Exploring Bodies: Recentring the Body in Histories of British Exploration, c.1850–1914.

Edward Armston-Sheret

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Royal Holloway, University of London

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ABSTRACT

This thesis offers a new perspective on Victorian and Edwardian British exploration by focusing on the bodies of explorers and those on whom they depended. It answers two key questions: "What does exploration look like if we take the bodies of those involved as our central focus?" and "What does this approach reveal about the contributions and experiences of people and animals otherwise under-represented in mainstream histories of exploration?" I answer these questions by providing a new historically and theoretically informed reading of otherwise familiar case studies: Richard Burton and John Hanning Speke's Nile expeditions (1856–59 and 1860–63); Isabella Bird's travels in North America, Persia, and Asia (1872–*c.* 1897); and Captain Robert Falcon Scott's two Antarctic expeditions (1901–04 and 1910–13).

By focusing on explorers' bodies and the embodied labour of exploration, I demonstrate the dependence of expedition leaders on individuals who are under-researched and under-represented in mainstream historiography—including working-class expedition members and people of colour—and reveal the interdependence of humans and animals in expeditionary fieldwork. In doing so, the thesis challenges existing literatures that portray such work as "simple" and "menial." Finally, I show that explorers' bodies were the objects of examination and curiosity, thereby demonstrating the importance of bodies in intercultural and interspecies encounters. I argue that an attention to the body allows us to write a history of exploration, and of geography more broadly, that foregrounds the contributions of silenced and marginalised groups. It also offers methodological strategies for using geographical archives to bring to the surface subaltern contributions to the discipline and practice of geography. The project draws on extensive archival research conducted in the UK and USA and on a close reading of explorers' published accounts. Through comparing these public and private sources, I argue that it is possible to read such sources "against the grain" and thereby to identify and bring to the fore subaltern contributions and experiences.

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DECLARATION OF AUTHORSHIP

I Edward Armston-Sheret hereby declare that this thesis and the work presented in it is entirely my own. Where I have consulted the work of others, this is always clearly stated. Signed: ______________ Date: 1st July 2021

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1

INTRODUCTION

This thesis offers a new perspective on Victorian and Edwardian exploration by devoting specific attention to the body. While geographical fieldwork has been subjected to critical analysis over the past thirty years, existing scholarship devotes little attention to many of the bodies involved in it. This omission is at odds with the vast literature on corporality within academia more broadly. Such work has analysed the role of bodies in relation to power and empire as well as gender, class, and racial identity.[1] Recent publications have also devoted attention to the relationship between humans and animals and the porous borders of the body itself.[2] These literatures have had some

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[1] This literature is vast and is discussed in detail below. For a variety of perspectives on the body, see: Bryan S. Turner, *The Body and Society: Explorations in Social Theory*, 3rd ed. (London: SAGE, 2008); Willemijn Ruberg, *History of the Body* (London: Springer, 2020); Judith Butler, *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*, Routledge Classics ed. (1990; London and New York: Routledge, 2007); Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan (1977; repr., London: Penguin Books, 1991); David Arnold, *Colonizing the Body: State Medicine and Epidemic Disease in Nineteenth-Century India* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993); Mrinalini Sinha, *Colonial Masculinity: "The Manly Englishman" and the "Effeminate Bengali" in the Late Nineteenth Century* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995); Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*, trans. Richard Nice (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1984).

[2] Donna J. Haraway, *When Species Meet* (Minneapolis University of Minnesota Press, 2008); Sujit Sivasundaram, "Imperial Transgressions: The Animal and Human in the Idea of Race," *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 35, no.1

influence on understandings of travel and exploration. Researchers have dedicated growing attention to the bodies of expedition leaders. However, they have shown much less interest in other expedition members—an approach out of step with the emerging literatures on the "hidden histories" of exploration.[3] In contrast, this thesis answers two key questions: "What does exploration look like if we take the bodies of those involved as our central focus?" and "What does this aproach reveal about the contributions and experiences of people and animals otherwise under-represented in mainstream histories of exploration?" Through answering these questions, this thesis shows how a study of the body can allow us to see exploration in new and different ways.

I also offer new historically and theoretically informed readings of four otherwise familiar case studies from the Victorian and Edwardian era: Richard Burton and John Hanning Speke's Nile expeditions (1856–59 and 1860–63); Isabella Bird's travels in

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(2015): 156–72; Sujit Sivasundaram, "The Human, the Animal and the Prehistory of COVID-19," *Past & Present* 249, no. 1 (2020): 295–316; Chris Philo and Chis Wilbert, eds. *Animal Spaces, Beastly Places* (London: Routledge, 2000). On the porous boundaries of the human body Donna J. Haraway, "A Manifesto for Cyborgs: Science, Technology and the Socialist Feminism in the 1980s," *Australian Feminist Studies* 2, no.4 (1987): 1–42; Elisabeth Grosz, *Volatile Bodies: Towards a Corporeal Feminism* (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1994); Robyn Longhurst, *Bodies: Exploring Fluid Boundaries* (London and New York: Routledge, 2000); Mark Holton, "On the Geographies of Hair: Exploring the Entangled Margins of the Bordered Body," *Progress in Human Geography* 44, no. 3 (2020): 555–71.

[3] Felix Driver and Lowri Jones, *Hidden Histories of Exploration* (London: Royal Geographical Society, 2009); Shino Konishi, Maria Nugent, and Tiffany Shellam, eds., *Indigenous Intermediaries: New Perspectives on Exploration Archives* (Canberra: ANU Press, 2015).

North America, Persia, and Asia (1872–*c.* 1897); and Captain Robert F. Scott's two Antarctic expeditions (1901–04 and 1910–13). The rationale for my selection is three-fold: 1) these case studies represent travel to different geographical regions and environmental contexts and therefore capture the bodily performance of exploration under a variety of climatic regimes and topographical settings; 2) the expeditions span the time period under investigation and were characterised by significant variation in questions of supplies and logistics as well as in their perceived success and celebrity, factors important in allowing me to explore different forms of dependence and their impact on their heroic reputations; 3) they are documented extensively in primary and secondary literature, allowing me to provide a new conceptual interpretation that both deepens and challenges existing scholarship. By attending to this diverse selection of case studies—spanning continents, environments, and the period in question, and exemplifying varying degrees of success, recognition, and fame—I offer broader insights on the cultures and conventions surrounding exploration in this period.[4]

For much of the thesis, I concentrate on expeditions. As Martin Thomas argues, literature on exploration often looks at explorers as individuals, meaning we have less understanding of the expedition as a collective.[5] But even terms like "the expedition" are more complex than they first appear. Not only did the human and animal makeup of many change over the course of a journey, but they also carried out a variety of activities

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[4] Dane Kennedy, *The Last Blank Space: Exploring African and Australia* (Harvard: Cambridge, MA, 2013), 1–24.

[5] Martin Thomas, "What is an Expedition? An Introduction," in *Expedition into Empire: Exploratory Journeys and the Making of the Modern World*, ed. Martin Thomas (London: Routledge, 2015), 17–20.

and depended on pre-existing networks of communication.[6] Consequently, most expeditions were far from singular objects.[7] Similarly, I have chosen the mid-nineteenth century as a starting point for my study. Although there were important waves of travel and encounter before the nineteenth century, the term "explorer" was not commonly used to refer to such travellers.[8] As Adriana Craciun argues, the idea of the explorer as a specific cultural figure emerged due to both changing practices of authorship and the establishment of geographical institutions, such as the Royal Geographical Society (RGS) in 1830.[9] The death of Captain Scott provides a symbolic but also conceptually significant endpoint to this study, since the First World War (which closely followed his death) changed the relationship between science, heroism, and Empire in important and long-reaching ways.[10] The period under investigation, therefore, captures an

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[6] Lawrence Dritsas, *Zambesi: David Livingstone and Expeditionary Science in Africa* (London: I.B. Tauris 2010); Felix Driver, "Face to Face to with Nain Singh: The Schlagintweit Collections and Their Uses," in *Naturalists in the Field: Collecting Recording, and Preserving the Natural World from the Fifteenth to the Twenty-First Century*, ed. Arthur MacGregor (Leiden: Brill, 2018), 452–53.

[7] Dritsas, *Zambesi*, 3.

[8] Adriana Craciun, "What is an Explorer?" *Eighteenth-Century Studies* 45, no. 1 (2011), 31; Felipe Fernandez-Armesto *Pathfinders: A Global History of Exploration* (New York: W.W. Norton, 2006). The latter provides an overview of these longer histories.

[9] Craciun, "What is an Explorer?," 30.

[10] Max Jones, *The Last Great Quest: Captain Scott's Antarctic Sacrifice* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), 269–83; Wade Davis, *Into the Silence: The Great War, Mallory, and the Conquest of Everest* (London: Bodley Head, 2011). There were, of course, some continuities, too, on which see Simon Naylor and James Ryan, eds., *New Spaces of*

important moment in the development of the ideal and idea of the explorer.

In addressing this issue, I develop knowledge on exploration in several ways. First, in Chapter 4, I offer a more nuanced analysis of the body of the "explorer-hero" than has been provided by previous scholarship. Both hagiographic accounts of exploration and post-colonial scholars have often taken for granted the idea that explorers were primarily represented as heroic. In contrast, I demonstrate that understandings of explorers' bodies were far from monolithic and that they were criticised as well as praised. Such disputes, I argue, reflected broader disagreements about what it meant to be an explorer. In addressing this issue, I advance understandings of the relationship between scientific norms, credibility, and ideas of heroism in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This chapter also frames the rest of my thesis. The fact that explorers' accounts were not one-dimensional tales of heroism makes it possible to read them in ways aimed at recovering subaltern contributions and experiences.

My second and main argument is that a focus on bodies can also be used to dismantle many of the heroic myths that still surround exploration. In the following four chapters of the thesis, I demonstrate explorers' dependence on the bodies, senses, and labour of a wide range of individuals who are often written out of more hagiographic accounts, developing the nascent literature on "indigenous intermediaries" and the "hidden histories" of exploration.[11] Recent work on the history and historical geographies of exploration has highlighted the contributions of guides, intermediaries, and porters to European-led expeditions. However, such work has often adopted a biographical approach, seeking to recover the voices of notable individuals identifiable

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Exploration, Geographies of Discovery in the Twentieth Century (I.B. Tauris: London, 2010).

[11] Driver and Jones, *Hidden Histories*; Konishi, *et al.*, eds., *Indigenous Intermediaries.*

from explorers' accounts—leaving many other expedition members ignored. Similarly, work on Antarctic exploration has demonstrated how most literature on the so-called "heroic age" of polar exploration has downplayed the roles of cooks and working-class sailors.[12] In contrast, my approach, focused on the body and the embodied work of exploration, provides new insights on the collective nature of exploration in this period in a way that highlights the multiple people and animals involved.

In examining this topic, I also address conceptual issues relevant to historians and geographers more broadly. My research contributes to debates about the relationships between power, knowledge, and colonialism. I suggest that, while in the field, explorers frequently found themselves dependent on others, and even examined by them. This image is at odds with much of the mythology surrounding explorers, which presents them as "seeing men" whose powerful physique and commanding gaze are the embodiment of European domination.[13] What explorers did have, however, was what Edward Said terms the "power to narrate" their experiences, casting them in more favourable terms.[14] Yet such re-writings were never totally successful in concealing more complex realities, meaning it is possible to read "against the grain" of geographical archives.[15] In doing so, it becomes possible to draw attention to a far broader range of people and animals. My approach also foregrounds the importance of embodied labour

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[12] Jason C. Anthony, *Hoosh: Roast Penguin, Scurvy Day, and Other Tales of Antarctic Cuisine* (Lincoln: Nebraska University Press, 2013); Ben Maddison, *Class and Colonialism in Antarctic Exploration, 1750–1920* (London: Pickering and Chatto, 2014).

[13] Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation*, 2nd ed. (London: Routledge, 2008), 9.

[14] Edward W. Said, *Culture and Imperialism* (London: Vintage, 1994), xiii.

[15] Ann Laura Stoler, *Along the Archival Grain: Epistemic Anxieties and Colonial Common Sense* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009), 47.

within geographical and scientific fieldwork. This point is important as a focus on such work allows us to view the history of geography in different terms. Accordingly, this thesis contributes to writing a history of exploration that recognises the contributions of women, people of colour, the working class, and animals. As such, this project could be read as a contribution to recent debates about decolonising geography.[16] I suggest that ignoring or disparaging the embodied and collaborative labour of people of colour was a powerful way of making geography conform to dominant imperial ideologies. Colonial geography is thus a geography that focuses on the trials and contributions of the (almost always) white (and generally male) geographer, while ignoring the labour and contributions of the people they depended on. Decolonising geography should, I suggest, involve a recognition of the underappreciated, embodied, and sensory labour on which producing and circulating knowledge and maintaining geographical institutions depends.[17] In short, this thesis demonstrates the multiplicity and interdependence of bodies on expeditions, but it also suggests that even singular bodies

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[16] Sarah A Radcliffe, "Decolonising Geographical Knowledges," *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 42, no. 3 (2017): 329–33; Patricia Noxolo, "Introduction: Decolonising Geographical Knowledge in a Colonised and Re-Colonising Postcolonial World," *Area* 49, no. 3 (2017): 317–19; Tariq Jazeel, 'Mainstreaming Geography's Decolonial Imperative', *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 42, no. 3 (2017): 334–37; Stephen Legg, "Decolonialism," *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 42, no. 3 (2017): 345–48.

[17] Dr Patricia Noxolo, interview with GeogPod, Geographical Association, November 26, 2020, https://www.geography.org.uk/GeogPod-The-GAs-Podcast.

could assume different meanings in different spaces and contexts.[18]

In what follows, I examine this issue in seven parts. First, in Chapter 2, I systematically examine previous literature on exploration and demonstrate that the lack of attention to the body in such works is at odds with broader developments in the humanities and social sciences. In Chapter 3, I analyse methodological considerations that shape my approach to archival and literary sources and contextualise this work within recent theoretical and historical work. I argue that studying this subject raises questions relevant to geographers and historians more broadly. Finding the body in the archives, I show, is challenging because of ways most source materials are catalogued. Moreover, correctly interpreting such materials is a complex task because of the ways explorers' accounts were written, as they were composed with domestic audiences in mind and often underwent multiple revisions before publication. In my empirical chapters, I follow the traveller's body through the various stages of an expedition.

In Chapter 4, *"Heroic" Bodies*, I offer a more nuanced reading of the explorer's body than provided by either hagiographical writers or postcolonial critics. I demonstrate that explorers' heroic reputations were often contested and that these debates were reflected in discussions of their bodies. These discussions, I argue, reflected broader disagreements about what it meant to be an explorer. In Chapter 5, *Dependent Bodies*, I highlight how so-called explorer-heroes depended on "body work" conducted by people and animals, whose contributions are often dismissed as simple "menial" labour in explorers' accounts and critical literature.[19] Such work includes the muscular labour of porters and chair-bearers, who carried supplies, instruments, and often the

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[18] Annemarie Mol, *The Body Multiple: Ontology in Medical Practice* (Durham NC: Duke University Press, 2003).

[19] Linda McDowell, *Working Bodies: Interactive Service Employment and Workplace Identities* (Oxford: Willey Blackwell, 2009).

explorers themselves, for hundreds of miles. Travellers also depended on the caring labour of individuals who nursed, cooked, and cleaned for them, freeing them up to conduct scientific and observational work. Animals, too, were an important aspect of most expeditionary parties, forming two-way relations of dependence with humans. In Chapter 6, *Disciplined Bodies*, I investigate questions of command and authority within travellers' published and private writings. In doing so, I argue that explorers often sought rhetorically to manage their dependence on others through a focus on discipline. They frequently sought to present the success of an expedition as totally dependent on their control over it, turning subaltern expedition members into "docile" instruments of exploration.[20] However, I argue that such descriptions were generally inaccurate and that explorers frequently relied on pre-existing forms of discipline (over which they had little control) and on the self-discipline of subaltern expedition members.

In Chapter 7, *Sensing Bodies*, I critique previous literature on vision and travel. Within both uncritical accounts and more recent academic literature, the explorer is often portrayed as a "seeing-man" who dominated landscapes using his disciplining and authoritative vision.[21] In contrast, I show how explorers depended on the senses of (and on oral information from) guides, intermediaries, and local people when making apparently direct observations. Examination shows that expedition leaders depended on the bodies and senses of subaltern expedition members when making geographical and scientific observations. Antarctica presented a particular challenge for explorers due to the lack of an indigenous population and the confusing array of optical illusions the explorers encountered. Consequently, collaboration was also important here but in

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[20] Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, 135–69; Felix Driver, "Intermediaries and the Archive of Exploration," in *Indigenous Intermediaries: New Perspectives on Exploration Archives*, eds. Koshini *et al.* (Canberra: ANU Press, 2015), 12–13.

[21] Pratt, *Imperial Eyes*, 9.

different ways. Finally, in Chapter 8, *Examined Bodies*, I further critique literature on travel and vision by demonstrating that the production of knowledge was a two-way process and involved multiple senses beyond vision. Explorers frequently found their own bodies subject to scrutiny and debate, touch, measurement, and occasionally violence. I examine the different ways people from Africa and Asia gained knowledge by examining explorers. In Antarctica, too, explorers found their bodies observed and examined by medics and animals. We shall see that explorers frequently wrote about such encounters in ways that sought to reassert their control over the situation, highlighting their own discomfort about being observed. These incidents are important as they bring to the surface travellers' vulnerability while in the field and the fact that they were not the only ones generating new knowledge. Exploration was a two-way process of bodily encounter where distinctions between the explorer and the explored were far from clear cut. Overall, the contribution of this thesis comes from its conceptual and thematic focus, which allows me to provide a novel perspective on well-known case studies. However, understanding the broad flow of events of each expedition will assist when reading the analysis that follows. Therefore, before moving on to the main body of thesis, I give in what follows a brief outline of each of the case studies.

Richard Burton, John Hanning Speke, and the Nile controversy

Richard Burton and John Hanning Speke's Nile expeditions were at the heart of one of the most dramatic disputes in mid-nineteenth-century geography.[22] Their expeditions were part of a growing European attention to the interior of the African continent and

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[22] Dorothy Middleton, "The Search for the Nile Sources," *Geographical Journal* 138, no. 2 (June 1972): 209–21.

its hydrology. In part, the interest in the source of the Nile reflected the importance of the river within biblical history, but it was also a product of growing European involvement in Africa over the course of the nineteenth century, culminating in the "Scramble for Africa" in the 1890s.[23] Both Burton and Speke were officers in the army of the East India Company. After developing his linguistic skills on the Indian subcontinent, Burton began his career as an explorer with a journey, disguised as a Muslim pilgrim, to the Muslim holy cities of Mecca and Medina in 1853. The venture made Burton famous, and he used this celebrity to gain support for an expedition to the Horn of Africa.[24] While preparing for the expedition in Aden, Burton met Speke who joined him on the Somaliland Expedition (1854–55).[25] Once in East Africa, the pair split up: Burton proceeded in disguise (which was soon foiled) to the city of Harar (in modern day Ethiopia). Meanwhile, Speke tried to survey a geographical feature called the Wadi Nogal.[26] After returning to the port of Berbera, the party were attacked by a group of Somali men, killing one of them (Lieutenant Stroyan) and leaving Burton and Speke with serious injuries.[27] The incident and how it was represented in Burton's book, *First*

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[23] Kennedy, *The Last Blank*, 263–65.

