it would also be difficult to trace the reception of these reports within and beyond the RGS without going well beyond the bounds of the present study. In the expedition grants paperwork, the reports are generally noted as having been received, but without any additional commentary. Late reports are sometimes discussed in the relevant committee minutes during this period, but the emphasis is generally on getting the expeditions in question to submit these reports rather than anything to do with their content. This is probably connected to the role that the reports served for the RGS as a kind of 'quality assurance' on their support of expeditions. Whilst they were almost certainly being read by someone at the RGS in line with this policy, I have found no records or traces of this reading.
In his study of the reception and readings of Ellen Churchill Semple’s *Influences of Geographic Environment*, Innes Keighren suggests that trying to assess a particular text by our current understandings of the topics it covers – that is, whether or not it was correct in its own assessments – is a futile exercise which risks introducing a distorting degree of presentism into our histories of past geographical thought and practice (Keighren, 2010). Instead, he suggests, energies should be focused on reconstructing the past readings of that particular text, and how changes over time and space in how that text was received can help to chart shifting currents in geographical thought and practice. This can be done by looking at reviews (and who wrote them, as well as which networks they participated in), citations in subsequent works, and more informal responses such as marginalia.

As far as I am aware, no records have been kept of who has consulted particular expedition reports, at least in the earlier decades (1950s and 1960s) which are covered by this study. This is in keeping with the fact that the records of reader requests and loans for the rest of the collection do not extend back beyond 2004, when the Foyle Reading Room was first opened to the public. Nor is there much evidence of marginalia or other annotations within the reports that I have consulted (although again, this is an area where the current physical absence of a number of reports becomes a problem). Neither were they generally officially reviewed in the GJ or in other publications, as whilst some of them were formal publications, many of them were far more informal. Whilst it might be possible to trace citations through different reports on the same topics or places, the number of reports involved, not to mention the need to first locate those currently missing, mean that this would present a serious undertaking, beyond the scope of the present doctoral project. This would, however, present a useful avenue for further research into the reception of expeditionary knowledge at the RGS-IBG. For my purposes, then, it is difficult to say much more than that these expeditions were disseminating knowledge through their reports.
‘A Very Worthy Lady’: Women lecturing at the Royal Geographical Society, 1913-c.1940

This section examines women’s participation in the semi-public spaces of the RGS lecture theatre(s), and the ways in which the reception of their expeditionary knowledges were and were not gendered. As has been argued elsewhere in this thesis, it is important to look at the interaction of women – as marginalised historical actors both at that time, and within histories of the discipline – with an elite, even hegemonic, institution like the RGS, in order to write more accurate histories of that institution, and of the discipline’s broader development. I have characterised these lecture spaces as constituting and representing a particular public and a particular audience, and as operating as a kind of semi-public space. Whilst the lectures were not, as far as can be seen from the available archival evidence, open to all-comers, and so cannot be seen as fully public events, there were other dimensions which suggest that they can be seen as semi-public spaces.

RGS lectures were often publicised in the press: some of the surviving letters in which preparation for lectures is discussed mention this, such as the correspondence between Arthur Hinks, then Secretary of the RGS, and Rosita Forbes about her forthcoming lecture in 1921, which had been advertised in the Times.4 Furthermore, the audience was often an interested general audience rather than specialists, at least for the main evening lectures. That general audience was made up largely of Fellows and their invited guests, although the Society would also invite other interested parties and experts, and speakers were also encouraged to invite guests who could contribute to the discussion.5 However, as lists of attendees have not been preserved, and the sources tend to hint at the size of an audience – using phrases such as ‘very well attended’ – rather than being explicit, it is difficult to discuss audiences for given lectures in great detail.

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4 Arthur Hinks to R. B. Burney, 26 May 1921, Correspondence Block 9, Rosita Forbes (Mrs McGrath), 1921-1930 RGS-IBG Archives.
5 Arthur Hinks to Gertrude Caton-Thompson, 2 November 1928, Correspondence Block 9 Gertrude Caton-Thompson 1925-1940, RGS-IBG Archives.
However, it is possible to sketch the general outlines of likely audiences during this period. As discussed elsewhere in the thesis, the RGS can be envisaged as a series of overlapping and interlinked networks. One of the most important was the Fellowship of the Society, made up of its Fellows and members (and for the purposes of this chapter, that proportion of the Fellowship, based in and around London, who regularly attended evening and afternoon lectures). At that time, as has been the case for much of the Society's history, Fellowship was dependent on demonstrating an interest in geography, and not necessarily on producing original geographical knowledge. The evening lectures in particular were considered important social occasions for the largely upper middle class and upper class Fellowship, so that the programme of lectures fulfilled social as well as geographical and educational purposes.

The history of the RGS with regard to its lecture spaces demonstrates clearly that the 'RGS lecture hall' was in fact made up of a number of different physical spaces during the period in question. After its foundation in 1830 the RGS moved through a number of different homes, most notably Whitehall Place from 1854 and Savile Row from 1871 (Mill, 1930). None of these premises had lecture capacity, so throughout its early history other locations were used for the Society's evening meetings. As for many other scientific societies during this period, the question of securing their own lecture facilities remained a perennial preoccupation for the Society (Mill, 1930; see Naylor, 2002).

The Society moved to Lowther Lodge, its present site, in 1913, having purchased the building in 1912. The building had formerly been a private home, and as such had no large lecture space, so the Society continued to make use of other venues, including the theatre at Burlington Gardens until 1920, and the Aeolian Hall until 1930. Between 1929 and 1930 the Society embarked on an ambitious remodelling and extension of Lowther Lodge, including the construction of the Hall (what is now the Ondaatje Theatre) and the Ambulatory. This created on site capacity for lectures, and for refreshments and social circulation after lectures. The mobility of the Society's evening meetings up to 1930 means that it is not always clear where a pre-1930 lecture took place, although this was
sometimes recorded in the printed lecture. As a result, it is difficult to envisage the interaction between speaker and physical setting, an important element of the practice of lecturing. However post-1930 this becomes easier.