[24] Dane Kennedy, *The Highly Civilized Man: Richard Burton and the Victorian World* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2005), 58–92.

[25] Alexander Maitland, *Speke and the Discovery of the Source of the Nile* (Readers Union: Trowbridge: 1973), 9–11.

[26] Kennedy, *The Highly Civilized*, 88.

[27] Lovell, *A Rage to Live*, 172–80; Richard F. Burton, *First Footsteps in East Africa: An Exploration of Harar* (London: Longman Brown, Green, and Longmans: London, 1856); John Hanning, Speke, *What Led to the Discovery of the Source of the River Nile* (Edinburgh: Blackwood and Sons, 1864).

Footsteps in East Africa (1856) annoyed and upset Speke.[28] Nevertheless, he did not make his bad feeling clear to Burton at the time. Nor did this prevent Speke from taking part in another expedition led by Burton. The RGS sponsored this venture, called officially The East African Expedition (1856–9).[29] The party left Zanzibar in 1857 to investigate the Great Lakes area of central Africa and its relationship to the Nile sources.[30]

Burton and Speke travelled into the interior of Africa on existing trade routes, leading a diverse party composed of African and Asian soldiers, porters, and guides.[31] Despite suffering from fever, dysentery, and other tropical diseases, they became the first white Europeans to reach Lake Tanganyika in 1858. Once at the lake, they were unable to hire a boat large enough to survey it properly and instead canoed around parts of it. Due to their own ill-health and the hostility of the local population they could not reach the northern end, where there was said to be a river called the Rusizi, which flowed either into or out of the lake.[32] Unable to establish the direction of the river by observation and running low on time and trade goods, the explorers headed for home. On the way back, the pair briefly separated: Speke to investigate reports of another lake

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[28] Lovell, *A Rage to Live*, 172–80; Maitland, *Speke*, 34–40.

[29] Middleton, "The Search for the Nile's Sources," 212.

[30] Richard F. Burton, *Zanzibar: City, Island, and Coast*, 2 vols. (London: Tinsley Brothers, 1872). The explorers reached Zanzibar in 1856 but spent some time there conducting preliminary journeys and waiting for the best season to travel.

[31] Stephen J. Rockel, "Decentring Exploration in East Africa," in *Reinterpreting Exploration: The West in the World*, ed. Dane Kennedy (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 172–94.

[32] Richard F. Burton, *The Lake Regions of Central Africa: A Picture of Exploration*, 2 vols. (London: Longman, Green, Longman and Roberts, 1860); Alan Moorehead, *The White Nile* (London: Hamish and Hamilton, 1960), 35.

to the north, Burton to write up his anthropological observations and make plans for the return march.[33] On this journey, Speke saw the body of water which he later named Lake Victoria and became convinced that it was the source of the Nile. Burton did not share Speke's conviction, leading to an increasingly public disagreement between the two men when they returned to England. In 1860, Speke retuned to East Africa on a further RGS-supported expedition with another army officer, James Augustus Grant. He aimed to more fully prove his claims about the relationship between the lake and the Nile. The two men succeeded in travelling around Lake Victoria and managed to follow the Nile for much of its length, eventually reaching Cairo in early 1863.[34] For the last leg of the journey, Speke was meant to travel down to Cairo with the Welsh explorer John Petherick. Instead, he had an unexpected meeting with Samuel and Florence Baker, who had gone there privately and decided to travel back with them, leading to a dispute with Petherick.[35] Despite collecting further evidence, the expedition failed to convince Speke's critics (and even some supporters) that Lake Victoria was definitely the source of the Nile. The pair had been forced to depart from the lake for considerable periods (meaning they could have seen several different lakes) and there were issues with the quality of their observations. In response to their continuing disagreement, Burton and Speke were due to debate at the 1864 meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science (BAAS) meeting in Bath. However, Speke died from a self-

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[33] John Hanning Speke to Norton Shaw, 2 July 1858, John Hanning Speke Collection, RGS/JHS/1/2, Royal Geographical Society (with the Institute of British Geographers) Archives (hereafter RGS), f. 3.

[34] John Hanning Speke, *Journal of the Discovery of the Source of the Nile* (Edinburgh: Blackwood, 1863).

[35] John Humphries, *Search for the Nile's Sources: The Ruined Reputation of John Petherick, Nineteenth-Century Welsh Explorer* (Cardiff: Cardiff University Press, 2013).

inflicted and probably accidental gunshot wound while hunting the day before.[36] Burton lived on until 1890, working as a diplomat and publishing numerous books, but he never again carried out further explorations of the Nile's sources. The controversy preoccupied much of the attention of British geographers well into the 1870s, leading to numerous other expeditions and vigorous debates between different explorers and armchair geographers.[37] Scholars have analysed these expeditions, using them to shed light on broader issues within British geography in this period, in particular the validity of non-European oral testimony as a source of geographical knowledge and the relationship between science, exploration and empire.[38] These expeditions speak to the

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[36] Maitland, *Speke*, 209–19; W.B. Carnochan, *The Sad Story of Burton, Speke, and the Nile; or Was John Hanning Speke a Cad?* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006), 98–102 provide good summaries of the available evidence; however, alternative theories such as suicide have been suggested, for instance by Fawn Brodie, *The Devil Drives: A Life of Sir Richard Burton* (London: Eyre and Spottiswode, 1967), 225–26.

[37] Moorehead, *The White Nile;* Middleton, "The Search for the Nile's Sources;" Tim Jeal, *Explorers of the Nile: The Triumph and Tragedy of a Victorian Adventure* (London: Faber and Faber, 2011).

[38] Lawrence Dritsas, "Expeditionary Science: Conflicts of Method in Mid-Nineteenth-Century Geographical Discovery," in *Geographies of Nineteenth-Century Science* in Charles W. J. Withers and David Livingstone (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011), 255–78; Adrian S. Wisnicki, "Cartographical Quandaries: The Limits of Knowledge Production in Burton and Speke's Search for the Source of the River Nile," *History in Africa* 35 (2008): 455–79; Adrian S. Wisnicki, "Charting the Frontier: Indigenous Geography, Arab-Nyamwezi Caravans, and the East African Expedition of 1856–59," *Victorian Studies* 51, no. 1 (2008): 103–37; Adrian S. Wisnicki, *Fieldwork of*

relationship between exploration and the growing European involvement in Africa in the nineteenth century. They also offer insights on how British geographers assessed the reliability of competing geographical claims in this period.

Isabella Bird

If Burton and Speke's expeditions are illustrative of European exploration in Africa, then Isabella Bird's expeditions allow the investigation of the changing role of women within nineteenth-century geography. Bird travelled to every continent except for Antarctica and published numerous books and articles on her travels. She also holds a critical position within British geography and was one of the first women admitted to the Royal Geographical Society in 1892. Born in 1831 in North Yorkshire to an upper middle class and devoutly protestant family, Bird spent her early years moving around the United Kingdom.[39] From an early age, she suffered from a spinal condition that affected her ability to walk. At the age of 18, she had an operation to remove a "fibrous tumours" from her lower back, but she continued to suffer pain from this area for the rest of her life.[40] The physical effects of this disease intermingled with psychological symptoms, such depression and insomnia, leading her doctors to prescribe sea travel as a treatment—a point I return to in detail below.[41] Bird's first major travels were to the

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Empire, 1840–1900: Intercultural Dynamics in the Production of British Expeditionary Literature (London Routledge, 2019).

[39] Kay Chubbuck, Introduction to *Letters to Henrietta*, ed. Kay Chubbuck (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 2002), 3.

[40] Anna M. Stoddart, *The Life of Isabella Bird (Mrs Bishop)* (London: John Murray, 1906), 25.

[41] Chubbuck, Introduction to *Letters*, 4–5.

United States in 1854, and she wrote *An Englishwoman in America* (1856) after her return.[42] The book was published by the John Murray publishing house, and Bird formed a friendship with Murray III.[43] The firm would publish all but one of her later books.

It was in May 1872 that Bird's major travels began, again on the advice of her doctors.[44] She travelled first to Australia and New Zealand before setting sail for Hawaii in early 1873.[45] Bird travelled extensively around Hawaii and was the second woman known to have ascended the 13,680 ft. Mauna Kea volcano. These travels formed the basis for her breakthrough book *Six Months in the Sandwich Islands* (1876), composed of a series of letters to her sister Henrietta.[46] Bird left Hawaii in August 1873 on a ship bound for San Francisco. From here she travelled overland on horseback through the Rocky Mountains, staying at Estes Park. She then went by stagecoach and train to New York before returning by ship to Liverpool in January 1874.[47] Bird published a commercially successful account of these travels under the title *A Lady's Life in the Rocky Mountains* (1879).[48] She spent the next few years in the United Kingdom, before travelling to Japan for six months in in 1878. Here, she visited areas that few other Europeans had been to and researched the Ainu people, the indigenous inhabitants of

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[42] Kiyonori Kanasaka *Isabella Bird in and Japan: A Reassessment*, trans. Nicholas Peterwee (Folkstone: Renaissance, 2017), 19–27.

[43] Stoddart, *The Life of Isabella Bird*, 38.

[44] Kanasaka, *Isabella Bird*, 27.

[45] Kanasaka, *Isabella Bird*, 28–29.

[46] Kanasaka, *Isabella Bird*, 28–29.

[47] Kanasaka, *Isabella Bird*, 34–38.

[48] Isabella L. Bird, *A Lady's Life in the Rocky Mountains* (London: John Murray, 1879). I quote from this edition unless otherwise stated.

Japan.[49] These travels formed the basis for her book *Unbeaten Tracks in Japan* (1880).[50] After Japan, Bird visited the Malay Peninsula and later published as the *Golden Chersonese and the Way Thither* (1883), which discussed her time there.[51]

In June 1880, soon after Bird returned from Japan, her sister Henrietta died of typhoid fever.[52] Nine months later, Bird married Henrietta's doctor, John Bishop.[53] From this point on, she went by the name Mrs J. Bishop, and often published under this name. For reasons of clarity and consistency, I have chosen to use her maiden name throughout the thesis. By 1882, Dr Bishop fell ill, and she spent the next few years caring for him, travelling to the South of France and Italy to help him recover. Despite these efforts Bishop died on 6 March 1886, shortly before the couple's fifth wedding anniversary.[54] Bird dealt with grief by engaging in another bout of travel. First, she went to Ireland, before going to Lesser Tibet (now Ladakh, India) and then on to Persia via Iraq and Kurdistan. For much of the Middle Eastern trip, she accompanied a "military-geographical expedition" led by an Indian Army officer, Major Herbert Sawyer, which sought to survey the area to advance British interests in the region.[55] She published accounts of these travels *Among the Tibetans* (1894) and *Journeys in Persia and*

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[49] Kansaka, *Isabella Bird.*

[50] Isabella L. Bird, *Unbeaten Tracks in Japan: Visits to the Aborigines of Yezo and the Shrine of Nikkô and Isê*, 3rd ed, 2 vols. (London: John Murray, 1880).

[51] Stoddart, *The Life of Isabella Bird*, 108; Isabella Bird, *The Golden Chersonese and the Way Thither* (London: John Murray, 1883).

[52] Kanasaka, *Isabella Bird*, 56.

[53] Chubbuck, Introduction to *Letters*, 14–15.

[54] Kanasaka, *Isabella Bird*, 58.

[55] Isabella L. Bird to John Murray, 11 April 1890, Ms. 42027, National Library of Scotland [hereafter NLS] Archives, f. 5.

Kurdistan (1891).[56] The latter book had to pass through the Government of India to remove any references to the secretive intelligence work of the military expedition.[57]

These works further established Bird's reputation as a traveller, and she was awarded an honorary fellowship of the Royal Scottish Geographical Society (RSGS) in 1890 and was one of a small group of women admitted to the RGS in November 1892.[58] Bird's fame grew, and she assumed a new status within scientific circles, speaking at the RSGS, the Anthropological Institute, the BAAS meetings in 1892.[59] In this period, she also trained in photography.[60] Following this spell in Britain, Bird travelled to Korea. The tense political situation in the region shaped her trip, and she was deported to China

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[56] Isabella L. Bishop, *Among the Tibetans* (London: The Religious Tract Society, 1894); Mrs Bishop (Isabella L. Bird), *Journeys in Persia and Kurdistan*, 2 vols. (London: John Murray, 1891).

[57] Isabella Bird to John Murray, 11 April 1890, NLS, f. 6.

[58] "Admission of Women Fellows," Administrative Papers, AP/93/1, RGS Archives. Following the admission of Bird and 22 other women, the RGS banned the admission of women until 1913, making her one of the few women members of many years.

[59] Anon., "Anthropological Institute," *The Atheneum* no. 3370 (28 May 1892), 700; Anon., "Meetings of Societies," *The Academy* (28 May 1892), 52; Mrs Bishop [Isabella L. Bird], "A Journey Through Lesser Tibet," *Scottish Geographical Magazine* 8, no. 10 (1892): 513–28; Mrs Bishop [Isabella L. Bird], "Anniversary Address: The Upper Karun Region and the Bakhtiari Lurs," *Scottish Geographical Magazine* 8, no. 1 (1892): 1–14.

[60] Luke Garltan, "'A Complete Craze:' Isabella Bird Bishop in East Asia," *Photoresearcher* no.15 (2011), 16; Deborah Ireland, *Isabella Bird: A Photographic Journal of Travels through China, 1894–1896* (London: Royal Geographical Society, 2015), 18.

following the start of the Sino-Japanese war in 1894.[61] Bird spent the following years travelling around East Asia, completing an extensive trip up the Yangtze river, taking numerous photographs en route.[62] She returned to the UK in 1897 and lectured before the RGS.[63] She published several books on East Asia, *Korea and Her Neighbours* (1898), *The Yangtze Valley and Beyond* (1899), and the photography book *Chinese Pictures* (1900).[64] Following this, she completed a final journey through Morocco on horseback.[65] After returning, her health declined, leading to her death on 7 October 1904.

I have chosen to address all of Bird's travels at different points in this thesis, as this allows me to trace her growing recognition as a geographer in the latter part of the nineteenth century. Focusing on her early writings, as some of scholars have done, gives the inaccurate impression that she was primarily a travel writer who made few serious contributions.[66] Discussing her later, more scientific, work without reference to her

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[61] Isabella Bird to John Keltie, 5 October 1894, RGS/CB, RGS Archive, f. 5.

[62] Ireland, *Isabella Bird*; Gartland, "A Complete Craze."

[63] Isabella Bishop, "A Journey in Western Sze-Chuan," *The Geographical Journal* 10, no.1 (1897): 19–50.

[64] Mrs Bishop (Isabella L. Bird), *Korea and Her Neighbours; A Narrative of Travel with an Account of the Recent Vicissitudes and Present Position of the Country*, 2 vols. (London: John Murray, 1898); Isabella Bishop, *The Yangtze Valley and Beyond* (London: John Murray, 1899); Mrs J.F. Bishop, *Chinese Pictures: Notes on Photographs Made in China* (Cassel and Company: London, 1900).

[65] Isabella L. Bishop, "Notes on Morocco," *The Monthly Review* 5 (October-December 1901): 89–102; Pat Barr, *A Curious Life for a Lady: The Story of Isabella Bird* (London: Penguin, 1970), 333–40.

[66] Chubbuck, Introduction to *Letters*, 21. Chubbuck dismisses Bird's later works as "stiff and tedious."

earlier ones is confusing as Bird drew and built on these experiences. As this summary shows, studying Bird challenges many stereotypes about women travellers and allows the interrogation of broader themes, such as the changing role of women in Victorian geography, the blurry line between travel and exploration, and questions of health, climate, and disability.

The British National Antarctic Expedition (1901–04) and the British Antarctic Expedition (1910–13)

Studying Edwardian Antarctic expeditions allows me to examine the relationship between scientific research and heroism in the early twentieth century. They also serve to demonstrate how exploration functioned differently in an area where there was no indigenous population. Scott's polar expeditions were, in some ways, a product of the debates over women's admission to the RGS discussed above.[67] As Max Jones demonstrates, polar exploration became a way to reunite the society around a common purpose.[68] Sir Clements Markham, president of the RGS between 1893 and 1905, was instrumental in marshalling the society's resources in support of Antarctic exploration.[69] The result of these efforts was the British National Antarctic Expedition (BNAE, 1901–04), which was jointly organised by the Royal Society (RS) and the RGS and partly funded by the Government. The two societies clashed over both the leadership and the priorities of the expedition: Markham and the RGS contending that the expedition should be led by a naval officer; while the RS argued that a civilian

[67] Jones, *The Last Great*, 31.

[68] Jones, *The Last Great*, 16.

[69] See Clements Markham, *Antarctic Obsession: A Personal Narrative of the Origins of the British National Antarctic Expedition, 1901–04* (Harleston: Bluntisham Books, 1986).

scientist should be in charge.[70] On this, the RGS won and naval Commander Robert Falcon Scott was appointed leader of the 48 officers, sailors, and scientists. They travelled to Antarctica on a specially built ship, *Discovery*, designed for polar service. Once in Antarctica, the explorers overwintered onboard in McMurdo Sound and built a small hut that they had brought with them. They carried out numerous explorations over the next two years. The most significant of these was made by Scott, Edward Wilson, the expedition's junior surgeon, and the Ernest Shackleton, the third lieutenant, towards the South Pole accompanied by 19 dogs.[71] The party managed to travel further south than anyone before but suffered an outbreak of scurvy. This disease affected Shackleton so badly that he was sent home after the party returned to the ship.[72] The other main success was a journey led by Albert Armitage that was the first to reach the raised polar plateau on which the South Pole sits—an achievement that Scott built on the following year with a second trip to the same region.[73] But not everything went to plan. The *Discovery* leaked. The explorers experienced numerous problems with their canned food supplies and suffered an outbreak of scurvy during their first winter. When news of this reached the outside world, there was widespread concern in the British

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[70] T.H. Baughman, *Pilgrims on The Ice: Robert Falcon Scott's First Antarctic Expedition* (Lincoln: Nebraska University Press, 1999), 26–27, 39.

[71] Robert F. Scott, *The Voyage of the "Discovery"* (London: Smith and Elder, 1905), 2:1–125, 376–458.

[72] Bea Riffenburgh, *Shackleton's Forgotten Expedition: The Voyage of the Nimrod* (London: Bloomsbury, 2005), 75–90.