As well as multiple lecture locations, there were also different forms of lecture during this period, which were aimed at different audiences and were governed by particular discursive norms. There were the main evening meetings, which were aimed at a general audience, and often included adventurous or entertaining material alongside their scientific content. There were also smaller afternoon meetings in the Map Room, which were run by the Research Department and aimed at specialists (Mill, 1930). Generally, a written paper was submitted to the Society prior to the lecture, and, at least in the case of evening meetings, sent out for comment to discussants, who would be called on to read a prepared response after the lecture. The paper would subsequently be printed in the GJ, along with the prepared comments from discussants. It is unclear whether afternoon meetings followed this precise format, as their printed versions do not generally contain individual comments. While the GJ is the primary source for reconstructing these lectures, it is also incomplete, as there is often little to no record of those in attendance who do not speak; it is likely that other discussion took place, which, because it was extempore and not pre-prepared, was not recorded. Other sources, drawn on in the discussion here, include substantial correspondence in the RGS-IBG archives between the Secretary for this period, Arthur Hinks, and potential speakers and discussants.

There were strong social elements here, including the serving of refreshments before and after lectures; this sociability was particularly important for the evening lectures. Mill notes in his history of the Society that Burlington Gardens was seen as being a particularly good venue in terms of its serving of refreshments after meetings; its closure and conversion to exam rooms in 1920, and the subsequent move of meetings to the Aeolian Hall, which did not have the same capacity for refreshments and socialising, was much lamented by many Fellows (Mill, 1930). One particularly important aspect of socialising around the lectures involved the Geographical Club. This was a men-only
dining club composed of the Council and senior Fellows, who would invite the speaker and other important guests to dinner before the lecture (Mill, 1930). Women were not generally permitted to attend, although an exception was made in the case of women speakers. These dinners formed an important venue for intellectual discussion and informal networking amongst the social elite of the RGS (Mill, 1930). In terms of overall numbers, there were 19 lectures from 16 RGS-supported women-participating expeditions between 1913 and 1939, out of a total of 32 such expeditions. Several of the remaining 16 expeditions disseminated their work through other Society outputs, such as short articles in the GJ, and had their work recognised in other ways by the Society, including book reviews and mentions in the Monthly Record (where the Society made announcements of interest to its Fellowship), and the Society’s medal and awards. Of these 19 lectures, 11 were read by men, seven by women, and one was split in two halves and read jointly by a man and a woman. Of the six lectures given solely by women, two were about the results of a mixed expedition (rather than from a women-only one), and in both of these cases these women – Katherine Routledge and Gertrude Caton-Thompson – had been responsible for the majority of the scientific work.
**Figure 16: Women’s RGS lectures on their RGS-supported expeditionary work, 1913-1940**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Katherine Routledge</td>
<td>1917</td>
<td>‘Easter Island’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gertrude Caton-Thompson</td>
<td>1928</td>
<td>‘Recent Work on the Problem of Lake Moeris’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gertrude Caton-Thompson</td>
<td>1932</td>
<td>‘The Prehistoric Geography of Kharga Oasis’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meta McKinnon Wood (half lecture)</td>
<td>1933</td>
<td>‘Professor J.W. Gregory's Expedition to Peru, 1932’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freya Stark</td>
<td>1938</td>
<td>‘Two Months in the Hadhramaut’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gertrude Caton-Thompson</td>
<td>1938</td>
<td>‘Climate, Irrigation, and Early Man in the Hadhramaut’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freya Stark</td>
<td>1938</td>
<td>‘An Exploration in the Hadhramaut and Journey to the Coast’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Olive Murray Chapman</td>
<td>1940</td>
<td>‘Primitive Tribes in Madagascar’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Routledge’s case, in March 1917, her authorship of the work was made explicit by her husband William Scoresby Routledge in a brief speech before the lecture, in which he explained that his wife desired him to say a few words as to why she is giving [the lecture] and not I. The point is this. You have lately elected ladies to be Fellows of the Society; and as I think a most worthy lady has most worthily carried out work of a character suitable for a lecture, it seems to me it would be much better for her to give an account rather than that I should do so. (W. S. Routledge, 1917, pp. 340-341)

It was highly unusual for anyone other than the President of the Society to speak before the lecture. Scoresby Routledge can be seen as using his own status to give his wife explicit permission to transgress social conventions against women giving scientific lectures. Importantly, he also uses the Society’s own policies – admitting women to the Fellowship, and so recognising women’s capacity for geographical knowledge production – to bolster and validate this decision.
From the overall numbers, it is clear that male speakers dominate these lectures, especially after taking into account the large number of lectures from men-only expeditions during this time where the speakers were necessarily male. This was the case even where subsequent publications by the expeditionary team were co-authored by women participants, such as in the case of Stella and Edgar Barton Worthington on the Cambridge East African expedition in 1930, where Stella was lead author on their subsequent book (Worthington and Worthington, 1933). However, Stella Worthington was favourably mentioned by the President after her husband’s lecture (Goodenough, 1932). She was praised in particular for her dedication to the expedition and its aims, to the extent that she had given up completing her degree in geography at Newnham College, Cambridge.