[73] Scott, *The Voyage*, 2:126–62, 204–305; Albert B. Armitage, *Two Years in the Antarctic: Being a Narrative of the British National Antarctic Expedition* (London: Edward Arnold, 1905), 158–79.

press and the RGS began raising funds for a resupply (and possibly rescue mission).[74] The two-ship relief expedition arrived in Antarctica in early 1904, leaving Scott frustrated by suggestions that the expedition needed rescue. Yet the *Discovery* was trapped and was on the verge of being abandoned when the ice finally broke up.[75]

The expedition had several important consequences, triggering a wider public interest in Antarctic exploration, particularly after the publication of Scott's best-selling book *The Voyage of the "Discovery"* (1905).[76] Shackleton had been embarrassed by his breakdown (and Scott's description of it) and soon launched his own Antarctic expedition to try and reach the South Pole. He came remarkably close, getting to within 90 miles of the pole, but turned back due to want of food. The expedition caused a lasting dispute between Scott and Shackleton, as the latter had agreed not to use McMurdo Sound as a base but ended up doing so as ice-conditions made landing anywhere else impossible.[77] In September 1909, Scott launched his own Antarctic expedition in order reach the pole. This expedition was officially called the British Antarctic Expedition (BAE); however, it is often referred to as the *Terra Nova* expedition as this was the name of their ship.[78] In comparison to the BNAE, Scott's second expedition had far less official involvement, partly due to the various scandals surrounding the BNAE.[79] Scott's journey was complicated by the fact that the Norwegian explorer Roald Amundsen

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[74] Edward Armston-Sheret, "Tainted Bodies: Scurvy, Bad Food, and the Reputation of the British National Antarctic Expedition, 1901–1904" *Journal of Historical Geography* 65 (2019), 23–28.

[75] Scott, *The Voyage*, 2: 306–52.

[76] Elspeth J. G. Huxley, *Scott of the Antarctic* (Lincoln: First Bison Books, 1990), 145.

[77] Riffenburgh, *Shackleton's Forgotten*, 143–56.

[78] Jones, *The Last Great*, 74.

[79] Jones, *The Last Great*, 71; Armston-Sheret, "Tainted Bodies," 26–28.

decided to travel to Antarctica at the same time. Amundsen made this decision in secret and the news was an unpleasant surprise to Scott who had not anticipated a race to the pole.[80]

Scott's expedition reached Antarctica in early 1911, landing a shore party (who overwintered in a hut) of 33 men "comprising seven officers (five from the Royal Navy), a scientific staff of twelve, twelve naval seamen" and two Russian men.[81] The expedition also brought three motor sledges, but one crashed through the ice when unloading the ship and the other two proved unreliable, breaking down near the start of Scott's southern journey the following spring. While the scientific staff of the expedition conducted a series of experiments, others, led by Scott, moved supplies to the South. Over the winter, Edward Wilson, Henry Robertson Bowers, an officer in the Indian Marines, and the assistant zoologist Apsley Cherry Garrard completed an arduous winter march to collect Emperor Penguin eggs from Cape Crozier.[82] This was Scott's most well-known expedition, with much attention focused the race to the pole. As I discuss below, the British used ponies, dogs, motor sledges and human labour to pull

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[80] Amundsen had been preparing to travel to the North Pole, but this objective was proving increasingly unpromising after expeditions led by the American explorers Frederick Cook and Robert Peary both claimed to have reached it in 1909 and 1910. Roland Huntford, *The Last Place on Earth: Scott and Amundsen's Race to the South Pole* (New York: Modern Library, 1999), 274–302; Susan Solomon, *The Coldest March: Scott's Fatal Antarctic Expedition* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2001), 92–93; Roald Amundsen, *The South Pole: An Account of the Norwegian Antarctic Expedition in the "Fram," 1910–12*, trans. A. G. Chater, 2 vols. (London: John Murray, 1912).

[81] Jones, *The Last Great*, 79.

[82] Apsley Cherry Garrard, *The Worst Journey in the World*, 2 vols. (London: Constable and Co., 1922), 1: 230–301.

their sledges. In contrast, Amundsen, relied on dog muscles to pull his party south, meaning he travelled more quickly. When Scott and four companions eventually reached the pole on 17 January 1912, they found that Amundsen had beaten them there by a month.[83] After taking a series of observations, the men returned north. As they descended the Beardmore Glacier, which joins the polar plateau to the Ross Ice Shelf the health of petty officer Edgar Evans, deteriorated, slowing the group down. He died on 17 February 1912.[84] The rest of the men continued, hoping to meet a party of dogs who would help them return to the base camp. Increasingly hungry, short on fuel, and suffering from nutritional deficiencies, the men's strength was waning, particularly the health of Lawrence "Titus" Oates. Once on the barrier, they encountered particularly cold weather for the time of year, which hindered their progress and gave Oates a bad frostbite.[85] On 17 March, he walked out in a blizzard in the hope that it would allow the remaining men to reach safety. Unfortunately, the others encountered another blizzard shortly before they reached a depot containing supplies and died in their tent around 29 March 1912.[86] The bodies of Scott, Wilson, and Bowers were found in November 1912 by a search party (who buried them in Antarctica) and their diaries and photographs were recovered. Scott's diaries were edited and published in 1913.[87] Once news of their

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[83] Solomon, *The Coldest March*, 216–17.

[84] Solomon, *The Coldest March*, 227.

[85] Solomon, *The Coldest March*, 286–319; Huntford, *The Last Place*, 492–93. In contrast to Solomon, Huntford argues that scurvy and nutritional deficiencies were the primary cause of the men's death.

[86] Solomon, *The Coldest March*, 242–44.

[87] Robert Falcon Scott, *Scott's Last Expedition*, 2 vols., ed. Leonard Huxley (London: Smith and Elder, 1913); generally, however, I quote from Robert F. Scott, *Journals: Captain Scott's Last Expedition* with an introduction by Max Jones (Oxford: Oxford

deaths reached the outside world, the men assumed a particularly heroic status—in many ways marking the apogee of exploration as a cultural phenomenon.[88]

The dramatic story of Scott's polar journey is often the focus of most scholarship on the expedition, but it is important to remember its other activities. Scientists conducted a great deal of research at the Cape Evans base. The story so-called "Northern Party" is extremely interesting but less well known.[89] Victor Campbell, a naval officer, led the party of six. Their original plans to explore King Edward VII Land were thwarted by the presence of Amundsen's expedition there. Accordingly, after spending a winter conducting scientific work in a hut at Cape Adare, the men were transported by ship to an area called Evans Cove some 200 miles from the main base to conduct a geological survey, with the *Terra Nova* intending to pick them up before winter.[90] Due to pack ice, the ship never returned, and the men were forced to spend the Antarctic winter in an ice cave with very few supplies.[91] Once spring broke, the men walked 200

University Press, 2006), which includes comments removed during this editing process.

[88] *Jones, The Last Great.*

[89] Raymond E. Priestley, *Antarctic Adventure: Scott's Northern Party* (New York: E.P. Dutton & Co. 1915); Meredith Hooper, *The Longest Winter: Scott's Other Heroes* (London: John Murray, 2010).

[90] Raymond Priestley, "Obituary: Captain V. L. A. Campbell, D. S. O., R. N. 1875–1956," *The Geographical Journal*, 123, no. 1 (1957): 131–32.

[91] Priestley, "Obituary," 131.

miles back to Cape Evans. The experiences of these men offer equally valuable insights into polar exploration, and I return to them at several points in this thesis.

Taken together, these diverse case studies allow me to interrogate different aspects of Victorian and Edwardian geography, including the relationship between identity and heroism. These examples also allow me to examine how location, timing, and identity shaped practices of exploration: Burton and Speke's expeditions enable me to address European involvement in Africa; Bird's expeditions to examine questions of gender and disability; and Scott's expeditions to examine the relationship between science and adventure in the run up to the First World War. Overall, these specific case studies have broader relevance, allowing me to make conceptual arguments that develop and challenge existing literatures. Consequently, in what follows, I analyse the wider scholarship that this thesis informs and is informed by.

2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Despite growing critical attention to exploration within a variety of disciplines, previous studies have rarely taken the body as their central focus. Where writers have discussed the subject, they have concentrated on expedition leaders rather than all the people and animals involved in making a journey possible. The disproportionate attention to leaders' bodies stands in contrast with growing efforts to understand exploration in relation to broader issues, moving attention away from the personalities of individuals. The lack of attention to the body within literature on exploration is at odds with literature in the humanities and social sciences more broadly, where corporality has become a central area of scholarly enquiry. Applying the insights offered by such work to the study of Victorian and Edwardian exploration can, I argue, provide a way to develop and extend understandings of this subject. This chapter functions to place the thesis within the wider context of conceptual and theoretical debates in the literature. In offering a survey of the literature on the history of exploration (both specifically related to the case studies examined in this thesis and exploration), this chapter demonstrates the lacunae which this thesis addresses.

This project is both shaped by and responds to previous literature on exploration. For much of the twentieth century, writing about explorers was predominantly biographic in focus and hagiographic in style.[1] Since the late 1970s, however, there has been a growing interest in exploration and travel writing from more critical scholars. Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1978) was influential in opening up a line of

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[1] Roy Bridges, "Explorers' Texts and the Problem of Reactions by Non-Literate Peoples," *Studies in Travel Writing* 2, no.1 (1998), 67; Kennedy, *The Last Blank*, 64.

inquiry, examining how travel writing provided the ideological underpinnings of European imperial expansion.[2] Works following a similar approach have been shaped by broader theoretical developments in literary and cultural studies. As such, they often focus on questions of representation and textuality. Building on Said, Mary Louise Pratt has examined the relationship between travel, travel writing, and imperialism.[3] In doing so, she has addressed the ways that travellers represented bodies (both their own and those of others) in their writings, and I draw on this work at several points.[4] But literary approaches to the study of exploration do have problems, as they view explorers' texts as "*literary artefacts*," rather than historical sources, however limited.[5] As Dane Kennedy argues, this focus on textuality draws attention away from the wider social, historical and political forces (both domestic and in the field) that shaped how and where explorers travelled.[6] Although their texts are unquestionably challenging sources, they do offer (albeit sometimes limited and speculative) insights on historical events, as I discuss below. In recent years, and in response to such criticisms, literary scholars have adopted different approaches, which have instead demonstrated how non-European contexts and wider forces shaped practices of travel writing, and I draw on these perspectives on

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[2] Edward W. Said, *Orientalism*, Penguin Modern Classics ed. (1978, London: Penguin, 2003); Pratt, *Imperial Eyes*; Said, *Culture and Imperialism.*

[3] Pratt, *Imperial Eyes.*

[4] E.g. Pratt, *Imperial Eyes,*18, 51–55, 77–80; Said, *Orientalism*, 190.

[5] Regard, Introduction to *British Narratives of Exploration*, 10. Emphasis in original.

[6] Dane Kennedy, *Imperial History Wars: Debating the British Empire* (London: Bloomsbury, 2018), 61.

several occasions.[7] But the body remains only a latent theme within such literatures.

Another issue with postcolonial writers is that they often present exploration as a synonymous with imperialism. Pratt argues that travel accounts "gave European reading publics a sense of ownership, entitlement and familiarity with respect to the distant parts of the world that were being explored, invaded, invested in, and colonized."[8] These arguments have some merit, but they often portray the relationship between geography and empire in too simplistic terms.[9] As Max Jones notes, the history of organisations like the RGS and the history of empire are related but are "not identical."[10] He continues, noting that the "imperial utility of geographical information varied widely, and the interests and agendas of the Society's officers and fellowship frequently diverged."[11] This point is important in relation to the case studies discussed below, as they involve journeys to some places (most notably East Africa) that were soon incorporated into European Empires, but also expeditions to places such as Japan, a country which soon became an imperial power in its own right. Areas of Antarctica, meanwhile, were formally claimed by Britain, but such claims to sovereignty proved difficult to enforce on the ground.[12] Consequently, the relationship between exploration

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[7] Wisnicki, *Fieldwork of Empire*; Adriana Craciun, *Writing Arctic Disaster: Authorship and Exploration* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016).

[8] Pratt, *Imperial Eyes*, 3.

[9] Felix Driver, "Geography's Empire: Histories of Geographical Knowledge," *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 10, no. 1 (1992): 23–40; Kennedy, *The Last Blank*, 5.

[10] Jones, *The Last Great*, 48.

[11] Jones, *The Last Great*, 48.

[12] Klaus Dodds, *Pink Ice: Britain and the South Atlantic Empire* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2002).

and empire varied considerably in the period and places discussed below. More recent literary scholarship of travellers' texts has offered a more nuanced analysis—demonstrating how in some instances travel could lead to the development of anti-colonial sentiments.[13] Whatever the limitations of some of the literary approaches discussed above, they have sparked a broader interest in nineteenth-century travel from scholars working in a variety of disciplines.

Cultures of Exploration

Recent scholarship on exploration has attempted to analyse broader processes instead of individual explorers. Felix Driver's *Geography Militant* has sought to understand exploration as a "set of cultural practices" involving "the mobilization of people and resources, especially publicity and authority."[14] Examining these "cultures of exploration" allows travel and fieldwork to be viewed in the context of broader developments. In doing so, Driver addresses explorers' bodies at several points, highlighting the growing efforts to discipline travellers' observations and their heroic reputations.[15] Similarly, Beau Riffenburgh has studied how the "myth of the explorer" was shaped by the emergence of a sensationalist press in Britain and the United States. In sponsoring expeditions and publishing their findings, newspapers had a vested interest in elevating the explorer to the status of hero, often through drawing attention

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[13] Priyamvada Gopal, *Insurgent Empire: Anticolonial Resistance and British Dissent* (London: Verso, 2020).

[14] Felix Driver, *Geography Militant: Cultures of Exploration and Empire* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2001); 8.

[15] Driver, *Geography Militant*, 49–67, 70–71.

to the trials of their body.[16] Explorers also feature in studies of imperial heroism, an issue I deal with at length in Chapter 4, *"Heroic" Bodies*. Such studies have demonstrated the important role that explorers played in British culture, and how the veneration (or vilification) of individuals has been shaped by broader changes in attitudes towards gender, empire, and class.

One of the key issues within exploration cultures was the issue of credibility. Studies examining the relationship between travel and trust have become a particularly productive area of inquiry for historians of science and historical geographers.[17] These issues were a central question for all scientists; however, they were particularly important for explorers who made observations that were hard (or even impossible) for desk-based commentators to verify through replication or triangulation.[18] As Steven Shapin notes, domestic audiences had to make judgements about the truth of travellers' claims "at a distance," meaning relationships of trust became "inscribed in space."[19] Previous scholarship examined the relationship between explorers' bodies and the perceived reliability of their findings. Disciplined, technical observations were widely lauded as the ideal quality of a scientific fieldworker.[20] Yet, paradoxically, physical

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[16] Beau Riffenburgh, *The Myth of the Explorer: Press, Sensationalism and Geographical Discovery* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994).

[17] Charles W. J. Withers, "Trust—in Geography," *Progress in Human Geography* 42, no. 4 (2018): 489–508; Felix Driver, "Distance and Disturbance: Travel, Exploration and Knowledge in the Nineteenth Century," *Transactions of the Royal Society* 14, no.6 (2004), 73–92.

[18] Steven Shapin, *A Social History of Truth: Science and Civility in Seventeenth-Century England* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 245.

[19] Shapin, *A Social History of Truth*, 245.

[20] David N. Livingstone, *Putting Science in Its Place* (Chicago: University of Chicago

suffering could also be a source of authority. As David N. Livingstone notes, the fact that "an explorer's body had undergone rigours and hardship in forbidding surroundings—literally bearing the marks of an alien environment—was considered the insignia of trustworthy testimony."[21] Dorinda Outram has demonstrated how domestic critics and readers "return repeatedly to the authentication of the explorer's travels by the trials of the body," when discussing the credibility of their findings.[22] Another paradox, noted by both Johannes Fabian and Dane Kennedy, was that many of the activities that effective explorers employed overseas—travelling in small parties and close (and sometimes sexual) relations with local people—rendered them problematic figures for domestic society unless their accounts were edited and sanitised.[23] I examine these tensions in detail below.

Questions of trust and credibility have also been examined through examining the role of instruments in the "regulation of observation and of inscription."[24] Claire

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Press, 2003), 153; Driver, *Geography Militant*, 49–67; Johannes Fabian, *Out of Our Minds: Reason and Madness in the Exploration of Africa* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 78.

[21] Livingstone, *Putting Science*, 153; Dane Kennedy, *The Last Blank*, 94.

[22] Dorinda Outram, "On Being Perseus: New Knowledge, Dislocation, and Enlightenment Exploration," in *Geography and Enlightenment*, ed. David N. Livingstone and Charles W. J Withers (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), 290.

[23] Kennedy, *The Last Blank*, 195–232; Fabian, *Out of Our Minds.*

[24] Fraser MacDonald and Charles W.J. Withers, "Introduction: Geography, Technology and Instruments of Exploration" in *Geography, Technology and Instruments of Exploration*, eds., Fraser MacDonald and Charles W. J. Withers (Farnham: Ashgate 2015), 2.

Warrior and John McAleer have highlighted that in the process of exploration, "objects and persons are mutually implicated in the production of knowledge in complex and intriguing ways."[25] Likewise, Boris Michael has shown how the German explorer Hans Meyer used a variety of narrative strategies to make credible knowledge about Mount Kilimanjaro, emphasising his mastery of his own body and use of scientific instruments.[26] Meanwhile, James R. Ryan demonstrated that explorers could use cameras to verify their observations and photographs to render their narratives credible.[27] Such strategies were often rendered problematic by the "simultaneous failures of instruments, inscriptions, and bodies."[28] Even so, attempting to use instruments—whether successfully or not—could be a source of credibility in its own right.[29] Indeed, explorers' claims were often analysed according to criteria that had little to do with the

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[25] Claire Warrior and John McAleer, "Objects of Exploration: Expanding the Horizons of Maritime History," in *Geography, Technology and Instruments of Exploration*, eds. Fraser MacDonald and Charles W. J. Withers (Farnham: Ashgate 2015), 117.

[26] Boris Michael, "Making Mount Kilimanjaro German: Nation Building and Heroic Masculinity in the Colonial Geographies of Hans Meyer," *Transactions of the IBG* 44, no. 3 (2019), 493–508.

[27] James R. Ryan, *Photography and Exploration* (London: Reaktion, 2013).

[28] Lachlan Fleetwood, "No Former Travellers Having Attained Such a Height on the Earth's Surface: Instruments, Inscriptions, and Bodies in the Himalaya, 1800–1830," *History of Science* 56, no.1 (2018), 7; See also Driver "Distance and Disturbance," 73–92; on instrument failure and repair, see also Simon Schafer, "Easily Cracked: Scientific Instruments in States of Disrepair," *Isis* 102, no.4 (2011): 706–17.

[29] Charles W. J. Withers, "Geography and 'Thing Knowledge:' Instrument Epistemology, Failure, and Narratives of 19th-Century Exploration," *Transactions of the IBG* 44, no.4 (2019): 676–91.

actual research they carried out. Michael Heffernan has demonstrated that the assertion were "judged according to nonscientific criteria, notably the race, class, and gender of the person making the claim" and, sometimes, how they had dressed while travelling overseas.[30] The idea of the "*gentleman* and gentlemanly identity" also emerged "as one powerful answer to the question 'whom to trust?'"[31] Indeed, the very idea of the "explorer" was a categorisation based on class and racial identity. Dane Kennedy notes that

> Africans who accompanied British-sponsored expeditions in Africa almost always outnumbered the European members of the parties by substantial ratios, yet it was always taken as a given that they could not be explorers, even when the regions they passed through were as unfamiliar to them as to the Europeans.[32]

This observation necessarily demands an answer to the question: Which bodies counted as explorers? And how did this definition fall along lines of class and race distinction?

Work on the history of publishing has also been a productive area on inquiry. Keighren *et al.* have investigated the John Murray publishing house and the ways that that travellers, editors, and the publisher brought travel books into being, showing how

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[30] Michael Heffernan, "'A Dream as Frail as Those of Ancient Time:' The in-Credible Geographies of Timbuctoo," *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 19, no. 2 (April 2001): 203–25.

[31] Steven Shapin, "Placing the view from Nowhere: Historical and Sociological Problems in the Location of Science," *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 23, no. 1 (1998): 8; Withers, "Trust," 499; Stuart McCook, "'It May Be Truth, But It Is Not Evidence': Paul Du Chaillu and the Legitimation of Evidence in the Field Sciences," *Osiris* 11, no. 1 (1996): 177–97.

[32] Kennedy, *The Last Blank*, 76.

each thought in particular ways about the representation of explorers' bodies in relation to questions of credibility.[33] They show how both bodily breakdown and the use of disguise could affect the perceived credibility of a traveller's observations, something that had to be managed "through careful judgment over different practices and strategies of self-presentation."[34] David Finkelstein has examined the publisher Blackwood in similar terms.[35] Being a successful explorer was about writing as well as travelling correctly.

While bodily breakdown could affect the believability of an explorer's account, it could also prove a productive source of information about the human body. Several scholars have addressed the ways that travellers and explorers used their own bodies as objects of scientific research (a point I return to in Chapter 8, *Examined Bodies)*. As Vanessa Heggie has shown, exploration was an important (but understudied) site of scientific research in the twentieth century.[36] Indeed, explorers even conducted experiments on their own bodies and debates about travellers' health played an important role in understandings of the relationship between human bodies, diet, and

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[33] Innes M. Keighren, Charles W. J. Withers and Bill Bell, *Travels into Print: Exploration, Writing, and Publishing with John Murray, 1773–1859* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015), 3.

[34] Keighren *et al. Travels into Print*, 82–92, 96 quote at 92.

[35] David Finkelstein, *The House of Blackwood: Author-Publisher Relation in the Victorian Era* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 2002).

[36] Vanessa Heggie, "Why Isn't Exploration a Science?" *Isis* 105, no. 2 (2014): 318–34; Vanessa Heggie, *Higher and Colder: A History of Extreme Physiology and Exploration* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2019).

different environments.[37] Heggie's work is particularly notable for its efforts to recover the contributions of women and people of colour to extreme environment physiology.[38] The need for such work reflects the fact that (with some notable exceptions) women are not always discussed within scholarship on exploration.

Gender, Travel, and Exploration

Feminist scholars have devoted attention to the bodies of nineteenth-century women travellers. Much of this literature examines the way that those women sought to balance gender norms with the process and practicalities of travel, exploration, and adventure.[39]

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[37] Lachlan Fleetwood, "Bodies in High Places: Exploration, Altitude Sickness and the Problem of Bodily Comparison in the Himalaya, 1800–50," *Itinerario* 43, no. 3 (2019): 489–515; Edward Armston-Sheret, "'A Good Advertisement for Teetotalers:' Polar Explorers and Debates over the Health Effects of Alcohol, 1875–1904," *The Social History of Alcohol and Drugs* 33, no. 2 (2019): 257–85; Michael Dettelbach, "The Stimulations of Travel: Humboldt's Physiological Construction of the Tropics," in *Tropical Visions in an Age of Empire*, ed. Felix Driver and Luciana Martins (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), 43–58; Philip W. Clements, *Science in an Extreme Environment: The 1963 American Mount Everest Expedition* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 2018).

[38] Heggie, *Higher and Colder*, 12.

[39] Alison Blunt, *Travel, Gender, and Imperialism: Mary Kingsley and West Africa* (New York Guilford Press, 1994); Sarah Mills, *Discourses of Difference: An Analysis of Women's Travel Writing and Colonialism* (London: Routledge, 1991); Shirley Foster and Sara Mills, eds., *An Anthology of Women's Travel Writing* (Manchester: Manchester

Interest in women explorers has formed part of a broader effort to write a feminist history of geography. In focusing on the travels and research of women in the Victorian and Edwardian era, scholars such as Avril Maddrell, Innes M. Keighren, Mona Domosh, and Sarah Evans have highlighted those women's contribution to geographical research, a factor often ignored (or mentioned only in passing) within masculine histories of the discipline.[40] David Stoddart has justified the exclusion of women from the history of nineteenth-century geographical exploration on the grounds that women, such as Isabella Bird (who travelled the world and recorded their experiences in popular published accounts) were "travellers" rather than geographical explorers.[41] Stoddart's distinction is based on the idea that travelling women did not take measurements, make maps, or make collections and seldom, if ever, referred to themselves as explorers.[42]

In contrast to this approach, I decided to include Bird within this broader study

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University Press, 2002); Avril Maddrell, *Complex Location: Women's Geographical Work in the UK 1850–1970* (Chichester: Wiley Blackwell, 2009), 27–59, 80–122.

[40] Mona Domosh "Toward a Feminist Historiography of Geography," *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 16, no. 1 (1991): 95–104; Mona Domosh, "Beyond the Frontiers of Geographical Knowledge," *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 16, no. 4 (1991): 488–90; Maddrell, *Complex Locations;* Sarah L. Evans, Innes M. Keighren, Avril Maddrell, "Coming of Age? Reflection on the Centenary of Women's Admission to the Royal Geographical Society," *The Geographical Journal* 179, no.4 (2013): 373–76; Innes M. Keighren, "'A Royal Geographical Society for Ladies:' The Lyceum Club and Women's Geographical Frontiers in Edwardian London," *The Professional Geographer* 69, no. 1 (2017): 661–69.

[41] Maddrell, *Complex Locations*, 5.

[42] David R. Stoddart, "Do We Need a Feminist Historiography of Geography—and If We Do, What Should It Be?" *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 16, no. 3

for several reasons. First, Stoddart's argument that she did not take measurements or conduct surveys is evidentially wrong.[43] Bird undertook courses in surveying, and, when travelling in Central Asia in 1890, took celestial observations after the expedition's official surveyor went blind.[44] I examine her observations in detail in Chapter 7, *Sensing Bodies*, but here it is sufficient to note that Bird's status as geographical fieldworker was recognised during her lifetime. Even Lord Curzon, a vocal opponent of women's admission to the RGS in the 1890s on the ground that "their sex and training render them…unfitted for exploration" conceded that Bird's "additions to geographical knowledge have been valuable and serious."[45] More broadly, the line between travel and geographical exploration was subjective and often based on the identity of the person in question rather than the extent or scientific credentials of their travels. In the Victorian era, men were frequently described as explorers for undertaking very similar actions to those labelled as travel by Stoddart and others. Indeed, after returning from China, Bird herself commented that "had I been a man, I should undoubtedly have received some recognition from the RGS. I consider myself to deserve it at least as much as Mr Warington Smyth."[46] Smyth was an RGS Fellow who travelled around in Siam around the same time as Bird was in China and Korea. Like Bird, he wrote an account of his

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(1991): 484–87, at 484; Kennedy, *The Last Blank*, 65–66. Kennedy offers a similar argument.

[43] Stoddart, "Do We Need a Feminist," 484.

[44] Isabella L. Bird, "Diary-letters, or 'Circular' 24 Dec 1889–15 Jul 1890," Ms. 42023, NLS, ff. 25, 27, 28.

[45] George Curzon, "Ladies and the Royal Geographical Society," *The Times*, 31 May 1893, 11.

[46] Isabella Bird to John Murray, 17 November 1899, Ms. 42029, NLS, f. 88.

journeys published by John Murray.[47] Smyth was awarded a Murchison Award for his contributions to geography, while Bird was not.[48] Bird was not unique in contributing to geographical research in the nineteenth century. Other women (including women working outside of established scientific institutions) engaged in practices of "scientific travel" which, had they been undertaken by men, would have been labelled exploration.[49] Indeed, even for masculine travellers, the line between "travel" and "exploration" was blurry.[50]

The relationship between gender and racial difference in the nineteenth century is also a common theme in this literature, and several scholars have argued that women travellers emphasised their whiteness while travelling to exert authority over people of

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[47] Herbert Warrington Smyth, *Five Years in Siam, from 1891–96*, 2 vols. (London: John Murray 1898).

[48] Isabella Bird to John Murray, 17 November 1899, Ms. 42029, NLS, f. 88; Dea Birkett, *Spinsters Abroad Victorian Lady Explorers* (1989, Stroud: Sutton Publishing, 2004), 228.

[49] Michael F. Robinson, "Scientific Travel," in *The Cambridge History of Travel Writing*, eds. Nandini Das and Tim Youngs (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2019), 500; Nuala C. Johnson, "Illustrating Nature: Exploration, Natural History, and the Travels of Charlotte Wheeler-Cuffe in Burma," in *Geographies of Knowledge: Science, Scale and Spatiality in the Nineteenth Century*, eds. Robert J. Mayhew and Charles W.J. Withers (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2020), 187–214; Nuala C. Johnson, "On the Colonial Frontier: Gender, Exploration and Plant-Hunting on Mount Victoria in Early 20th-Century Burma," *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 42 no. 3 (2017): 417–31.

[50] Bridges, "Explorers' Texts" footnote 12, pg. 81; Maitland, *Speke*, 77.

colour in colonial settings, a point I examine in detail in Chapter 6, *Disciplined Bodies.*[51] A critical approach is required to avoid presenting women travellers as exceptional individuals in ways that foreground their difference from other women and the people of colour on whom they depended.[52] This approach was exactly how many nineteenth-century commentators approached Bird and other travelling women.[53] Indeed, as Avril Maddrell has argued, women geographers occupied a "complex location," marginalised because of their gender and privileged in relation to many other women because of their class and racial identity.[54] Therefore, in this thesis, I address (where possible) the contributions of more subaltern women on the expeditions in question as well as the interaction of class and gender on Bird's journeys. In what follows I move the focus away from the individual explorer and recast exploration as a collective process of embodied labour.[55]

"Hidden Histories" of Exploration

Arguably one of the most important areas of recent exploration scholarship focuses on the "local partners, guides, porters, fixers, interpreters, traders, and officials who made

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[51] Blunt, *Travel, Gender, and Imperialism*, 105–11; Birkett, *Spinsters Aboard*, 155.

[52] Birkett, *Spinsters Abroad*, 181–210.

[53] Birkett, *Spinsters Abroad*, 185; Maddrell, *Complex Locations*, 331.

[54] Maddrell, *Complex Locations.*

[55] Felix Driver, "Hidden Histories Made Visible? Reflections on a Geographical Exhibition," *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 38, no. 4 (2013), 421; Felix Driver, "Exploration as Knowledge Transfer: Exhibiting Hidden Histories," in *Mobilities of Knowledge*, eds. Heike Jöns, Peter Meusburger, and Michael Heffernan, Knowledge and Space (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2017), 85–104.

journeys of exploration possible."[56] This work has demonstrated that European explorers depended on non-European individuals, whose contributions were frequently downplayed in published accounts.[57] Felix Driver and Lowri Jones have, for example, highlighted how "orthodox and popular histories" of exploration often "overshadow the agency of these and other individuals."[58] This insight has led to an emerging group of scholarship addressing non-European expeditions members. Detailed attention has generally reserved for individuals sometimes referred to as "intermediaries" or "go-betweens."[59] In some contexts, such a label is accurate, but, as Felix Driver has argued, many of the individuals who took part in expeditions cannot be easily defined as either "local" or "indigenous" as the informants were, themselves, travellers and not, therefore, necessarily local or indigenous to the geographical area in question.[60] Kennedy has similarly suggested that African, Asian, and Aboriginal people could also be "active contributors to the scientific work" of an expedition, "though often in ways that were

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[56] Driver and Jones, *Hidden Histories*, 5.

[57] Driver and Jones, *Hidden Histories*; Konishi *et al.*, eds., *Indigenous Intermediaries.*

[58] Lowri Jones, "Local Knowledge and Indigenous Agency in the History of Exploration: Studies from the RGS-IBG Collection" (PhD Thesis, Royal Holloway University of London, 2010), 14; Driver and Jones, *Hidden Histories.*

[59] Kennedy, *The Last Blank*, 159–94; Konishi *et al. Indigenous Intermediaries;* Simon Schaffer, Lissa Roberts, Kapil Raj, James Delbourgo, eds. *The Brokered World: Go-Betweens and Global Intelligence, 1770–1820* (Sagamore Beach: Science History Publications, 2009); Eric Mueggler, *The Paper Road: Archive and Experience in the Botanical Exploration of West China and Tibet* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011).

[60] Driver, "Intermediaries and the Archive," 15.

unacknowledged."[61] In this thesis, I highlight how such individuals contributed to white-led expeditions in ways that have not hitherto been appreciated. Doing so has made me question whether there is any meaningful distinction between the work of "explorers" and their "guides" and "intermediaries," terms which emphasise the idea that such individuals' contributions merely facilitated the travels of European explorers rather than as human agents with agency and curiosity in their own right.

I discuss this work in detail chapter 5, *Dependent Bodies*. Here, however, it is worth noting that reconstructing the contributions and experiences of such people is complicated by the one-sided information presented in travellers' accounts and the scant information given about the biographies of more subaltern expedition members. Even so, the primary approach within previous studies in this area has been biographical and intellectual, focusing either on the biographies of individual expedition members and their contributions to geographical and scientific knowledge. How guides and porters used their bodies has been the subject of much less attention, but there are some notable exceptions. Tiffany Shellam, for instance, looks at the role that the bodies of Aboriginal Australian guides played in intercultural encounters.[62] Meanwhile, Felix Driver has discussed how Indian pandits, such as Nain Singh, had plaster casts of their own bodies taken as part of the Schlagintweit Expedition's "ethnological" work.[63] Similarly, Kapil Raj has examined how pandits employed by the Survey of India measured distances using by disciplining and counting their steps but were seldom considered explorers

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[61] Dane Kennedy, "Lost in Place: Two Expedition Gone Awry in Africa," in *Geographies of Knowledge*, eds. Robert Mayhew and Charles W.J. Withers (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2020), 243.

[62] Tiffany Shellam, "Mediating Encounters Through Bodies and Talk," in *Indigenous Intermediaries*, eds. Koshini *et al.* (Acton: ANU Press, 2015), 85–103.

[63] Driver, "Face to Face with Nain Singh," 456–63.

because they did not publish an account.[64] Ben Maddison and Jason Anthony have begun similar and related tasks in the context of Antarctic exploration, documenting the often-overlooked contributions of working-class expedition members.[65] Such Antarctic focused works have remained largely separate from the broader literature on the "hidden histories" of exploration. Neither of these works devote sustained attention to the body. Moreover, as I discuss below, Maddison's work is also hampered by a simplistic approach to questions of class, discipline, and power. Scholars working in adjacent fields have also offered insights relevant to this study. Stephen J. Rockel's work, which has discussed the dependence of European explorers on the East African caravan system, examines the broader work of exploration particularly well, sometimes addressing the body.[66] However, his work is more interested in using explorers' accounts to shed insights on East African history than on the insights it offers about exploration cultures in general.

Despite these efforts to study the subject in broader terms, most writers still present logistical work as simple and less deserving of attention than more directly "scientific" activities. As I show in Chapter 5, *Dependent Bodies*, the idea that logistical

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[64] Raj, *Relocating Modern Science*, 181–222; Kapil Raj, "When Human Travellers Become Instruments: The Indo-British Exploration of Central Asia in the Nineteenth Century," in *Instruments Travel and Science: Itineraries of Precision from the Seventeenth to the Twentieth Century*, eds. Marie-Nöelle Bourguet, Christian Licoppe and H. Otto Sibum (London: Routledge, 2002), 156–89; Jones, *Local Knowledge* 58–91.

[65]Anthony, *Hoosh;* Maddison, *Class and Colonialism.*

[66] Stephen J. Rockel, "Decentring Exploration in East Africa," in *Reinterpreting Exploration: The West in the World*, ed. Dane Kennedy (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 172–94; Stephen J. Rockel, *Carriers of Culture: Labor on the Road in Nineteenth-Century East Africa* (Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann, 2006).

work was "simple" and "menial" is a common refrain in explorers' accounts. Similar claims are also repeated in more recent critical works. Kennedy, for instance, discusses such work within a broader chapter and describes the work of expeditionary labour forces as "the manifold menial tasks that came with moving people and supplies great distances."[67] Such descriptions reflect the fact that economists have often dismissed service work (particularly if unpaid) as unimportant.[68] In contrast, I question the notion that such work was simple, unskilled, and less worthy of study than other activities.[69] Literature focused on the "intermediaries" and "hidden histories" has proved a productive area of inquiry but has only started to examine the various other kinds of work on which explorers depended in any detail.

The More-than-Human in the History of Exploration

The other major issue with existing literature on exploration is the lack of attention to the animal bodies that formed a large part of many expeditions. There are a few exceptions. Dane Kennedy writes usefully about the importance of camels in the exploration of Australia.[70] Historians of polar expeditions have devoted some attention to the use and treatment of dogs, ponies, and other animals on Victorian and Edwardian expeditions.[71] However, as Isla Forsyth argues, historians of science and geographical

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[67] Kennedy, *The Last Blank*, 131.

[68] McDowell, *Working Bodies*, 28–29.

[69] Steven Shapin, "The Invisible Technician," *American Scientists* 77, no. 6 (1989): 554–63.

[70] Kennedy, *The Last Blank Spaces*, 142–46.

[71] Sarah L. Wilks, "The Coldest Dog and Pony Show on Earth: Animal Welfare on the First Expeditions to Reach the South Pole," *Anthrozoös* 25, no. 1 (2012): 93–109; Carl

fieldwork have given "peripheral attention" to the role of non-humans "as objects of study, companions, pests or danger."[72] In this thesis, I examine animals at various points. On one level, such analysis simply arose out of the empirical material, which frequently discussed the animal contributions to expeditions. On another level, though, it also reflects the emerging academic interest in non-human bodies across a variety of disciplines. Such works have critiqued the "anthropocentrism" of much western research and writing and questioned whether rigid distinctions between humans and non-humans are ethical and accurate.[73] That said, such works also recognise that human and

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Murray, "The Use and Abuse of Dogs on Scott's and Amundsen's South Pole Expeditions," *Polar Record* 44, no. 4 (2008): 303–10; Cam Sharp Jones, "Animals, Joseph Dalton Hooker and the Ross Expedition to Antarctica," *Journal for Maritime Research* 22, no. 1–2 (2020): 25–40.

[72] Isla Forsyth, "The More-than-human Geographies of Field Science," *Geography Compass* 7, no.8 (2013), 530.