However, women involved in the expeditions were sometimes invited to give a prepared comment in the post-lecture discussion. The handful of women in question generally spoke after lectures given by their husbands about their joint expeditionary work. For example, both Mollie Courtauld and Phyllis Wager were invited to comment on their experiences on the 1935 Wager Greenland expedition after the lectures given by their respective husbands in late 1936 and in early 1937. In Wager’s case this was a particularly noteworthy achievement as she had given birth only three weeks before (Hargreaves, 1991, 2011). In her comment Wager focused on the domestic roles played by her sister-in-law and herself, and the relationships they built with the Inuit women who were also part of the expedition, but does not mention their contributions to the botanical and geological work of the expedition:

It is a very beautiful country indeed. My sister-in-law and I certainly did the drudgery work, such as washing up, cooking, and baking of bread, but we enjoyed it all very much. I thought the winter might be a little trying during the dark months, but I did not find it so. When the men were away we spent hours in the Eskimo house, talking with them, and they came over to our house, generally just at meal-times so that they could share the meal with us; and we had an arrangement whereby the Eskimo came to tea every Sunday. We used to fill them up with biscuits and jam, and then we had to entertain them afterwards. The
gramophone came in very useful for that, and when the snow melted from our large door-step we used sometimes to dance outside, once in a very heavy snowstorm (Wager, 1937 p. 424).

Wager focuses on these social and domestic elements, possibly as the part that she was most interested in, or possibly in keeping with gendered notions of modesty and appropriate expeditionary work for a woman. Her comment is highly evocative of their day to day life at base camp, and as such is an important resource for reconstructing these aspects of their expeditionary experiences.

Another good example is that of Inezita Hilda Baker, who gave an extended comment about her experiences of the 1933 Oxford Expedition to the New Hebrides after her husband's lecture on the subject (Baker, 1935). Her comment was unusual in terms of its length and that it was illustrated by slides, serving as an appendix to the lecture itself, or even as a small lecture in its own right. Like Wager, Baker also discusses how she developed relationships with local people. She also describes at length her adventures with Tom Harrisson, another team member, after they were stranded on a different island to the rest of the team, after having travelled there with the ambition of climbing an unexplored mountain whilst in pursuit of geological specimens (Baker, 1935). It is probably for these latter details that Baker was invited to give this extended comment, as well as for the slides that she showed. Both adventurous narratives and lantern slides were a popular draw for audiences throughout this period, if sometimes disparaged as being sensationalist.6

For example, Arthur Hinks commented in a letter to David Hogarth, who, as part of the preparation process beforehand, had read and commented on Rosita Forbes’ 1921 lecture on her Kufara expedition, that ‘whatever the defects [in the paper] I am sure she will create a sensation on our platform.’7 There had been a public dispute between Forbes

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6 This is discussed in Emily Hayes’ doctoral research into the lantern slides collections at the RGS-IBG, which is supported by a Collaborative Doctoral Award between the RGS-IBG and the University of Exeter.

7 Arthur Hinks to David Hogarth, 4 May 1921, Correspondence Block 9 Rosita Forbes (Mrs McGrath), 1921-1930, RGS-IBG Archives.
and Hassanein Ahmed Bey, the Oxford-educated Egyptian diplomat and writer with whom she collaborated on the expedition (which was not supported by the RGS, and so not included in the set of lectures discussed here), as to who had been the originator of the expedition, and responsible for its findings. This dispute had racial as well as gendered dimensions, in that Hassanein Bey saw his contributions as being downplayed because he was not English, in spite of his strong network connections and participation. Hinks had written to various experts, including Hogarth, to try and determine the truth. Hogarth had been dismissive about Forbes’ contributions to the leadership of this expedition, or to the knowledge produced by it; this is likely to be the reason for Hinks’ comment on the possible ‘defects’ of Forbes’ paper. However, as Forbes was young, beautiful and engaging, with a reputation both for adventurous travel, and for potentially disreputable morals (according to the gendered social conventions of the time), she was still likely to attract a good audience for the Society.\(^8\) There are parallels here with the treatment of Wilhelmina Elizabeth Ness, and Hinks’ citing the fact that she was ‘nice-looking’ as a reason to help her, discussed in Chapter 4. Women’s beauty and sociability could open doors for them, but to the detriment of their intellectual or scientific accomplishments, and without the woman in question having consciously used such a strategy for advancement.

Particularly high-status women also played the role of invited discussant. Gertrude Bell, who commented on a lecture on the Balkans given by her friend and colleague David Hogarth in 1913, was introduced by the RGS President, Lord Curzon, as ‘one of our greatest authorities on the Near East, who has written excellent books on the subject’ and as ‘one of our recently elected Lady Fellows’ (Curzon, 1913, p. 337). The lecture took place on 10 March, a few weeks after Bell had been elected in the first cohort of women Fellows admitted in February 1913, and around the same time that she was awarded the Gill Memorial Prize in recognition of her expertise and previous work. Both of these can be seen as marks of her high status at this time within the Society. I will now turn to

\(^8\) Barnaby Rogerson, n.d. ‘Follow the Leader: Rosita Forbes and Hassanein Ahmed Bey and their journey through the Libyan desert to Kufara’ [http://www.travelbooks.co.uk/barnaby/articles/42.html](http://www.travelbooks.co.uk/barnaby/articles/42.html) Accessed 04/09/2014.
considering the lectures given by these women in more detail, beginning with the process of preparing a lecture.

*Preparing a lecture*

During this period, the Secretary of the RGS, Arthur Hinks, played an important role in organising the Society’s programme of lectures, and it is possible to reconstruct these processes through analysis of his correspondence with invited speakers; potential discussants; potential guests; and other members of RGS staff. For example it was Hinks who first made the suggestion of Caton-Thompson lecturing at the RGS on her Fayum expedition’s findings, during their correspondence in May 1928 about the grant the RGS had made to her: ‘I am glad to hear that my letter of April 3 has at last reached you and to learn of your success in this season’s work. We shall evidently expect a paper from you and Miss Gardner at an Evening Meeting next session.’

As a paper would need to be sent out to discussants prior to a lecture, the processes of preparing the text for a lecture, along with any accompanying illustrative slides, and of preparing it for subsequent publication in the GJ, ran alongside one another. Before this could happen, however, the paper generally had to pass a process of peer review, either by Hinks or his colleagues at the RGS, or by other experts to whom Hinks had passed the paper for comment. An example of the reviewer comments for one of Evelyn Cheesman’s later papers survives in the RGS-IBG archives, as well as the instructions sheet sent to the reviewer, Henry Balfour. This gives some idea of the criteria by which papers were judged, including originality, whether the Society should accept it for publication, what alterations were needed, and whether it could be adapted for an evening meeting lecture.

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9 Arthur Hinks to Gertrude Caton-Thompson, May 3rd 1928, Correspondence Block 9 Gertrude Caton-Thompson 1925-40, RGS-IBG Archives.
10 Arthur Hinks to Henry Balfour, 1 November 1932, Correspondence Block 9 Lucy Evelyn Cheesman, RGS-IBG Archives.
The role of Arthur Hinks in particular, and other members of staff at the RGS in general, as gatekeeper for the reception of knowledge at the Society and through its lecture programme is made explicit in the case of Violet Cressy-Marcks (Maddrell, 2009a). In 1937 there was a ‘protracted correspondence’ between Hinks and Cressy-Marcks as to the possibility of Cressy-Marcks giving an evening lecture, which Hinks did his best to obstruct. Maddrell demonstrates how the RGS positioned Cressy-Marcks as not quite one of their own, with the result that she was not given much space within the Society for dissemination of her work and ideas (Maddrell, 2009a).

In the case of Caton-Thompson’s 1928 paper, Hinks himself read it and offered comments. His suggestions shed light on the expectations and norms governing an RGS evening lecture at this time, particularly his comment that while the ‘great amount of material’ they had amassed was to be congratulated, it made for ‘rather stiff reading’. Hinks made a number of suggestions for improving the paper and making it more accessible for the general audience, suggesting that they added ‘A brief introductory geographical paragraph on the present geography of the Fayum’, on the basis that ‘one cannot assume that the reader is familiar with the essential facts.’ He also added that:

there are places where the argument seems to me to need a little elucidation, especially for the lecture audience. One must not assume that they understand the implications of the technical terms. For the lecture I think that it will be necessary to summarise large sections in plainer language, omitting the details. An audience cannot follow a detailed argument unless they are familiar with the matter, and will be quite prepared to accept the conclusions without treading in all the steps.12

Not only did Hinks have to ensure that Caton-Thompson had written and submitted the paper to him in good time in order that it could be checked, and provision made for any accompanying slides and illustrations, he also had to corral potential discussants, as well as inviting anyone within the Society’s networks with an interest or

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11 Arthur Hinks to Gertrude Caton-Thompson, 7 November 1928, Correspondence Block 9 Gertrude Caton-Thompson 1925-40, RGS-IBG Archives.
12 Arthur Hinks to Gertrude Caton-Thompson, 7 November 1928, Correspondence Block 9 Gertrude Caton-Thompson 1925-40, RGS-IBG Archives.
expertise in the topic, to both the lecture and if necessary the Geographical Club dinner beforehand. For Caton-Thompson’s lecture, this task was complicated by the fallout of the Fayum dig dispute in 1927 and 1928.

The first two years of Caton-Thompson’s Fayum work (1924-5 and 1925-26) had been funded by Flinders Petrie’s British School in Egypt, but in 1926 this came to an end, with Petrie moving his base of operations to Palestine. As concessions to excavate were ‘given to an approved institution, not to an individual’ (Caton-Thompson and Gardner, 1934, p. 6), Caton-Thompson and Gardner therefore needed to find another ‘body of standing’ to act as sponsor, as well as financial support (Caton-Thompson, 1983, p. 102; Drower, 2006). Gardner had just been appointed Lecturer in Geology at Bedford College (Harvey and Ogilvie, 2000), and would not have access to leave of absence until the 1927-28 season, whilst Caton-Thompson had ‘much to write up and lecture about’. They did not return to the Fayum until October 1927, planning to move to a fresh dig site adjacent to their previous sites in order to systematically continue their work (Caton-Thompson 1983, p. 103).13

In the meantime, Caton-Thompson was unable to renew the concession. They were unconcerned about the delay, ‘tranquil in the tradition which forbids appropriation of another person's work without inquiry as to their intentions to continue it’ (Caton-Thompson, 1928, p. 109). However, in the meantime,

owing to alleged sensational discoveries ... an American expedition had secretly applied for, and been virtually accorded the N. Fayum concession. Prolonged negotiations with the Dept. of Antiquities, so devoid of prehistorians as to be unable to verify the authenticity of the Fayum discoveries, resulted in acknowledgment of our moral right to continue the work in which we had led the way, but left undefined the area to be assigned to us. The positions of the sites coveted by the Oriental Institute of Chicago were widespread: no attempt was made from that quarter to alleviate our position; and on arrival in Egypt in November we found ourselves re-allotted a restricted concession within the area

13 Drower places the third Fayum expedition in the 1928-1929 season, and the suspended year in 1927-1928 (Drower, 2006), but Caton-Thompson and Gardner, 1934 states clearly that it was the 1927-28 season, whilst the 1928 correspondence between Hinks and Caton-Thompson cited here also places it there.
we had already exhausted both prehistorically and geologically (Caton-Thompson, 1928, p. 109).

Whilst Caton-Thompson and Gardner were able to secure some significant findings in going over their previous ground (thanks largely to some fortuitous rains) (Caton-Thompson and Gardner, 1929), this was a serious breach of professional etiquette on the part of the rival team. It had repercussions within the London circle of the RGS, due to Kenneth Sandford’s involvement with the debacle, and to the social conventions around lectures given at the RGS. This can be seen from a letter from Caton-Thompson to Hinks in November 1928, immediately prior to that in which Hinks gave feedback on the paper:

Thinking of what we said about Dr. Sandford’s invitation to the Moeris lecture, and my readiness that he should come if he cares to, I should, perhaps, have made it clearer that it would be pleasanter for both of us not to meet at dinner [emphasis original]. Miss Gardner feels quite as hurt as I do about his conduct, and would, I know associate herself with this request. Neither can I think Dr. Sandford would wish to meet us in any but a purely professional way.  