[73] Haraway, *When Species Meet*; Elizabeth Leane, "Animals," in *The Routledge Research Companion to Travel Writing*, eds. Alasdair Pettinger and Tim Youngs (London: Routledge, 2020), 305–18; Karen M. Morin, "Carceral Spaces: Prisoners and Animals," *Antipode* 45, no. 5 (2016), 1329; Julie Urbanik, *Placing Animals: An Introduction to The Geography of Human-Animal Relations* (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield, 2012), 75–102; Jason Hribal "Animals Are Part of The Working Class: A Challenge to Labor History," *Labor History* 44, no. 4 (2003): 435–45; Jonathan Saha, "Colonizing Elephants: Animal Agency, Undead Capital and Imperial Science in British Burma," *BJHS Themes* 2 (2017): 169–89; Aaron Skabelund, "Animals and Imperialism: Recent Historiographical Trends," *History Compass* 11, no. 10 (2013): 801–7; Robert Cribb, Helen Gilbert, and Helen Tiffin, *Wild Man from Borneo: A Cultural History of the Orangutan* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2014).

animal bodies have different capacities for agency and, in discussing them together, it is important not to trivialise human experience.[74]

Such work needs to be done particularly carefully in the context of Empire, given how racist writings often compare people of colour to animals.[75] But discussing humans and animals side-by-side can also draw attention to racist practices. A comparative approaches provides opportunities for understanding the processes by which certain bodies were and are rendered more acceptable objects of violence and exploitation.[76] Historically, too, the links between racism and discussions of animals mean that studying the two together can be insightful. As Sujit Sivasundaram argues, ideas about racial difference "operated alongside, within, and against questions of animal difference and human-animal difference."[77] As a result, expanding the "concept of the subaltern" to include animals as well as humans offers new opportunities for developing understandings of nineteenth-century science and empire.[78] This approach also reflects recent developments in labour history and the growing awareness that humans and animals frequently "co-labor" together.[79]

At times, institutions have found it easier to recognise the contribution of

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[74] Benedicte Boisseron, *Afro-Dog: Blackness and the Animal Question* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2018), 18–19.

[75] Karen M. Morin, "Carceral Spaces: Prisoners and Animals," *Antipode* 48, no. 5 (2016), 1329.

[76] Morin, "Carceral Spaces," 1319; Boisseron, *Afro-Dog*, 32.

[77] Sivasundaram, "Imperial Transgressions;" Sivasundaram, "The Human, the Animal and the Prehistory of COVID-19."

[78] Sivasundaram, "Imperial Transgressions," 169.

[79] Morin, "Carceral Spaces," 1329–1331; Urbanik, *Placing Animals*, 75–102; Hribal, "Animals Are Part," 435–53.

animals to exploration than they have the contributions of people of colour. The Scott Polar Research Institute at the University of Cambridge has a monument to the British Antarctic Survey's sledge dogs used between 1945 and 1994. The monument names all the dogs used and states that it is erected by their "companions and friends." There is no comparable monument in Britain celebrating the contribution of any person of colour to any expedition. Expeditionary racism thus functions by humanising certain animals and animalising (or ignoring) certain humans. It is possible, however, to write about the co-dependence of human and animal bodies without, "putting racial concerns and animals concerns in competition with each other."[80] In different ways, all the expeditions discussed in this thesis were "hybrid" undertakings, relying on both human and animal bodies.[81] Drawing on these approaches, I focus on the human and non-human bodies involved in the collective work of exploration; I do this not to draw moral comparisons between their treatment and erasure from history but simply to offer a comprehensive picture of the various bodies on which exploration depended. Studying animals alongside humans allows me to do this more thoroughly than previous studies.

New Approaches to Biography

Much of the critical literature on Victorian and Edwardian exploration has been a reaction against biographical modes of writing. However, a growing number of writers

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[80] Boisseron, *Afro-Dog*, 34, xx.

[81] Sarah Whatmore, *Hybrid Geographies: Natures, Cultures, Spaces* (London: SAGE, 2002); D. Graham Burnett, "'It Is Impossible to Make a Step without the Indians': Nineteenth-Century Geographical Exploration and the Amerindians of British Guiana," *Ethnohistory* 49, no. 1 (2002): 3–40, also analyses expeditions as hybrid undertakings, though focusing only on humans.

have approached the biographical form differently, situating their individual subjects in their various social, cultural, and political contexts. Such works have used the biographical form to address a broader range of issues. Robert Stafford's biography of Sir Roderick Murchison, for instance, addresses the relationship between science, exploration, and imperialism.[82] Dane Kennedy's biography of Richard Burton, discussed below, is notable for its thorough analysis of the political and cultural setting in which he lived.[83] Beau Riffenburgh's work on Shackleton also situates his expeditions in the context of British imperialism.[84] Meanwhile, David Lambert has used a focus on the life of the Armchair geographer James MacQueen to examine broader issues such as geographical credibility as well as debates over slavery and empire.[85]

Metabiographies have also provided a way to use the biographical form to address new and different questions. Put simply, metabiography is an approach that compares different biographical accounts of an individual, "as a way of understanding not only the genre but the nature of historical life writing."[86] As such, metabiographical works can serve an important de-mythologising function, showing how the same lives assume different meanings in different contexts.[87] This approach has been productively applied to the study of explorers, leading to metabiographies of the German polymath

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[82] Robert A. Stafford, *Scientist of Empire: Sir Roderick Murchison, Scientific Exploration and Victorian Imperialism* (Cambridge University Press, 2002).

[83] Kennedy, *The Highly Civilized.*

[84] Riffenburgh, *Shackleton's Forgotten*, 15–28.

[85] David Lambert, *Mastering the Niger: James MacQueen's African Geography and the Struggle Over Atlantic Slavery* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013).

[86] Edward Saunders, "Defining Metabiography in Historical Perspective: Between Biomyths and Documentary," *Biography*, 38, no.3 (2015), 326.

[87] Saunders, "Defining Metabiography," 337.

Alexander von Humboldt and the African explorer David Livingstone.[88] These works have, at times, addressed the body. For instance, Justin Livingstone has highlighted how, following David Livingstone's death and the arrival of his corpse in England, his "body was the site of multiple and conflicting meanings, a site of clashing horizons. It was an arena in which debates about native warrant and indigenous potential could be dramatized."[89] While not seeking to write a biography of any of the case studies, the multiplicity of meanings present in singular bodies is an idea that I have drawn on throughout this thesis.

As I have shown, there is a significant lacuna around the position of bodies in the history of exploration that this thesis addresses. At the same time, there is a sizeable academic literature on travel and exploration that this thesis is both informed by and extends; it does so in several ways. First, I develop understandings of the subject by directly focusing on the body, which few other studies do. A second contribution comes from combining this approach with recent work that has sought to extend the range of people and animals studied. This projects also responds to and develops previous literature on the individual case studies, as I now examine.

LITERATURE AND SOURCES ON THE CASE STUDIES

The body has rarely been a central focus of attention within literature on the case studies discussed in this thesis. As with the broader literatures, much of the scholarship on my

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[88] Justin Livingstone, *Livingstone's "Lives:" A Metabiography of a Victorian Icon* (Manchester University Press, 2014); Nicolaas A. Rupke, *Alexander Von Humboldt: A Metabiography* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008).

[89] Justin D. Livingstone, "A 'Body' of Evidence: The Posthumous Presentation of David Livingstone," *Victorian Literature and Culture* 40, no.1 (2012), 21.

case studies is biographical. In large part, these works speak to an enduring popular interest in explorers. Roy Bridges notes that such biographies "tend to concentrate on the personalities of the explorers and dwell on the disputes between them."[90] In doing so, such studies sometimes offer insights on the personalities and psychology of the individuals involved and have, therefore, proved useful at several points in writing this thesis.[91] Richard Burton has been the subject of numerous biographies, all of which devote considerable attention to the East African Expedition and Burton's ensuing dispute with Speke about the source of the river Nile.[92] John Hanning Speke, too, has been the subject of similar attention, although on a more limited scale.[93] However, many works do not engage with the broader contexts of imperial history and spend even less time discussing the histories of the areas where they travelled.[94] In contrast, Dane Kennedy's *The Highly Civilized Man* examines Burton's life in the "the wider Victorian world."[95] Kennedy also devotes attention to Burton's body and his work has, therefore, been drawn on below. More broadly, the Nile controversy has been the subject of significant attention from popular writers interested in the "triumph and tragedy" of the explorers' journeys.[96] Such works offer insights on key events but devote scant attention

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[90] Bridges, "Explorers' Texts,'" 67.

[91] Bridges, "Explorers' Texts," 67.

[92] Mary Lovell, *A Rage to Live: A Biography of Richard and Isabel Burton* (New York: W.W Norton, 1998); Brodie, *The Devil Drives*; James Newman, *Paths Without Glory: Richard Francis Burton in Africa* (Washington DC: Potomac Books, 2010). Aside from Kennedy's biography, these works have been drawn on most extensively.

[93] Maitland, *Speke*; Carnochan, *The Sad Story*.

[94] Bridges, "Explorers' Texts," 67.

[95] Kennedy, *The Highly Civilized*, 7.

[96] Jeal, *Explorers of the Nile*; Moorehead, *The White Nile*.

to African and Asian expedition members. In contrast, more critical writers have considered how the debate over the source of the river sheds light on the cultures and conventions surrounding geographical exploration, including questions of trust, conduct, and credibility.[97] Notably, Adrian Wisnicki has examined the explorers' reliance on East African oral testimony in great detail and how this was written out of their published accounts.[98] David Finkelstein has addressed the role of the house of Blackwood in editing Speke's accounts of his travels to East Africa.[99] However, the body has not been a major theme in such works.

Isabella Bird, too, has been the subject of biographical attention, most notably by Pat Barr, Kay Chubbuck, Dorothy Middleton, and Kiyonori Kanasaka.[100] As with Burton and Speke, these works focus on Bird's personal qualities, psychology, and achievements. They also discuss Bird's body more than comparable literatures on the other case studies, in part because of her spinal condition and disability but also in relation to questions of dress and respectability (as I discuss in Chapter 4, "*Heroic" Bodies*). However, the biographical focus of much writing on Bird means that there has

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[97] Dritsas, "Expeditionary Science;" Driver, *Geography Militant*; Kennedy, *The Last Blank.*

[98] Wisnicki, *Fieldwork of Empire*; Wisnicki. "Cartographical Quandaries;" Wisnicki "Charting the Frontier."

[99] Finkelstein, *The House of Blackwood*, 49–69; David Finkelstein, "Unraveling Speke: The Unknown Revision of an African Exploration Classic," *History in Africa* 30 (2003): 117–32.

[100] Barr, *A Curious Life*; Kanasaka *Isabella Bird*; Chubbuck, Introduction to *Letters*; Dorothy Middleton, *Victorian Lady Travellers*, US Paperback edition (Academy: Chicago, 1982); Dorothy Middleton, "Some Victorian Lady Travellers," *The Geographical Journal* 139, no. 1 (1973): 65–75.

been little attempt to understand Bird's body within the broader context of Victorian and Edwardian exploration cultures. Due to her contested position within the history of geography, discussed further below, Bird has been the subject of greater attention from scholars of travel writing, often within broader studies of women travellers.[101] These works frequently offer insights into the ways that Bird presented her body and wrote about the bodies of others, but generally do so from a literary rather than a historical perspective.[102] Historians of photography have examined Bird's work in this area.[103] In general, however, Bird's scientific and geographical work has been subject to far less sustained attention than any of the other case studies, probably in large part because of her gender.[104] Dorothy Middleton discusses Bird's scientific contributions, but argues

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[101] Karen M. Morin, *Frontiers of Femininity: A New Historical Geography of the Nineteenth-Century American West* (New York: Syracuse University Press, 2008); Middleton, *Victorian Lady*; Birkett, *Spinsters Abroad*; Teresa Gomez Reus and Terry Gifford, eds. *Women in Transit through Liminal Spaces* (Basingstoke: Pallgrave Macmillan, 2013).

[102] See, for example, Wan Roselezam, Wan Yahya, Farah Ghaderi and Kamaruzaman Jusoff, "The Exotic Portrayal of Women in Isabella Bird Bishop's *Journeys in Persia and Kurdistan*," *Iranian Studies* 45, no.6 (2012): 779–93; Joohyun Jade Park, "Missing Link Found, 1880: The Rhetoric of Colonial Progress in Isabella Bird's Unbeaten Tracks in Japan," *Victorian Literature and Culture* 43, no.2 (2015): 371–88; Laurence Williams "'Like the Ladies of Europe'? Female Emancipation and The 'Scale of Civilisation' in Women's Writing on Japan, 1840–1880," *Studies in Travel Writing* 21, no. 1 (2017): 17–32.

[103] Garltan, "'A Complete Craze,'" 13–26.

[104] Birkett, *Spinster Abroad*, 142–78, 218–28.

that she and other women travellers “were not eminent as geographers or discovers.”[105] A notable exception in this area is Avril Maddrell’s *Complex Locations*, which discusses Bird’s contribution to geography at length.[106] Although valuable, few of these works devote significant attention to the other people and animals with whom Bird travelled.

Robert Falcon Scott’s expeditions, meanwhile, have been subject to a great deal of popular and academic attention, particularly his final *Terra Nova* expedition. Popular and biographical attention has, for the last four decades, been shaped particularly by Roland Huntford’s dual biography of Scott and Roald Amundsen which was fiercely critical of Scott and the apparent veneration of him within British culture.[107] Since the publication of this book, others have sought to defend Scott’s conduct, decision making, and reputation.[108] There are also numerous biographies of other expedition members of varying quality and relevance to this study.[109] The BNAE, Scott’s first expedition, has also been the subject of two major studies that have described and analysed the main

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[105] Middleton, “Some Victorian Lady Travellers,” 68.

[106] Maddrell, *Complex Location*, 27–36, 51–59.

[107] Huntford, *The Last Place on Earth.*

[108] Solomon *The Coldest March*; Ranulph Fiennes, *Captain Scott* (London: Hodder and Soughton, 2011); Jones, *The Last Great.*

[109] E.g., Sara Wheeler, *Cherry: A Life of Apsley Cherry Garrard* (Johnathan Cape: London, 2001); Aubrey A. Jones, *Scott’s Forgotten Surgeon: Dr Reginald Koettlitz, Polar Explorer* (Caithness: Whittles Publishing, 2011); Isobel Williams, *Captain Scott’s Invaluable Assistant: Edgar Evans* (Cheltenham: The History Press, 2012); Michael Smith, *An Unsung Hero: Tom Crean–Antarctic Survivor* (Cork: The Collins Press, 2000).

events of the expedition.[110] In recent years, several literary critics and historians have examined the role of the polar regions in Victorian and Edwardian British culture in broader terms.[111] More recently, Max Jones and Stephanie Barczewski have argued that the debates over Scott's reputation reflect changing attitudes towards heroism in Britain over the course of the twentieth century.[112] Max Jones' *The Last Great Quest*, provides a particularly detailed and insightful account of the contemporary reaction to the death of Scott and his companions.[113] Meanwhile, Edward Larsen's *An Empire of Ice* offers a strong account of the scientific work undertaken during the heroic age of polar exploration.[114] Cultural geographers interested in ideas of landscape and practices of representation have also devoted attention to Scott's polar expeditions, and I draw on

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[110] Baughman, *Pilgrims on the Ice*; David E. Yelverton, *Antarctica Unveiled: Scott's First Expedition and the Quest for the Unknown Continent* (Denver: University of Colorado Press, 2000).

[111] Francis Spufford, *I May Be Some Time: Ice and the English Imagination* (London: Faber and Faber, 1996).

[112] Max Jones, "From 'Noble Example' to 'Potty Pioneer:' Rethinking Scott of the Antarctic, c.1945–2011," *The Polar Journal* 1, no.2 (2011): 191–206; Max Jones, "'The Truth about Captain Scott': *The Last Place on Earth*, Debunking, Sexuality and Decline in the 1980s," *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 42, no.5 (2014): 857–81; Stephanie Barczewski, *Antarctic Destinies: Scott, Shackleton, and the Changing Face of Heroism* (London: Continuum, 2007); Stephanie Barczewski, *Heroic Failure and the British* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2016).

[113] Jones, *The Last Great*.

[114] Edward Larson, *An Empire of Ice: Scott, Shackleton, and the Heroic Age of Antarctic Science* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011).

these literatures at several points in this thesis.[115]

Literature on my case studies has many of the same limitations as wider works on travel and exploration: the body is rarely the central focus of analysis. Despite recent efforts to study the subject in broader terms, these approaches have been inconsistently applied to the case studies under discussion; nor has the body been a central subject in such works. As noted above, this lack of attention is out of step with wider academic developments. I now turn to works addressing the body within academia more broadly, analysing the ways that they motivate and shape this study.

STUDIES OF THE BODY

There is a rich and extensive academic literature on the body. These studies have approached the subject from a variety of perspectives and, in doing so, have raised broader epistemological questions. This thesis is both inspired and informed by such works but does not seek to apply any one theory uncritically to the context of exploration. One of the most important insights from scholarship on the body is an awareness that it is not a discrete object separate from the mind. This division, the fundamental precept of Cartesian dualism, has shaped dominant philosophical understandings of the human body in the post-Enlightenment West.[116] Such mind/body

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[115] John Wylie, "Becoming Icy: Scott and Amundsen's South Polar Voyages, 1910–1913" *cultural geographies* 9, no.3 (2002): 249–65; Kathryn Yusoff, "Antarctic Exposure: Archives of the Feeling Body," *cultural geographies* 14, no. 2 (2007): 211–33; Kathryn Yusoff, "Configuring the Field: Photography in Early Twentieth Century Antarctic Exploration," in *New Spaces of Exploration*, eds. Simon Naylor and James R. Ryan (London. I.B. Tauris: 2010), 52–77.

[116] Grosz, *Volatile Bodies*, 6; Ruberg, *History of the Body*, 12.

distinctions were (and still are) gendered, with women presented as being constrained by their bodies in contrast to men who were portrayed as altogether more mental and rational.[117] These ideas have often sat alongside a "naturalistic" view of sexual difference that has presented gender difference as innate, biological, and embodied.[118] Given the importance of the body within patriarchal systems of domination, it is unsurprising that many important theoretical insights on the body have come from feminist theorists.[119] Scholars, most notably Judith Butler, have critically analysed the role of the body in relation to questions of sex and gender and the relationship between bodies, language, and identity.[120] Robyn Longhurst has demonstrated how the boundaries of the human bodies are "leaky" and porous, blurring the boundaries between bodies and spaces.[121] Donna Haraway, meanwhile, has examined the interactions of bodies and technology and questioned rigid distinctions between human and animal bodies.[122]

The work of Michel Foucault has also exerted an important influence on the expanding academic interest in the body within human geography. Foucault analysed changing attitudes towards the body in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, while also devoting considerable attention to the relationship between knowledge and

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[117] Butler, *Gender Trouble*, 17.

[118] Chris Shilling, *The Body and Social Theory*, 2nd ed. (London: SAGE, 2003), 37–61, 62–87.

[119] Alexandra Howson, *Embodying Gender* (London: SAGE, 2005), 44.

[120] Butler, *Gender Trouble*; Judith Butler, *Bodies That Matter: On the Discursive Limits of "Sex"* (London and New York: Routledge, 1993).

[121] Longhurst, *Bodies*, 123–35.

[122] Haraway, *When Species Meet*; Haraway, "A Manifesto for Cyborgs," 1–42.

power.[123] As I examine below, he argued that the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries led to the development of new approaches to the body within Western societies.[124] Geographers have shown considerable interest in his work, both applying and developing his theories.[125] While Foucault devoted little attention to imperialism in his writings, his works have been used to analyse the development of colonialism and its lasting effects.[126] Often these works focus on direct imperial rule, but Daniel Clayton

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[123] See, for instance, Michel Foucault, *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings, 1972/77*, trans. Colin Gordon *et al.* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1980).

[124] Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, 135–37; Felix Driver, *Power and Pauperism: The Birth of the Workhouse System, 1834–1884* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993; Michael Foucault, *The Will to Knowledge: The History of Sexuality*, vol. 1., trans. Robert Hurley (1978; London: Penguin Books, 1998); Michel Foucault, *The Birth of the Clinic: An Archaeology of Medical Perception*, Routledge Classics Edition trans. Alan M. Sheridan (1963, London: Routledge, 2003).

[125] For example, Jeremy W. Crampton and Stuart Elden, eds., *Space, Power, Knowledge* (London: Routledge, 2017); Felix Driver, "Power, Space and the Body: A Critical Assessment of Foucault's *Discipline and Punish*," *Environment and Planning and D: Society and Space* 3, no. 4 (1985): 425–46; Stephen Legg, "Foucault's Population Geographies: Classifications, Biopolitics, and Governmental Spaces," *Population, Space, and Place* 11, no. 3 (2005): 137–56.

[126] Stephen Legg, "Beyond the European Province: Foucault and Postcolonialism," in *Space, Power, Knowledge*, eds. Jeremy W. Crampton and Stuart Elden (London: Routledge, 2007), 265–90; Stephen Legg and Deana Heath, eds. *South Asian Governmentalities: Michel Foucault and the Question of Postcolonial Orderings* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018); Ann Laura Stoler, *Race, Education and Desire: Foucault's History of Sexuality and the Colonial Order of Things* (Durham and London:

has used Foucault's theories to analyse European exploration.[127]

Foucault's ideas have done much to displace naturalistic views of the human body.[128] Susan Bordo and Sandra Bartaky have developed his ideas to study the relationship between the body and questions of gender and sexuality.[129] Nevertheless, his approach to the body has also been subject to trenchant critiques. For instance, Chris Shilling argues that his approach often minimises the fleshy materiality of bodies and questions of experience.[130] In contrast to Foucault, other scholars have devoted specific attention to such matters, sometimes drawing on the phenomenological approach of

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Duke University Press, 1995); Ann Laura Stoler, *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power: Race and the Intimate in Colonial Rule* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010); Arnold, *Colonizing the Body.*

[127] Daniel W. Clayton, *Islands of Truth: The Imperial Fashioning of Vancouver Island* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 2000).

[128] Roger Cooter, "The Turn of the Body: The History and Politics of the Corporeal," *Arbor* 186, no. 743 (2010), 397.

[129] Susan Bordo, "Feminism and Foucault and the Politics of the Body" in *Up Against Foucault: Explorations of Some Tensions Between Foucault and Feminism*, ed., Caroline Ramazanoglu (London: Routledge, 1993), 179–202; Susan Bordo, *Unbearable Weight: Feminism, Western Culture, and The Body*, 10th anniversary ed. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004); Sandra Lee Bartky, "Foucault, Femininity and the Modernization of Patriarchal Power" in *The Politics of Women's Bodies: Sexuality Appearance and Behaviour*, ed. Rose Weitz (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), 25–45.

[130] Shilling, *The Body and Social Theory*, 70–72; Cooter, "The Turn of the Body," 397; Porter, Roy. "History of the Body," in *New Perspectives on Historical Writing*, ed. Peter Burke (University Park: Pennsylvania University Press, 1991), 208.

Maurice Merleau-Ponty.[131] Such methods have, however, proved challenging to apply to historical studies because of the difficulty in finding appropriate sources and because understandings of experience are mediated through textual sources, bringing the question of representation to the fore again.[132] Pierre Bourdieu's ideas of "habitus," which examine how class relations become embodied in behaviour and habits, have been applied more productively.[133] More recently, there have been a greater number of studies interested in issues of materiality, examining bodies as both fleshy objects and as products of culture and history.[134] For instance, recent scholarship on cultural understandings of fat and fatness provide a means to examine bodies in ways that address their materiality and cultural changes.[135]

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[131] Maurice Merleau-Ponty, *The Phenomenology of Perception* trans. Donald A. Landes (1945, London: Routledge, 2012); Frantz Fanon, *Black Skins, White Masks*, trans. Charles Lam Markmann (1951, London: Pluto Press, 2008); Arthur W. Frank, *The Wounded Storyteller: Body, Illness and Ethics*, 2nd ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2013).

[132] Ruberg, *History of the Body*, 91.

[133] Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgement of Taste*, trans. Richard Nice (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1984); Ruberg, *History of the Body*, 85–88.

[134] Christopher E. Forth, *Masculinity in the Modern West: Gender Civilization and the Body* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008); Johnathan Lamb, *Scurvy: The Disease of Discovery* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2017); Ruberg, *History of the Body.*

[135] Sabrina Stings, *Fearing the Black Body: The Racial Origins of Fat Phobia* (New York: New York University Press, 2019); Christopher E. Forth and Anna Carden, eds., *Cultures of the Abdomen: Diet Digestion and Fat in the Modern World* (Basingstoke:

These broader literatures on the body mean there is a vast conceptual literature to guide this study. As the historian Antoinette Burton has argued, focusing on the body provides a way to think about, write about, and teach history in new and different terms.[136] In particular, it can help to spotlight the lives, labour, and experiences of traditionally ignored subaltern groups; it also puts issues of gender and sexuality at the centre of historical analysis.[137] Such works inspire this study and are drawn on throughout this thesis. More specifically, though, this thesis develops understandings of the body in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and it is to literatures on these areas I now turn.

Bodies in the Victorian and Edward Era

Historians and historical geographers have highlighted how the post-Enlightenment period (and the nineteenth century, in particular) saw a fundamental change in understandings of the human body within Britain and the British Empire, leading to the emergence of new, modern ideas of the body. Although, there was clearly no one unified "modern" understanding of the body, a broad understanding of some of these developments is "a critically important methodological task" for contextualising the way

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Palgrave Macmillan, 2005); Christopher E. Forth, "Fat, Desire and Disgust in the Colonial Imagination," *History Workshop Journal* 73, no.1 (Spring 2012): 211–39.

[136] Burton, "The Body in/as World History;" in *Bodies in Contact: Rethinking Colonial Encounters in World History*, eds Tony Ballantyne and Antoinette Burton (Durham: Duke University Press, 2005); Kathleen Canning, "The Body as Method? Reflections on the Place of the Body in Gender History" *Gender & History* 11, no. 3 (1999): 499–513.

[137] Burton, "The Body In/As World History," 276–77.

that nineteenth-century writers understood and wrote about bodies.[138]

Scientific understandings of gender and sexual difference changed dramatically in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century. As the historian Thomas Laqueur has argued, pre-Enlightenment thinkers generally thought in a "one-sex model" in which women's bodies were viewed as imperfectly formed male bodies.[139] By 1800, he argues, "writers of all sorts" insisted there "were fundamental differences between the male and female sexes" based "on discoverable biological distinctions."[140] While Laqueur's approach has been criticised for simplifying pre-modern understandings of the male body, and for his reliance on anatomical textbooks, it is clear that the nineteenth century did see a dramatic shift in understandings of the relationship between body, sex, and gender in Britain, leading to more rigid and binary understandings of biological sex.[141]

Previous scholarship has demonstrated how the nineteenth century saw the emergence of new disciplinary regimes that governed human bodies and their behaviours. Before the modern period, religious ideas of virtue and sin played a key role in regulating the body and the kinds of behaviour that were acceptable. Norbert Elias argues that the early modern period saw the emergence of new modes of behaviour "which manifests itself as embarrassment at the mere sight of any bodily functions of others."[142] Although originally confined to the courtly upper classes, new modes of

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[138] Canning, "The Body as Method?, 504.

[139] Thomas W. Laqueur, *Making Sex: Body and Gender From the Greeks to Freud* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1990), 62.

[140] Laqueur, *Making Sex*, 5.

[141] Ruberg, *History of the Body*, 60.

[142] Norbert Elias, *The Civilizing Process: Sociogenetic and Psychogenetic Investigations*, revised ed., trans. Edmund Jephcott (Oxford: Blackwell, 2000), 60.

"civilized" behaviour gradually spread across society as a whole.[143] As noted above, Foucault's has examined how, over the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries changing understanding of discipline spread through society.[144] Institutions—barracks, schools, hospitals, prison, workhouses, and so on—were used to discipline and develop bodies in new ways, training and rebuilding them, rendering them both more controlled and more productive.[145] These new penal institutions sought to modify inmates' behaviour through "forms of coercion [and] schemata of restraint, applied and repeated," including exercise, rigid schedules, compulsory activities, work in common, control of space, and solitary confinement.[146] Such techniques, Foucault argues, developed into "general formulas of domination" and were used to discipline society as a whole.[147] These changing approaches were intertwined with the development of the British Empire. For instance, David Arnold has examined the relationship between medicine and colonialism in India, arguing that the colonising and disciplinary nature of medicine was "exceptionally raw and accentuated" in the colonial context.[148] Harris, meanwhile, has examined practices of punishment in post-emancipation Barbados and Jamaica, demonstrating how the racist application of punishments reinforced socio-racial hierarchies.[149]

The expansion of European empires also led to the development of new ideas about

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[143] Elias, *The Civilizing Process*, 60.

[144] Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*; Driver, *Power and Pauperism.*

[145] Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, 135–37.

[146] Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, 128.

[147] Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, 137.

[148] Arnold, *Colonizing the Body*, 9.

[149] Dawn P. Harris, *Punishing the Black Body: Marking Social and Racial Structures in Barbados and Jamaica* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2017).

"race."[150] As George Stocking argues, before about 1800, ideas about the origins of humanity were largely drawn from the Judeo-Christian religious tradition.[151] In the book of Genesis, the Bible claimed the origins of humanity lay with Adam and Eve but later described a cataclysmic flood which destroyed all human life on the planet save for Noah and his family. Hence, within the biblical account, all human populations were the descendants of Noah's children who went on to repopulate the earth.[152] This idea of "monogenesis" (the single origin of humanity) was "widely accepted" in Britain until the mid-nineteenth century.[153] Before then, European writers frequently referred to different populations as belonging to (often vaguely and inconsistently) defined "races."[154] However, conceptions of race as based on innate and embodied biological difference were not widespread: variations in skin colour were often thought about as superficial qualities shaped mostly by environmental factors.[155] Differences in wealth

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[150] Anne McClintock, *Imperial Leather: Race Sexuality and the Colonial Contest* (London and New York: Routledge, 1995).

[151] George Stocking, *Victorian Anthropology* (New York: Free Press, 1987), 11–12.

[152] Stocking, *Victorian Anthropology*, 12; Michael F. Robinson, *The Lost White Tribe: Explorers, Scientists, and The Theory That Changed a Continent* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 57.

[153] Stocking, *Victorian Anthropology*, 12; David N. Livingstone, *Adam's Ancestors: Race, Religion, and the Politics of Human Origins* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2008).

[154] Charles W.J Withers, *Placing the Enlightenment: Thinking Geographical about the Age of Reason* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007), 139–48.

[155] Angela Saini, *Superior: The Return of Race Science* (London: 4th Estate, 2019), 47; Kay Anderson and Colin Perrin, "How Race Became Everything: Australia and Polygenism," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 31, no. 5 (2008): 962–90.

between populations were largely thought as developmental stages.[156] In short, the idea of a common origin of humanity made it hard to maintain that dissimilarities between human populations were dramatic or inevitable.[157]

In the early nineteenth century, however, European scientists became increasingly dissatisfied with existing explanations of human development, caused by a growing understanding that the earth was much older than a literal reading of biblical accounts suggests.[158] Moreover, encounters with human populations who had very different ways of life also led to growing doubts that all human populations had one common origin.[159] Such "polygenist" ideas claimed that different "races" represented different human species that had either developed separately or had evolved in to distinct species.[160] Consequently, even many of those who viewed humanity as having one singular origin increasingly viewed differences in human populations as innate and embodied.[161] Such ideas assumed an explanatory power in the context of European empires. Growing numbers of writers, politicians, and scientists arguing that economic development of non-European populations was a product of their alleged physical and mental capacity for development.[162] Even the emergence of Darwinism, which reasserted the common

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[156] Anderson and Perrin "How Race," 963.

[157] Anderson and Perrin "How Race," 964.

[158] Anderson and Perrin "How Race," 980.

[159] Anderson and Perrin "How Race;" Sadiah Qureshi, *Peoples on Parade: Exhibitions, Empire, and Anthropology in Nineteenth-Century Britain* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011), 200.

[160] Anderson and Perrin "How Race;" Qureshi, *Peoples on Parade*, 200; Robinson, *The Lost White Tribe*, 90–91.

[161] Anderson and Perrin, "How Race," 980.

[162] Anderson and Perrin "How Race," 980.

origin of humanity, could not displace the idea that superficial bodily differences between human populations had some moral and political significance.[163] Some scientists argued that white Europeans represented the highest stage of evolutionary progress and had developed "superior brains in the course of cultural progress."[164] Darwinism changed how human difference was explained, but it did not change the idea that the examination of bodies could shed light on broader evolutionary processes. As David N. Livingstone notes, European and North American descriptions of human difference often employed a language of "moral climatology" in which the inhabitants of tropical and Arctic climates were presented as ethically and intellectually inferior to the inhabitants of temperate regions.[165] These developments also meant that Victorian scientists devoted considerable attention to people and animals that seemed to transgress the human-animal divide.[166] Similar methods of examination were practised on human and animal skulls to try and study the relationship between the two.[167] This thesis therefore addresses a period in which there were profound changes in understandings of the body within Britain.

These transformations provoked anxieties. Concerns about the hardiness and vulnerability of the white body, particularly in tropical climates, were an important

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[163] George Stocking, *Race, Culture, and Evolution: Essays in the History of Anthropology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), 46.

[164] Stocking, *Victorian Anthropology*, 185.

[165] David N. Livingstone "Race, Space, and Moral Climatology: Notes Towards a Genealogy," *Journal of Historical Geography* 28, no. 2 (2002): 159–80.

[166] Sivasundaram , "Imperial Transgressions," 157–68.

[167] Sivasundaram , "Imperial Transgressions," 157–68.

theme of imperial discourse.[168] The importance attached to bodily difference and appearance also affected domestic society. As Sadiah Qureshi notes, in the nineteenth century it became "common to argue that a person's outward physical formation reflected the development of inner moral qualities."[169] Depictions of the urban poor, for instance, sought to "render people's character apparent in their facial features, like words written on a page."[170] This idea was reflected in scientific developments such as the emerging field of phrenology, a now-discredited science, which argued that the mental and moral capacities of both individuals and populations could be studied by examining and measuring their skulls.[171] As James Poskett has documented, phrenology became an increasingly global science over the course of the nineteenth century.[172] Evolutionary ideas, which highlighted the effects of environmental forces on the body also provoked

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[168] Dane Kennedy, "The Perils of the Midday Sun: Climatic Anxieties in the Colonial Tropics," in *Imperialism and the Natural World*, ed. John M. Mackenzie (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1990), 118–40; Dane Kennedy, *Magic Mountains: Hill Stations and the British Raj* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996); David N. Livingstone, "Tropical Climate and Moral Hygiene: The Anatomy of a Victorian Debate," *The British Journal for the History of Science* 32, no. 1 (1999): 93–110.

[169] Qureshi, *Peoples on Parade*, 38; Allan Sekula, "The Body and the Archive," *October* 39 (Winter 1986): 3–64.

[170] Qureshi, *Peoples on Parade*, 38.

[171] Qureshi, *Peoples on Parade*, 38; James Poskett, *Materials of the Mind: Phrenology, Race, and the Global History of Science, 1815–1920* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2019).

[172] Poskett, *Materials of the Mind.*

anxieties about the white body and manliness.[173] This led to concerns about the alleged "degeneration" of British bodies, due to the effects of modernisation, tropical travel, and urban living.[174] One response, was the development of ideas of "muscular Christianity" which emphasised "physical strength, religious certainty, and the ability to shape and control the world around oneself."[175] The nineteenth century saw profound changes in social and scientific understandings of bodies, which have been the subject of growing scrutiny in recent years. Work on such issues means there is a wealth of secondary scholarship to draw on. At the same time, studying such writing also shows the relative lack of attention to the body within the history of exploration.

CONCLUSION

This thesis responds to and extends previous scholarship on exploration by bringing together several bodies of literature that have so far remained largely separate. On the one hand, I respond to literatures that have sought to understand exploration in broader

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[173] Joanne Begiato, *Manliness in Britain, 1760–1900: Bodies, Emotion, and Material Culture* (Manchester University Press, 2020).

[174] Rod Edmond, "Returning Fears: Tropical Disease and the Metropolis," in *Tropical Visions in an Age of Empire*, eds. Felix Driver and Luciana Martins (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), 175–96; Daniel Pick, *Faces of Degeneration: A European Disorder, c. 1848–1918* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1989); Ina Zweiniger-Bargielowska, *Managing the Body: Beauty, Health and Fitness in Britain, 1880–1939* (Oxford: Oxford University Press 2010).

[175] Donald E. Hall, "Introduction: Reading and Writing the Male Social Body," in *Muscular Christianity: Embodying the Victorian Age*, ed. Donald E. Hall (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press: 1994), 7.

terms, using travel to study political, social, and scientific changes and to the contributions of a wider range of individuals. These works have, at times, addressed the body, but have seldom taken it as a central subject. Where they have done so, such scholarship has generally focused on the role of expedition leaders' bodies in questions of scientific credibility and heroism. The other bodies involved in expeditions have received far less attention. On the other hand, I draw on the broader academic interest in the body, including the Victorian and Edwardian era. As I have shown, there is a rich historical and conceptual literature that I use to inform this study. In bringing together these two areas of scholarship and positioning the body as the central object of analysis, this thesis develops new insights on the history of exploration and offers an original reading of four otherwise-familiar case studies. As other scholars have demonstrated, taking the body as the central focus allows me to write about exploration in different terms, putting issues of gender, class, and racial difference at the centre of analysis and foregrounding different kinds of work. However, the body is not a simple object of analysis and studying it raises various epistemological and methodological challenges to which I now turn.