Hinks, previously unaware of the extent of the dispute, saw Caton-Thompson and Gardner privately to discuss the matter, and Caton-Thompson also supplied him with a copy of her article in Man (Caton-Thompson, 1928), which set on record her version of events.

In the subsequent letters between Hinks and the various concerned parties, as he tried to ascertain the truth of the matter and work towards a resolution, there is an interesting exchange between Hinks and Sandford which invokes various gendered norms and discourses around expeditionary work and geographical capability. Sandford complains of the public ‘attacks’ that Caton-Thompson has made against him in the press, and laments that ‘allowing her a woman’s privilege’ – presumably of chivalrously not raising to the bait, implicitly not treating her as an academic equal – ‘has not been the best

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14 Gertrude Caton-Thompson to Arthur Hinks, 4 November 1928, Correspondence Block 9 Gertrude Caton-Thompson 1925-1940, RGS-IBG Archives.  
15 Gertrude Caton-Thompson to Arthur Hinks, 9 November 1928, Correspondence Block 9 Gertrude Caton-Thompson 1925-1940, RGS-IBG Archives.
policy.’ In response, Hinks rebukes Sandford for implying that Caton-Thompson was unqualified for the work that she had planned:

I do not feel that I am convinced by some of your arguments, particularly about letting Miss Caton-Thompson “loose” as you call it in an area which she had made her own for two years, and which in her opinion someone had stolen from her. But I do not want to enter into the details. I have known Miss Caton-Thompson for a good many years, and have naturally a slight prejudice on her side, but am most anxious that the Society should do the proper thing.”

The ‘proper thing’ turned out to be Hinks engineering an invitation for Sandford to the Kosmos Club, another dining society associated with the RGS, so that he would not be present at the Geographical Club dinner, on the grounds that it ‘would be a pity if anything would remind Miss Caton-Thompson and Miss Gardner of the controversy just before they read the paper.’ In any case, although Hinks had hoped that ‘the lecture by you and Miss Gardner might be the occasion of improving the situation rather than the reverse,’ the feud continued for many years, with Caton-Thompson requesting not to be seated near Sandford at subsequent dinners.

The feud also had its professional, scientific dimensions, as the various academics concerned also disagreed with each other’s interpretations of the data, provoking a series of papers in the GJ throughout the 1920s and 1930s from Caton-Thompson, Gardner, Sandford, A J Arkell, H L Beadnell, and John Ball, on the precise prehistoric levels of Lake Moeris and other related geological and archaeological phenomena. This is all discussed at length in correspondence between Hinks and the various authors: a good example is Sandford commenting in 1933 that ‘I see Beadnell and Miss Caton Thompson have been

16 Kenneth Sandford to Arthur Hinks, 14 November 1928, Correspondence Block 9 Dr. K. S. Sandford letters 1925-39 RGS-IBG Archives
17 Arthur Hinks to Kenneth Sandford, 15 November 1928, Correspondence Block 9, Dr. K. S. Sandford letters 1925-39. RGS-IBG Archives
18 Arthur Hinks to Kenneth Sandford, 13 November 1928, Correspondence Block 9 Dr. K. S. Sandford letters 1925-39. RGS-IBG Archives
19 Arthur Hinks to Gertrude Caton-Thompson, 7 November 1928, Correspondence Block 9 Gertrude Caton-Thompson 1925-40, RGS-IBG Archives.
20 Gertrude Caton-Thompson to Arthur Hinks, 10 June [1932], Correspondence Block 9 Gertrude Caton-Thompson 1925-1940, RGS-IBG Archives.
having a little discussion in this month’s Journal, & find that a good bit of the battle takes part [?] over my presumably prostrate body’21, and requesting the right to reply, to Hinks’ annoyance. Hinks commented that ‘I am anxious to do everything reasonable in this matter consistent with the interests both of the combatants and the readers of the Journal, who may to tell the truth be getting a little tired of Pliocene and Pleistocene Tufas.’22

It is important to note here the close intertwining of the professional and the social, and of the scientific and the personal, within this dispute. It is unlikely that the debate would have been sustained over so many years were it not for the personal animosities involved. It is also important to highlight the mediating role played by Hinks as RGS Secretary, at the centre of this network, seeking to balance a range of different priorities. The foregoing discussion also shows how collaborative, and potentially contested, the process of dissemination, or at least of getting the speaker to the stage, paper in hand, could be.

The lecture itself

It is rather more difficult in these particular seven and a half cases of women delivering lectures to reconstruct the actual performance of the lecture, including excavating traces of the embodied gendered nature of this performance, as Keighren does for some of Ellen Churchill Semple’s lectures (Keighren, 2010). Whilst the printed versions of the lectures survive, it is clear from some of the correspondence around Rosita Forbes’ 1921 paper that speakers did not necessarily read the whole of the printed paper, and in some cases owing to length were actively encouraged not to.23 Similarly, it is unclear whether Hinks’ suggested amendments for Caton-Thompson’s paper, quoted above, were made to the printed version, or simply to that read by Caton-Thompson on the night, for the RGS

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21 Kenneth Sandford to Arthur Hinks, 11 December 1933, Correspondence Block 9 Dr. K. S. Sandford letters 1925-39 RGS-IBG Archives.
22 Arthur Hinks to Kenneth Sandford, 2 March 1933, Correspondence Block 9 Dr. K. S. Sandford letters 1925-39 RGS-IBG Archives.
23 Arthur Hinks to Rosita Forbes, 18 May 1921, Correspondence Block 9, Rosita Forbes (Mrs McGrath), RGS-IBG Archives.
evening lecture audience. Caton-Thompson does not discuss the experience of giving the lecture in any of her subsequent publications, or in the surviving correspondence with Hinks. In her letters to her mother, however, Freya Stark does discuss her nervousness about lecturing at a range of venues, including the RGS:

'I must send you a hasty line to say that all went well. I know today by the general feeling of lightness what a burden it was. The hall was crammed – 800 people: Iveaghs, Lady Halifax, Goschens, and lots of friends there. The Admiral was in the Chair and Lord Wakefield on my other side at dinner, and he, Mr. Perowne, and Violet Leconfield made speeches after, all full of nice things – dreadful to listen to when one is perched on a platform. But the audience was charming, and laughed at all my jokes.'

The topics covered in the whole set of lectures range quite widely, as does the tone adopted by the speaker in question. Caton-Thompson's is quite dryly scientific, while Olive Murray Chapman is rather self-deprecating. There are likely to have been significant class dimensions to this, with Caton-Thompson's self-confidence emanating from her upper-class background as well as from her expertise. The earlier example of Mary Kingsley is potentially instructive here. While Kingsley gave her own lectures in northern manufacturing towns, and particularly to the Liverpool Geographical Society, she was more sensitive about lecturing in the home counties, due to anxieties about her accent (Blunt, 1994; Maddrell, 2009a).

The invited comments on these lectures tend to conform to the polite conventions of praise and congratulation for the lecturer – which governed this particular set of lecture spaces. Little attention is explicitly drawn to their gender, and they are generally positioned as high achieving equals; in contrast to the treatment of earlier writers like Kingsley, whose femininity was emphasised by reviewers in order to downplay her achievements (Blunt, 1994). Katherine Routledge was praised for her scientific achievement and hard work on Rapanui, and Caton-Thompson and Gardner were praised in similar terms in the comments to their joint paper on Lake Moeris (co-authored but

read by Caton-Thompson). In both cases there is intellectual engagement with, and
significant criticism of, their arguments, in ways that frame them as intellectual and
professional equals to the male discussants making these comments. This is in contrast to
the way in earlier decades that women’s geographical work was often described as
‘suggestive’, in the sense of being thought-provoking, but not endowed with a sense of
authority (Maddrell 2009a). Meanwhile, Freya Stark, in comments to her paper on the
Wakefield expedition and in particular her exploration of the Hadhramaut coast, is
effusively praised for her courage and personal qualities, and her contributions to British
imperial interests in the Middle East, as well as for her ‘lively, entertaining and humorous
narrative.’ While these comments have echoes of the ‘pluck in the face of adversity’ tropes
used to characterise earlier women travellers, as well as of the strong discursive links
between gender and nationality used to describe Kingsley (Blunt, 1994), Stark is clearly
being positioned as an asset, and not an eccentric oddity.

These examples are however a handful of the lectures given by women to the
Society at this time. There were a number of such lectures, beyond those reporting back on
RGS-supported expeditions. An example is that given by Forbes in 1921, discussed above.
Moreover, the women discussed here – particularly Caton-Thompson and Stark – enjoyed
high status and recognition at the Society, with Caton-Thompson serving on Council
during the 1930s, and Stark described by the President as the Society’s ‘valued friend’
(Goodenough, 1939). It would be interesting to compare the treatment of these high-
status, high-achieving women, with that experienced by other women lecturing to the
Society, an avenue for future research beyond this PhD project.

It is important to also reiterate that the present study has focused upon the
archives and history of the RGS. The discussion above reveals participation by women who
were largely not academic geographers, instead often being formally trained or
experienced in other related fields. Attention to the archives of the Institute of British
Geographers (IBG), which was founded as a society for academic, university-based
geographers in 1933, and in particular to its spaces of knowledge dissemination, such as
its annual conference, might uncover evidence of the participation of female academic geographers in the networks of the IBG, rather than those of the RGS.

There are also further opportunities for research in reconstructing the reception of the published papers in the GJ. Sometimes papers were responded to in the pages of the GJ, in the form of subsequent articles and letters, as in the case of the long-running Lake Moeris debate discussed above. However, reconstructing the reception beyond this is a more involved process, similar to that which would be needed for the expedition reports as discussed above, and would involve tracing citations and marginalia.

**Conclusion**

A number of important points emerge from the foregoing discussion. The first is that in this period (1913-1945), taking lectures from RGS-supported expeditions as a mostly-representative slice of all RGS lectures, although the lecture spaces of the RGS were strongly male-dominated, there were women speaking and lecturing there. Secondly, the reception given to the female lecturers seems to have been largely non-gendered. In the cases of Stark and Caton-Thompson, this is probably reflective of their high status at the RGS. It was also probably due to existing norms of politeness, and possibly of chivalry. While women tended to speak – in terms of giving the main lecture – only when there were no men to speak for them, there were also other opportunities to contribute to the dissemination of expeditionary knowledge through speech, in the form of invited comments. Here, however, there was a gender difference, in that their invited comments tended to focus on the everyday, domestic side of their expeditions, rather than on scientific content.

During this period, the lecture spaces of the RGS were closely connected to another major RGS space for knowledge dissemination, the GJ. Reconstructing the processes by which papers were prepared for the lecture theatre and for the GJ shows the extent to which this was shaped by the particular people involved, and in particular the importance
of the mediating role played by the RGS Secretary. It also demonstrates the extent to which these practices of knowledge dissemination and reception were connected to, and constitutive of, the wider networks within and around the RGS. These included the audiences of lectures, the group of speakers and authors, those attending Geographical Club dinners, and so on. There are also a number of further avenues of research on the RGS's spaces of knowledge dissemination and reception, which I have been unable to do justice to here. These centre on the GJ, and on the expedition reports collection. The final chapter considers these opportunities for future research alongside others identified in the rest of the thesis, as part of a wider discussion about the key findings of this project and the contributions it makes to wider debates.
CHAPTER 9: CONCLUSIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS

This chapter draws together the conclusions for the whole thesis, outlining its key findings and original contributions. It then discusses future directions for research which have arisen from this project.