3

THE BODY AS METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, I examine some of the epistemological and methodological challenges presented by studying the role and position of the body in the history of exploration. I outline an investigative approach attentive to the representation of bodies and their materiality. I also describe, from a methodological perspective, how my attention to the body has been facilitated by an engagement with particular forms of evidence and the application of specific interpretative approaches. Studying this topic also raises deeper philosophical questions about the relationship between bodies, materiality, and language, discussed by others.[1] In analysing such issues, these works have shown the problems with viewing the body as a pre-existing "biological given" as biology, language, and society cannot be easily separated.[2] While such discussions are important, the focus on language and representation within them has, at times, meant that the body "dissolves into language," drawing attention away from [t]he body that eats, that

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[1] Butler, *Gender Trouble*; Butler, *Bodies That Matter*; for an alternative perspective, see Grosz, *Volatile Bodies.* These debates have also played out within human geography. See, Longhurst, *Bodies*; Lise Nelson, "Bodies (and Spaces) Do Matter: The Limits of Performativity," *Gender, Place and Culture: A Journal of Feminist Geography* 6, no.4 (1999): 331–53; Gillian Rose, "Geography and Gender, Cartographies and Corporealities," *Progress in Human Geography* 19, no. 4 (1995): 544–48.

[2] Porter, "History of the Body," 215; Butler, *Gender Trouble;* Shilling, *The Body and Social Theory*, 8–9.

works, that dies, that is afraid."[3] The relationship between bodies and language is a conceptual challenge with which this thesis grapples. Broadly speaking, I adopt an approach that addresses issues of language, culture, and representation while also acknowledging that bodies "remain material, physical, and biological entities."[4] There are also other challenges relating to the types of material on which this project relies.

Over the last thirty years, historians and theorists have devoted growing attention to the archive as a subject of inquiry.[5] As this project draws extensively on archival sources, it is also important to reflect on the nature of these sources and to discuss the approach taken in interrogating them. In some ways, these issues reflect broader challenges with historical research in general. As recent scholarship has demonstrated, the development of archives was not a neutral process but must be viewed "within the context of the historical development of systems of governance, power, and control."[6] As such, the geographer Jake Hodder notes, "the act of archiving is invariably one of both preservation and discardment, which, in revealing certain aspects of the past,

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[3] Caroline Bynum, "Why All the Fuss about the Body? A Medievalist's Perspective," *Critical Inquiry* 22, no. 1 (1995), 1.

[4] Shilling, *The Body and Social Theory*, 9–10; Antoinette Burton, "The Body in/as World History," in *A Companion to World History*, ed. Douglas Northop (Oxford: Blackwell, 2012), 277.

[5] Stoler, *Along the Archival Grain;* Jacques Derrida, *Archive Fever: A Freudian Impression*, trans. Eric Prenowitz (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998); Ricardo Roque and Kim A. Wagener, eds., *Engaging Colonial Knowledge: Reading European Archives in World History* (Basingstoke: Palgrave MacMillan, 2012).

[6] Jake Hodder, "On Absence and Abundance: Biography as Method in Archival Research," *Area* 49, no.4 (2017), 453.

conceal others."[7] In terms of their physical composition, archives are spaces "configured by both scarcity and abundance."[8] These presences and absences are not random but are the product of the fact that "what counts as knowledge" is shaped by "who is in power to record their versions of it."[9] As I discuss below, the uneven archiving of documents is reflected in holdings on the case studies this thesis discusses.

There are, however, specific challenges in interpreting explorers' texts due to the fact they were often written with a variety of domestic audiences in mind.[10] As the historian Roy Bridges argues, "many historians have been too naïve in approaching the explorers' texts as simple bits of evidence which one can take at face value."[11] Books were "rarely if ever the direct unmediated expressions of observations and experiences."[12] Travellers took various different kinds of observations, which had to be pulled together into some form of coherent (and ideally compelling) narrative.[13] To achieve this, their public texts often underwent numerous rounds of editing and re-writing before publication, rendering them problematic historical sources.[14] Even

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[7] Hodder, "On Absence and Abundance," 453.

[8] Hodder, "On Absence and Abundance," 453.

[9] Stoler, *Along the Archival Grain*, 47; Ruberg, *The Body and History*, 113; Bernard S. Cohn, *Colonialism and its Forms of Knowledge: The British in India* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1996); Said, *Orientalism;* Said, *Culture and Imperialism.*

[10] Bridges, "Explorers' Texts;" Driver, "Intermediaries and the Archive."

[11] Bridges, "Explorers' Texts," 69; Roy C. Bridges, "Nineteenth Century East African Travel Records with an Appendix on 'Armchair Geographers' and Cartography," *Paideuma* 33 (1987): 179–96.

[12] Kennedy, *The Last Blank*, 248.

[13] Kenendy, *The Last Blank*, 248.

[14] Bridges, "Nineteenth Century East African;" Bridges, "Explorers' Texts."

private writings, such as diaries, were often produced with domestic audiences in mind and diaries were often given over to geographical societies, government agencies, or sponsors to verify their credibility. Consequently, self-censorship or self-deception at the writing stage is also a possibility.[15] Indeed, there are several cases—including some notable events in Richard Burton's life—where explorers appear to have deliberately lied about their journeys and achievements.[16]

Even when explorers' writings about their bodies are not deliberately distorted they often employed pre-existing literary tropes. As Carl Thompson has shown, the idea of the "suffering traveller" became a powerful literary default and expectation in Romantic-era travel accounts.[17] At the same time, modesty was another powerful trope within travellers' accounts and these two pressures could prove difficult to balance.[18] Isabella Bird, who sometimes downplayed her suffering to emphasise her professionalism, confided these competing pressures in a letter to her publisher, John Murray.[19] When one reviewer of her *Korea and Her Neighbours* (1898) praised her for

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[15] Bridges, "Nineteenth-Century East African," 191; Keighren *et al. Travels into Print*, 44–45; Finkelstein, "Unraveling Speke."

[16] Jon R. Godsall, *The Tangled Web: A Life of Sir Richard Burton* (Troubador: Leicester, 2008); Jon R. Godsall "Fact and Fiction in Richard Burton's Personal Narrative of a Pilgrimage to El-Medinah and Meccah (1855–6)," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* 3, no. 3 (1993): 331–51.

[17] Carl Thompson, *The Suffering Traveller and the Romantic Imagination* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007).

[18] Keighren *et al. Travels into Print*, 102–6.

[19] Stephanie Palmer, "Emily Katharine Bates and the Suppression of Travail in Late Nineteenth-Century Travel Writing about the United States," *Studies in Travel Writing* 14, no.1 (2010), 32.

her "cool saneness", she told Murray: "I think I have perhaps too much minimised in writing on Korea and Western China the very serious discomforts and difficulties as well as the actual risk which I ran."[20] Even in descriptions of their own suffering and experience, explorers' writings were pushed in competing directions and require careful reading. One of the methods I have adopted for dealing with these issues is to examine some of the most powerful tropes directly in Chapter 4, *"Heroic" Bodies* and Chapter 6, *Disciplined Bodies*. Going "along the archival grain" in this way helps to identify the sections of explorers' writing that are clearly playing into broader literary conventions.[21] However, I also suggest that while explorers' accounts were edited and selective, they rarely removed all traces of the (often less-than-heroic) reality of their expeditions due to competing pressures and different understandings of what it meant to be an explorer.[22]

SUBALTERN BODIES IN THE ARCHIVES OF EXPLORATION

More than thirty years ago, Gayatri Spivak asked whether the subaltern can speak within colonial-era archives.[23] This question remains an important one when it comes to analysing explorers' texts. Their written sources are problematic in fundamental ways when it comes to understanding inter-cultural encounters and the perspectives of

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[20] Isabella Bird to John Murray, 27 January 1898, NLS, Ms.42028, ff. 95–96

[21] Stoler, *Along the Archival Grain.*

[22] Armston-Sheret "Tainted Bodies;" Driver, *Geography Militant.* I return to this point in detail below.

[23] Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, "Can the Subaltern Speak?" in *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture*, eds. Cary Nelson and Lawrence Grossberg (Basingstoke: MacMillan, 1988), 271–316.

non-European expedition members.[24] Documents overwhelmingly reflect the viewpoints of leaders, sponsoring institutions, and publishers. Meanwhile, sources written by people of colour are scarce, and are non-existent for the case studies discussed.[25] Descriptions of them are often couched in racist stereotypes and slurs. As a result, the perspective and experiences of non-European and working-class expedition members are often ignored or distorted, even when their presence and contributions are acknowledged.[26] Felix Driver argues that such limitations mean that non-European intermediaries are "partially visible."[27] Critical scholarship thus involves "deciphering even the most unpromising of materials to realise the residue of their meaning beyond that which the explorers themselves, and more especially the guardians of the received narratives of exploration, have so often ascribed to them."[28] Accordingly, my reading of the expeditionary archive draws on a diverse range of public and private sources—including diaries, letters, maps, images, and book drafts. While illustrations and photographs are problematic in their own ways, as they were often staged and sometimes shot in studios, they do offer different and still-useful insights from written sources.[29]

These problems with expeditionary archives cannot be totally overcome;

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[24] Bridges, "Explorers' Texts;" Wisnicki, *Fieldwork of Empire*, 1–18.

[25] There are some important examples of African voices being more directly represented in colonial archives. *One More Voice*, https://onemorevoice.org.

[26] Driver, "Intermediaries and the Archive;" Wisnicki, *Fieldwork of Empire*, 6.

[27] Driver, "Intermediaries and the Archive," 17.

[28] Driver, "Intermediaries and the Archive," 17.

[29] Ryan, *Photography and Exploration*; Bridges, "Nineteenth Century East African," 185–86.

however, I have deployed strategies to try and mitigate them.[30] Bridges argues that some of the problems with explorers' texts can be reduced by focusing on "raw" private writings and using the "first stage record where this is available," as such distortions often become more pronounced through the re-writing and editing of travel narratives.[31] Moreover, he also suggests that a more thorough historical understanding of the various contexts in which explorers operated allows us to unpack some of "cultural baggage" that shapes and distorts representations of non-Europeans.[32] One way to do such interpretive work is to contextualise explorers' writings by drawing on broader literatures about writing, racism, and empire in the Victorian and Edwardian era, an approach that highlights when explorers are drawing on pre-existing tropes. Contextual historical research can also be a valuable tool for assessing the plausibility of explorers' claims. For instance, Wisnicki demonstrates that a focus on African historical contexts and the use of a diverse range of expeditionary sources—including images, maps, journals, letters, and diaries—can offer "unique, unadulterated discursive and material evidence of the intercultural dynamics involved in the field-based production process."[33] Despite the challenges of studying explorers' texts, it possible to read their writings in ways that mitigate some of their limitations.

A comparison of explorers' public and private accounts has proved central to recovering subaltern contributions. Some of Richard Burton, John Hanning Speke, and Isabella Bird's papers were deliberately destroyed in their lifetimes or after their deaths,

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[30] Wisnicki, *Fieldwork of Empire*, 1–18; Bridges, "Explorers' Texts," 72.

[31] Bridges, "Explorers' Texts," 72; Bridges, Nineteenth Century East African," 180–86.

[32] Bridges, "Explorers' Texts," 79.

[33] Wisnicki, *Fieldwork of Empire*, 11.

leaving researchers with only a partial picture of their private lives.[34] Nevertheless, I have found numerous examples of such edits and omissions between "first stage" records and public accounts.[35] Often such redaction centred on how explorers had used their bodies or had depended on or interacted with those of others. When re-writing their accounts, explorers often recast incidents of illness or and incapacity in heroic terms and highlighted their authority over other expedition members.[36] The editing of Speke's first draft of *Journal of the Discovery of the Source of the Nile* (1863) by John Burton was particularly dramatic, deleting and recasting numerous incidents, such as descriptions of venereal disease and sexual encounters with East African women, that would have damaged his domestic reputation.[37] Isabella Bird's correspondence with her publisher John Murray contains both incidents omitted from published accounts and discussions about how to cast her narrative in favourable terms.[38] Analysing primary records brings to surface numerous incidents and relationships invisible from published accounts.

Recovering the historical "voices" of animals is even more challenging than surfacing the voices of subaltern humans because our knowledge about the animals in

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[34] Chubbuck, Introduction to *Letters*, 22; Lovell, *A Rage to Live*, xiii; Bridges, "Nineteenth Century East African," 181.

[35] Bridges, "Nineteenth Century East African Travel Records," 180.

[36] Keighren *et al.*, *Travels into Print*, provides a comprehensive analysis of this process.

[37] John Hanning Speke, 1863, "Firsts Corrected Proofs of "Journal of the Discovery of the Source of the Nile," with Many Stylistic Changes by the Author and by John Hill Burton National Library of Scotland, Ms. 4873; Finklestein, *The House of Blackwood*, 49–69; Finklesteain, "Unraveling Speke."

[38] Isabella Bird's Correspondence with John Murray, Ms. 42024–42029, NLS.

question is entirely mediated by humans.[39] Explorers often viewed animal bodies as resources, making it impossible to recover their experiences for their writings.[40] Given the available sources, this is a challenge that cannot be entirely overcome; however, I have often been surprised by the extent to which explorers were alive to and discussed their ethical commitments to animals.[41] Scott was concerned by the implications of using them on a polar expedition and the suffering they experienced. Meanwhile, Bird often wrote in more detail about horses and ponies than about human subalterns (a point I return to in Chapter, 5 *Dependent Bodies*). Despite the one-sided evidence available, it is possible to learn something about the role of animals, however speculative these insights might be.

My research has also highlighted the limits of viewing the re-writing of accounts only as a negative process of censorship and distortion. In the field, explorers were often under considerable physical and mental strain, meaning that they typically only wrote down particularly interesting or novel events, or those required by dint of routine scientific observation or survey work. Day-to-day domestic arrangements and the experience of exploration sometimes receive surprisingly little attention in the "raw" accounts of exploration. When undergoing extreme physical suffering, explorers often had little time or energy to write about the experience in detail.[42] Scott later explained:

> The diaries which record the doing of a sledge party, and which are written

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[39] Catherine Johnston, "Beyond the Clearing: Towards a Dwelt Animal Geography," *Progress in Human Geography* 32, no.5 (2008), 634.

[40] Owain Jones, "(Un)ethical Geographies of Human—Non-Human Relations: Encounters, Collectives and Spaces," in *Animal Spaces, Beastly Places*, Philo and Wilbert, eds. (London: Routledge, 2000), 283.

[41] Jones, "(Un)ethical Geographies," 283.

[42] Kennedy, *The Last Blank*, 249.

> in such adverse circumstances…do not enter into the hardships and discomforts which are inevitable to the day's work, but in the main are devoted to special incidents of the particular day.[43]

As this passage shows, suffering could draw attention away from mundane activities. Consequently, Chapter 5 *Dependent Bodies*, in highlighting the contribution of non-Europeans to the domestic and caring labour of the expedition, relied much more heavily on published sources than I expected at the outset of my research. Published account could, and often did, serve to write the body back into expedition accounts. Scott's drafts of *The Voyage of the "Discovery"* (1905) shows him adding in supplementary details about the party's experiences of hunger and Petty Officer Edgar Evan's nose and its liability to frostbite.[44] Similarly, they often devoted specific sections of their books to "logistical" questions, often summarising the composition of their expeditions in ways that their diaries did not. In short, explorers' "raw" records are limited in their own ways and present their challenges when it comes to studying explorers' bodies. It is in the act of comparison between the "raw" and the "polished" that the most significant insights can be gained.

Explorers' writings offer some insights on the reality of Victorian and Edwardian exploration, even if they require careful and critical reading, and the use of a variety of sources. The interrogation of such diverse sources shows that, in a particular sense, explorers had multiple bodies—real and represented, material and metaphorical, dependent and heroic—that were constituted in different ways, at different times, and

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[43] Scott, *The Voyage*, 1: 499–500.

[44] See Robert F. Scott, Draft Fragment of Chapter 18 of the Voyage of the Discovery (London, 1905), Ms. 145324, Scott Polar Research Institute, University of Cambridge (hereafter SPRI), ff. 5, 7.

for different audiences.[45] But as I show throughout this thesis, attempts to impose a singular narrative on an expedition often came unstuck, partly because the strains of the field left indelible marks on bodies and travel narratives, but also because of conflicting understandings of what it meant to be an explorer. Such disagreements made it difficult for explorers to write an account that would, at the same time, be domestically acceptable, commercially successful, and scientifically credible, consequently, explorers' writings are open to multiple and more complex readings than is often assumed. Brining these different bodies and perspectives to the fore required examining various archival collections.

Summary of Sources Consulted

It is also important to outline the specific materials I consulted during this project, the reasons for the selection of these sources, and some of the specific opportunities and challenges presented by individual sources and collections. All the expeditions discussed in this thesis have a rich variety of sources associated with them, but the collections related to each one differs in important respects. This section seeks to outline the similarities and differences between the collections and the different opportunities and challenges they offer, as these issues shape the analysis offered in the rest of the thesis.

There are numerous primary resources on John Hanning Speke, Richard Burton, James Augustus Grant, and the Nile controversy. Burton, Speke, and Grant each wrote books and articles about their travels and were each the subject of biographical attention in the Victorian era.[46] In terms of archival sources, the Royal Geographical Society holds

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[45] Mol, *The Body Multiple.*

[46] Burton, *The Lake Regions of Central Africa*; Burton, *Zanzibar*; Speke, *Journal of the Discovery*; Speke, *What Led*; Isabel Burton, *The Life of Captain Sir Richard F. Burton*, 2

a record of the three explorers' correspondence with the society, all of which was consulted in the course of this project.[47] The British Library holds correspondence between Burton and Speke on the Nile controversy.[48] Most of the correspondence about their Nile expeditions in the British Library's collection has been collected, transcribed, and published in *The Search for the Source of the Nile* (1999), which proved an invaluable

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vols. (London: Chapman and Hall, 1893); John Hanning Speke, "Journal of A Cruise on the Tanganyika Lake," *Blackwood's Magazine* (September 1859): 339–90; John Hanning Speke, "Captain Speke's Discovery of the Victoria Nyanza Lake, The Supposed Source of the Nile Part II," *Blackwood's Magazine* (October 1859): 391–419; John Hanning Speke, "Captain Speke's Discovery of the Victoria Nyanza Lake, The Supposed Source of the Nile Part III," *Blackwood's Magazine* (November 1859): 565–90; Richard F. Burton, "The Lake Regions of Central Equatorial Africa," *The Journal of the Royal Geographical Society* 29 (1859): 1–454.

[47] The Sir Richard Burton Collection, RGS/RFB, RGS Archives; John Hanning Speke, "Scientific Observations in the Nile Region," RGS/JHS, RGS Archives; Letters to Royal Geographical Society, RGS/JHS, RGS Archives; James Augustus Grant, "Letters to the Royal Geographical Society," RGS/CB, RGS Archives. The society also holds several maps drawn by Speke during his time in the lake regions, which were also an important source. See John Hanning Speke, Sketch-Map of Route from Zanzibar towards Lake Tanganyika," RGS Archive, parts I and II.

[48] The most important collection in the British Library for this thesis is the Burton Manuscripts, Ms. 88861–88877, British Library. The archive also contains the service records of Burton and Speke in the Army of the East India Company. E.g., John Hanning Speke, IOR/L/MIL/10/39/494–496, India Office Records and Private Papers, British Library; Richard F. Burton, IOR/L/MIL/9/201/46–49, India Office Records and Private Papers, British Library.

resource.[49] The National Library of Scotland holds correspondence between Speke and Grant and correspondence between both men and the Blackwood publishing house, which was examined in detail.[50] Most importantly, the archive also contains the first drafts of his book *Journal of the Discovery of the Source of the Nile* (1863), including many revealing passages removed from the published version.[51] This source has proved particularly valuable, as Speke's diaries from this expedition do not survive, and a close reading of this draft had brought my attention to several important incidents that are either ignored or rewritten in Speke's published book.