Key findings and original contributions to knowledge

This thesis has mapped out women's participation in RGS-supported expeditions between 1913 and 1970, drawing on a range of sources from across the RGS-IBG collections, and creating a new database to consolidate this information. In so doing, it has built on the substantive work done by other feminist historical geographers, and particularly that carried out by Avril Maddrell, which had provided extensive evidence of women's participation in expeditionary work in the nineteenth and early-to-mid twentieth centuries (Blunt, 1994; McEwan, 1995, 2000; Maddrell, 2009a). In providing evidence of this particular subset of women's geographical work, this study substantiates this earlier research, providing further evidence that 'women are not recent arrivals in the production of geographical knowledge' (Maddrell 2009a p. 315). In addition, this thesis makes two important contributions to the literature. The first stems from the tight focus that it maintains on the RGS as an elite and male-dominated institution and set of networks, and on women's relationship with the RGS and careful negotiation of these networks. This is particularly important given the RGS's historical hegemonic position at the heart of British geography and the development of the discipline, and the ways in which this has been presented in earlier histories as an almost wholly male-dominated endeavour.

While a great deal of work had been carried out on women's strategies for undertaking geographical and in particular expeditionary work at a time when they were excluded from the Fellowship of the RGS and the opportunities that this represented, previously there had been no long-term systematic analysis of the impact of the 1913
admission of women on women’s access to the opportunities provided by the RGS with relation to expeditionary support. This thesis goes some way to addressing that gap. Secondly, and relatedly, in examining these women prosographically, as a cohort rather than as individuals, this study allows for a systematic overview of their work and achievements, sketching out similarities, differences, and trends.

The thesis has established that while the overall picture of RGS-supported expeditionary work during this period remains male-dominated, there were women present on RGS-supported expeditions in every decade between 1913 and 1970. This systematic overview, a product of this original research, has also mapped out how this changed over time, and why: increasing from a handful of applications in the 1910s and early 1920s, to making up 15% of all applications by the outbreak of the Second World War; declining in the immediate postwar period, in response to changes in the types of expedition being supported, and a decline in women's participation in higher education; before increasing again in the late 1950s, and becoming 37.5% of all applications by 1970, as new opportunities opened up for women in the universities and beyond. In mapping this previously unknown historical terrain, this terra incognita, the thesis addresses a significant gap in existing knowledge.

In designing and building a new database of all applications to the RGS for expeditionary support, this study also addresses the previous lack of a systematic catalogue of applications and supported past expeditions at the RGS-IBG (see Appendix 1). An important legacy for the project, this database will be integrated into the RGS-IBG’s collections and catalogues, so that it may be of use to future researchers, including future AHRC CDA students at the RGS-IBG. From this database, it is possible to list all of the women-participating applications during the period 1913-1970 by date, identify where they were going, and in many cases name the women involved (see Appendix 2). Making these women and their work visible in this way is an important aim of feminist history-writing, and is a major contribution of this thesis to the feminist historiography of geographical thought and practice.
What is particularly striking about both the women-participating expeditions and the wider database as a whole, is the sheer diversity of the kinds of expeditionary work being carried out, and the places being visited in the course of that work. In the case of the women-participating expeditions, these go to all the continents except Antarctica, with particular concentrations on the Middle East, Central Asia, and the Arctic (defined broadly and including Iceland and Greenland). Work undertaken includes excavation, exploration, mountaineering, ethnographic work, geographical survey, biological survey, and many others. Women also participate in several types of expedition, including relatively solitary treks where they were the only Western member of the party; large multi-disciplinary expeditions; extensive periods of subject-specific fieldwork; and ‘junior’ training expeditions.

That the discursive formation of ‘expedition’ includes such a wide range of different types of project reflects that there were shifts in geographical practice over the course of this period (Stoddart, 1986; Maddrell, 2009a). However, this thesis also argues that for the RGS, and those participating in its networks, throughout this period, the use of the particular term ‘expedition’ represents a claim to geographical status, rather than a statement that a particular kind of knowledge production will be undertaken. As a result of this, there was contestation of the meaning and value of the term ‘expedition’ during this period, and the thesis has discussed a succession of RGS-based anxieties about preserving the term, and its/their hegemonic position. Although this study covers only a subset of all expeditionary work undertaken during this period, and a subset even of all such work associated in some way with the RGS, given the hegemonic status of the RGS it is likely that these patterns were at least partly reproduced in other expeditionary work; a potential avenue for further research.

The research has also provided evidence of women making use of a number of official and unofficial networks, within and beyond the RGS, in order to gain support for their expeditionary work, and an audience for their findings. Importantly, this thesis has found evidence of a number of women participating directly in the networks at the heart
of the RGS, contributing to ongoing attempts to undermine understandings of these as wholly male-dominated spaces. However, by focusing on women’s participation in RGS-supported expeditions, and mapping out all such expeditions for the first time, the thesis has also found evidence of and shown the importance of other networks beyond the RGS, and in particular familial-social networks, in an important continuity with the pre-Fellowship period. In particular, this thesis has uncovered evidence of such a network operating at and around the University of Cambridge during the earlier part of my research period. Careful consideration of this form of network participation, in addition to that within the central networks of the RGS, not only helps to uncover fragmentary evidence of women’s participation, it also shows how these networks were important for expeditionary work as a whole.

Women-focused networks also emerge from this thesis as critical for women’s expeditionary participation, particularly in the later period as formal and official women-focused networks began to emerge. These include the Oxford University Women’s Exploration Club and the British Girls Exploring Society. These seem to have been particularly crucial where women were explicitly excluded from participating in their male equivalents. The development of the refereeing system as part of the RGS’s application process, and its increasing importance to that process, was also a key means by which women could support other women in their expeditionary work. In some cases, this was a formalisation of existing informal processes, as can be seen in Gertrude Caton-Thompson’s practices of mentoring and supporting other women.

The women participating in RGS-supported expeditions bring with them both their lived embodied gendered experience, and the gendered discourses, narratives, and norms that are associated with femininity, and which seek to govern it. As a result, making women’s participation in expeditions visible within histories of geographical thought and practice – and within epistemological and methodological understandings of expeditions as discourses, spaces, and practices of geographical knowledge production – provides additional
evidence to highlight the ways in which these were contested, constructed, and collaborative endeavours.

This thesis has provided a number of examples of this, such as the experiences of Elinor Gardner or of Kate Ricardo and Janet Owen, where the women's gendered subject position affected their experiences of expeditionary participation and their subsequent knowledge production. For example, the discussion in Chapter 7 has suggested that a gendered awareness, a self-consciousness, of being gazed at, opens up space within women's texts about their expeditionary experiences for reconstructing the gazes of local people, ordinarily themselves subject to an imperial, Western, colonizing gaze. As such, and following Mary Louise Pratt, this thesis argues that this colonial relationship, within the expeditionary contact zone, was, if unbalanced, not solely unidirectional.

Awareness of their gendered subject position, in the context of their wider lives, and the wider society in which they lived and participated, is also key for reading the texts that these women produced about their expeditionary work and experiences, and understanding the ways that they chose to represent themselves. In a key continuity with earlier women's travel writing, several of the earlier women in the dataset express clear ambivalence about occupying the subject position of the geographer, the traveller, the explorer, or at least about publicly claiming this status in their published texts. Instead, they employ strategies of humour and self-deprecation to undercut their claims to status and authority. At the same time, these women continue to make such claims, and to use strategies of authentication to demonstrate their ability to produce knowledge, and in particular the value of the knowledge that they have already produced.

Examining the experiences of these women also demonstrates the importance of forms of embodied knowledge production, in ways which help to bolster the ongoing discursive shift towards de-emphasising and destabilising the visual as a form of geographical knowledge production. Not only is there evidence of a range of other senses being used in expeditionary knowledge production, these examples also help to
demonstrate how vision is also firmly sited in the body, and thereby in the surrounding landscape and environment, rather than being distanced from it.

As discussed in the foregoing chapters, bringing women’s discursive association with tropes of immobility, domesticity, emotion and caring work, and home, into expeditionary space has shown how these are key contributors to, and vital components of, expeditionary practice. Practices of strategic immobility are key to the successful completion of expeditionary knowledge production, so that it becomes appropriate to speak of expeditionary rhythms, between mobility and immobility, rather than solely of expeditionary mobility. Similarly, whilst logistical and caring work was a central part of expeditionary practice on all expeditions, the fact that it was often carried out by women on mixed expeditions brings it to the fore in these examples, providing space to consider and theorise its broader importance.

In making these women and their expeditionary work visible, the thesis also provides hundreds of ‘smaller’ stories of past geographical practice for inclusion within histories of the discipline, which can potentially add nuance to existing understandings of expeditionary practice as a form of geographical knowledge production. As such, the thesis represents further steps towards (re)constructing a systematic historical geography, and a genealogical history, of women’s expeditionary work more broadly, and of contributing towards the history of expeditionary work in general.

**Future directions for research**

As this study was always intended as an exploratory project, an initial foray into the *terra incognita* of women’s RGS-supported expeditionary work, it is unsurprising that the project has thrown up several new directions for further research. Foremost amongst these is the prospect of extending the present study more broadly in time and space. This would include further research on the collections of the RGS, in order to strengthen the existing dataset, and to extend it backward and forwards in time beyond 1913-1970.
particular, this could include extending the research forward in time into the 1970s, 1980s, and beyond, and examining the impact of the women’s movement and of second and third wave feminism on women’s RGS-supported expeditionary work. This could also include looking more closely at women’s other RGS-associated work on expeditions, such as that carried out by female staff of the Society, like Mrs Wade and S. Muir, or at women’s financial support of the RGS’s expeditionary support programmes, with Wilhelmina Elizabeth Ness being a potential example.

Another important avenue would be to expand the study to consider a number of other institutions, including other geographical societies, other learned societies, and the universities. This could include work at a number of other archives, and could help to develop an account of other networks and spaces for supporting women’s expeditionary work. One possible example is the suggestion that emerges from this thesis of the Cambridge-based Worts Fund being perceived as more appropriate for applications from female undergraduates, at least partly because it did not use the term expedition.

As suggested in Chapter 8, there is also a great deal of scope for further research on the spaces and practices of the reception of geographical knowledge within and around the RGS during this period, both particularly that produced by women on RGS-supported expeditions and more broadly. In particular, the archives of the *Geographical Journal* remain a largely untapped resource, to be investigated in a new Collaborative Doctoral Award project starting in autumn 2014. There is also more potential for locating the missing expedition reports, and for conducting an in-depth study on this collection as a whole.

Another area for potential further research is the recognition of women’s geographical work through the medals and awards of the RGS, a task begun by Avril Maddrell in her survey of women’s geographical work between 1850 and 1970 (Maddrell, 2009a). As discussed in Chapter 3, in order to keep this PhD project manageable in scope and extent, the focus of this research has been on prospective support of expeditions, rather than retrospective recognition, and therefore the numbers of women in receipt of
RGS medals and awards during this period have not been mapped out. This was an important sphere of the Society’s recognition of particularly high-profile work, and certain elite women in my dataset did receive medals and awards from the Society during the earlier period. These included Gertrude Bell, who received the Gill Memorial Prize in 1913 and the Founders Medal in 1918; Gertrude Caton-Thompson, awarded the Cuthbert Peek Grant in 1932; and Freya Stark, who received the Back Grant in 1933 and the Founder’s Medal in 1942.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, there is a great deal of scope for picking up on the oral history interviews successfully piloted here. These have already proved a rich resource for uncovering the experiences and perspectives of women participants in RGS-supported expeditionary work. In particular, there is much potential for using today’s networks at RGS-IBG to develop a more extensive programme of oral history interviews with participants on supported expeditions, potentially leading to the formation of a new archive at the RGS-IBG.
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