The Huntington Library in California holds both Richard Burton's library and a collection of his manuscripts. Many of Burton's books are extensively annotated and his marginalia were a particular focus of my examination.[52] A focus of attention were Burton's comments in the margins of his personal copies of Speke's books. These are valuable for understanding their disagreement over the source of the River Nile and

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[49] Donald Young, ed. *The Search for the Source of the Nile* (London: Roxburghe Club, 1999). To check the accuracy of these transcriptions, I compared a sample of original sources and the published version in *The Search for the Source of the Nile*, and I have found that the published versions are accurate.

[50] John Hanning Speke, 1854–64, Letters to James A. Grant, Ms. 17910, NLS; John Hanning Speke, Letters to William Blackwood and Sons, Ms. 30970, ff. 15, 129–57.

[51] John Hanning Speke, 1863, "First Corrected Proofs of 'Journal of the Discovery of the Source of the Nile,'" Ms. 4873, NLS.

[52] B.J. Kirkpatrick, ed., *A Catalogue of the Library of Sir Richard Burton K.C.M.G. Held by the Royal Anthropological Institute* (London: Anthropological Society, 1978) was invaluable in navigating his extensive collection.

incidents which Burton disputed.[53] The library also holds rare publications by Burton that proved useful.[54] Researching Burton's library was a challenge compared to the comparatively simple archival research on his manuscripts. The library is extensive and, while the catalogue identifies the books that have "annotations and marked passages," reading these annotations necessarily involved a rather painstaking page-by-page study.[55] Some of his books contain extensive (and interesting) comments, annotations, and instances of scrapbooking.[56] One of the most remarkable of these was Burton's annotated copy of *The Art of Travel* (1856), in which he gives numerous discursive recommendations for running a successful expedition.[57] These comments reveal Burton's "individual engagements" with the books in questions, containing, at turns,

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[53] John Hanning Speke, *Journal of the Discovery of the Source of the Nile*, Richard Burton Library, Huntington Library (hereafter HL) Richard F. Burton Library (hereafter RFB) 1679 (Edinburgh: Blackwood, 1863); John Hanning Speke, *What Led to the Discovery of the Source of the Nile*, HL RFB 1680 (Edinburgh Blackwood, 1864).

[54] E.g. Richard F. Burton, *Supplementary Papers to the Mwata Cazembe*, HL RFB 43 (Privately Published, 1873). This work was particularly useful.

[55] Kirkpatrick, *A Catalogue of the Library*, x.

[56] His scrapbooking in Richard F. Burton, *The Lake Regions of Central Africa; A Picture of Exploration* 2 vols. HL RFB 10 (London: Longman Green, 1860) is particularly extensive. Natalie Cox, "Armchair Geography: Speculation, Synthesis, and the Culture of British Exploration, c.1830–c.1870" (PhD Thesis, University of Warwick, 2016), 264–68 discusses Burton's annotation and scrapbooking practices in detail. Her work was also extremely useful for navigating the Burton collections.

[57] Francis Galton, *The Art of Travel: or Shifts and Contrivances Available in Wild Countries*, 2nd ed. HL RFB 381 (London John Murray, 1856).

"comments, criticisms, objections, observations, and praise."[58] Others are simply underlined or include brief notes, such as "N.B.", which reveal far less about the motivations and thinking of the writer.[59] The Royal Asiatic Society has a number of articles on (and about) Burton that were consulted in the course of the project and provided insights on broader views of Burton within Victorian society.[60] The Orleans House Gallery, the Royal Anthropological Institute, and the Swindon and Wiltshire Records office all hold collections on Burton, but these do not deal primarily with the Nile controversy—and were not examined in the course of this project.

The public and private writings of Isabella Bird are also extensive. Bird wrote numerous published books and articles on her travels.[61] Archival collections on Isabella Bird are held at the National Library of Scotland, which holds Bird's correspondence with her publisher John Murray and circulars distributed to her sister Henrietta Bird and her friends while she was travelling.[62] The correspondence between Bird and Murray has been especially valuable, offering unrivalled insights into how she used and

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[58] Innes M. Keighren, "Reading the Reception of Ellen Churchill Semple's Influences of Geographic Environment (1911)" (PhD Thesis: University of Edinburgh, 2008), 43.

[59] Kirkpatrick, *A Catalogue of the Library*, x.

[60] Richard Burton Collection, RGS/RB/1–8, Royal Asiatic Society Archive.

[61] Isabella L. Bird, *The Hawaiian Archipelago: Six Months Among the Palm Groves, Coral Reefs, and Volcanoes of the Sandwich Islands* (London: John Murray, 1875); Bird, *A Lady's Life*; Isabella Bishop, *Unbeaten Tracks in Japan*; Bishop, *Korea and Her Neighbours*; Bishop, *The Yangtze Valley*; Bird, *Journeys in Persia.*

[62] Letters of Isabella L. Bird, John Murray Collection, Ms. 2020–29, NLS; Isabella L. Bishop, "Letters to J.S. Blackie," Correspondence and Papers of Professor John Stuart Black and His Family, 1798–1915, Ms. 2623–2642, NLS.

represented her body in ways that ensured she was both respectable and credible. The Royal Geographical Society also holds a series of correspondence between Bird and the Scottish Geographer John Scott Keltie who played a prominent role in the Society in the 1890s and 1900s. These, too, were examined in detail.[63] The correspondence with Keltie offers insights into Bird's relationship with the society and her growing reputation within geographical circles. An Edwardian biography of Bird, by her friend Anna Stoddart also provides important insights into Bird's life, although the accuracy of some of the stories included in it has recently been called into question, meaning it has been approached with caution.[64]

Each of Scott's expeditions led to the publication of several books by Scott and other expedition members.[65] Archival records on Scott's two expeditions are relatively comprehensive and are held, primarily, at the Royal Geographical Society, the Royal Society, and the Scott Polar Research Institute at the University of Cambridge, all of which were examined in the course of this thesis (the selection of relevant files is discussed below).[66] Due to the official (and at times tediously bureaucratic) way in which

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[63] Isabella Lucy Bishop, Correspondence with the RGS, RGS/CB, RGS Archives.

[64] Stoddart, *The Life of Isabella Bird*; Chubbuck, Introduction to *Letters*, 2.

[65] For example, Scott, *The Voyage*; Armitage, *Two Years in the Antarctic*; Scott, *Journals*; Cherry Garrard, *The Worst Journey*; Herbert Ponting, *The Great White South; Being an Account of Experiences with Captain Scott's South Pole Expedition and of The Nature Life of the Antarctic* (London: Duckworth and Co., 1922); Edward Evans, *South with Scott* (London: Collins Clear-Type Press, 1921).

[66] The British National Antarctic Expedition is represented primarily in the National Antarctic Expedition Collection, AA, RGS Archives; The Captain Robert Falcon Scott collection, RFS, RGS Archives offers valuable insights on Scott's relationship with the society; The Reginald Koettlitz Collection, LMS K 12, RGS Archives, also contains a

Scott's first expedition was organised, the records on this expedition are particularly comprehensive and I found that these records offered unprecedented insights into the ways Edwardian polar expeditions were organised and how they thought about caring for the body in an extreme environment. The National Maritime Museum, and Discovery Point in Dundee also hold smaller collections on Edwardian Antarctic Exploration, which were examined in the course of this thesis.[67] The British Library holds Scott's diary from his final expedition and other relevant documents; however, the most relevant of these have been transcribed and published by Oxford University Press so the original was not examined here.[68]

Each of the case studies is reflected in the archives in distinct ways, reflecting the different ways the expeditions were organised, different degrees of institutional support, and the regions through which they travelled. Despite these differences, all the expeditions presented challenges when it came to finding references to the body and it

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number of important insights on the organisation of the BNAE. The Robert Falcon Scott Collection, the British National Antarctic Expedition Collection, and the British Antarctic Expedition Collection at SPRI were invaluable. In addition to this, I also examined SPRI's holdings on other members of Scott's Antarctic expeditions: for instance, the Edward Wilson Collection, The William Lashly Collection, and the Reginald Koettlitz collections were both important and the photographic record of the expedition using the SPRI online picture catalogue.

[67] At the National Maritime Museum, the Albert Markham Collection, MRK/1 and the papers of Captain Robert Falcon Scott, HSR/Z/53 were both examined in detail.

[68] See for example, "Diaries and Other Records of the Second Antarctic Expedition of Captain Robert Falcon Scott," Add Ms. 51024–51042, British Library; Scott, *Journals.*

is to these challenges that I now turn.

Finding the Body in the Archives of Exploration

Finding bodies in these various archives and publications was not a simple task. In what follows, I discuss the methodological approaches and challenges associated with interrogating the archive of exploration with reference to the bodies of explorers and those on whom they depended. In so doing, I examine not only the practical steps I took in selecting my sources, but the conceptual framework that guided my interrogation of those sources. Taken together, this section offers some wider reflections on reading the exploration archive "against the grain" that will, I hope, be of value of critical scholars of nineteenth- and twentieth-century exploration.

One of the main challenges of studying the body in the archives of exploration is navigating the huge volume of material available. The body is both everywhere and nowhere—a more-or-less "absent presence" in every document.[69] An explorer may write a letter or diary entry covering numerous other topics, before moving on to mention, in passing, the illness of a companion or their own blindness—and it unlikely that the document in question will be described in the catalogue so as to draw attention to this latter point. The nature of archival catalogues, which, for various understandable reasons, tend to privilege names, dates, and locations in their descriptions of documents, mean that they cannot easily be interrogated to reveal the presence of material specifically addressing the body. For this reason, archival catalogues alone are insufficient to determine the potential relevance of material for this study. Despite such issues with cataloguing, it soon became clear that explorers wrote a lot about both their own bodies and the bodies of others. The large volume of material and the fact that the

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[69] Shilling, *The Body and Social Theory.*

body is rarely treated as a specific subject within the archives of exploration has meant that tracking down references to the body in a systematic way has been a lengthy and time-consuming process, involving several different strategies that reflect the different natures and structures of the archives in questions.

One approach was to narrow my focus on material obviously concerning provisioning, dress, and equipment, and medical inspections—as these topics were catalogued in some of the archival collections (most notably the RGS's holdings on the British National Antarctic Expedition).[70] This approach yielded some important results but proved impossible to apply to archival collections that lacked such topic-level descriptions in their catalogues. I adopted, therefore, several other approaches to address these collections. One strategy was to draw on the explorers' published writings and secondary literature on the history of exploration to guide my identification of potentially relevant archival material by period or location. For instance, Speke's published account mentions that the Cape Riflemen on his 1860 expedition suffered severely with fever. An awareness of this point then drew my attention towards files discussing their recruitment and performance in the RGS archives, with productive results. I read the major published works of all the explorers cover-to-cover, which helped me to identify key periods or incidents for more focused archival research. The indexes of the explorers' published books were also a useful resource on this front, as instances of disease or dress were often specifically mentioned in these.

Another approach was to conduct broad scoping research of whole collections to get a sense of where bodies are discussed in detail. This was an approach that I adopted

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[70] This collection has, for instance, subheadings dealing with the selection of Officers and Men, RGS/AA/3, Stores and Provisions, RGS/AA/6, and Sledge Equipment, AA/7.

with Isabella Bird's correspondence with the Murray publishing house and her correspondence with the RGS. These collections are both extensive but contain comparatively little cataloguing information to help my search for information on the body. To get a sense of the collections, I systematically read every letter in order to identify any instances where she discussed her body or the bodies of others and then transcribed the relevant sections. This was a time-consuming approach but proved a productive. When it came to larger archives, such as the Scott Polar Research Institute's holdings on the BAE and the BNAE, I adopted a similar approach but had to be more selective, due to the enormous size of the collection, avoiding any files that were likely to be of little relevance. In this case, the knowledge of the archivists was particularly helpful in selecting files for targeted research. Again, I also used Scott's published works and secondary literature to help identity incidents, periods, or collections for more focused and targeted research.

Alongside these physical resources, I also interrogated several digital newspaper and periodical archives—most importantly British Library Newspapers, Nexis UK, and Gale Primary Sources. By inputting particular combinations of search terms (primarily a combination of names, dates, and types of illness, etc.), it was possible to find numerous instances where explorers' bodies were discussed in the press. For instance, this proved a particularly productive approach to examining outbreaks of scurvy on the BNAE. Combining search terms like "scurvy" and "tinned food" and "Antarctica" proved productive when combined with a tight date range. From my archival research, I knew the dates at which new of the outbreak reached the outside world, when Markham spoke before the RGS, and when the expedition's ship *Discovery* docked in Portsmouth. This information allowed me to concentrate my search of newspaper sources on key periods. A similar approach was also possible when analysing the press response to explorers' public appearances Even with such a narrow focus, this approach still involved sifting through many "false positive" results, where, for example, the search terms happened to

be mentioned in several unrelated articles on the same page of the newspaper or periodical in question.[71] The newspaper and periodical databases were also useful for findings reviews of explorers' books. Such work also required much sifting, as searching for book titles also returned numerous one line "book notices" of little use to the present study.

Towards the end of my thesis, I also benefited from access to digitised versions of the John Murray Archive and the RGS-IBG archive. Access to these collections made a different kind of research methodology possible, due to the additional contextual information provided as a consequence of optical character recognition (in the case of the RGS-IBG archive) and handwriting recognition (in the case of the John Murray Archive). The digital version of these archives—both of which I had interrogated previously in person using the existing catalogues and manual examination—offered new ways of searching for potentially relevant material. I experimented with searching for keywords—such as "eyes," "blindness," "porters"—in relation to these case studies. This produced some productive results, but also false positives. A particular problem when using digital search functions is the fact that parts of the body are often used as metaphors in speech and writing—"in my eyes," "I knew in my gut," etc.—and digital search functions are unable to separate these figurative uses from more direct references. More direct searches for words like "body" frequently brought back hundreds of results containing words like "anybody" and "nobody." While searches using explorers' names, could prove equally problematic—as words like "Scott," "Burton" or "Bird" appear in

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[71] Caroline Bressey, "Surfacing Black and Brown Bodies in the Digital Archive: Domestic Workers in Late Nineteenth-Century Australia," *Journal of Historical Geography* 70 (2020): 1–11, provides a particularly good discussion of the challenges and opportunities of using digital newspaper archives to surface subaltern histories.

thousands of unrelated articles. These search functions were more successful when searching for specific articles alluded to in explorers' writings or in secondary literature, especially when I knew the date a particular incident happened on. For instance, I drew on such tools to find discussions of Isabella' Bird's dress in a *Times* review of one of her books, as I had the date of the paper to hand from her private correspondence.[72]

In summary, then, simply finding resources on the body in the archives of exploration raises several methodological challenges, as the archives are seldom structured with the body as a central focus. Archival catalogues record dates, names, people and location, not hands, feet, eyes and ears. In focusing on the body, I developed methodological approaches useful to historians and geographers working in a variety of contexts. In short, though, there is no silver bullet to finding the body in the archives of exploration.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has outlined several of the major epistemological and methodological challenges of studying bodies in the history of exploration. Some of these issues are specific to the archives of exploration and the specific archives under discussion. For instance, explorers' book and articles, as published travel narratives, underwent specific processes of editing and revision. Other challenges of studying this subject are related to more general problems around the possibilities of recovering subaltern experiences within metropolitan archives and around the relationship between bodies and language. As I have shown, one of the main problems with which this thesis grappled was the structure of the archival catalogues, which focus on names, dates, and places, rather than body parts or illnesses. These matters are inflected in somewhat different ways within

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[72] See pages 131–132 of this thesis.

the archival collections on each case study. In addressing the absence of the body within archival catalogues, I demonstrate that focusing on the body requires reading public texts and archives in specific ways. By comparing explorers' public and private writings, and written and visual sources, it is possible to learn something of the multiple bodies involved in exploration. When it comes to recovering subaltern contributions and experiences, the problem is not only finding relevant sources, but is also one of interpretation. Written sources are predominantly (and in some cases exclusively) written by expedition leaders, sponsoring bodies, and publishers, and reflect their prejudices. The challenge is to read such narratives in ways that expose question the ways that explorers valued certain types of work and write about certain kinds of bodies. This task requires a close reading of explorers' accounts, a comparison of public and private writings, and an engagement with broader literatures about empire and racism in the Victorian and Edwardian era. It is to this task of critical interpretation that I now turn.

4

"HEROIC" BODIES

Both biographers and more critical writers frequently portray explorers' bodies as heroic. Often, they present the connection between travel and heroism as inevitable. "Polar enterprise seems to brace the explorer's morale, and converts him into a hero," one Victorian writer argued.[1] More recent scholarship has also focused on the "heroic reputations" of explorers, even if they have done so for different ends.[2] Travellers feature prominently in recent works on heroism and empire, which emphasise how explorers embodied imperial values such as masculinity, progress, and conquest.[3] Similarly recent writing on Arctic explorers has stressed the connection between their heroic bodies and

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[1] Augustus Henry Beesly, *Sir John Franklin* (New York: G.P Putnam's Sons, 1881), 12.

[2] Geoffrey Cubbitt and Alan Warren, eds. *Heroic Reputations and Exemplary Lives.* (Manchester: Manchester University Press (2000); Max Jones, Berny Sèbe, John Strachan, Bertrand Taithe and Peter Yeandle, "Decolonising Imperial Heroes," *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 42, no. 5 (2014): 798–99; Max Jones, Berny Sebe, Bertrand Taithe and Peter Yeandle, eds. *Decolonising Imperial Heroes: Cultural Legacies of British and French Empires* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2016).

[3] Berny Sèbe, *Heroic Imperialists in Africa: The Promotion of British and French Colonial Heroes, 1870–1939* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013); Edward Berenson, *Heroes of Empire: Five Charismatic Men and the Conquest of Africa* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011), 28; Driver, *Geography Militant*, 70; Kennedy, *The Last Blank*, 233–60; Livingstone, *Livingstone's "Lives,"* 102–3, 190, 275; Shane McCornistone, *The Spectral Arctic: A History of Dreams and Ghosts in Polar Exploration* (London UCL Press, 2018), 35.

Britain's national identity.[4] In this chapter I argue that such works—which often focus on a narrow range of exemplary explorers—offer only a partial picture of the ways they were understood by their contemporaries. In contrast, I offer a more subtle reading of the role of explorers' bodies in their reputations. I demonstrate that they were torn between competing ways of representing their own bodies that reflected underlying differences about what counted as acceptable conduct, ideas about gender, and the purpose of travel. On the one hand, strength, discipline, and restraint were central tenets of expeditionary heroism, helping to demonstrate their mental and physical prowess. On the other hand, suffering, bodily breakdown, and adaptation to local circumstances were central features of adventure narratives. Overall, I examine how styles of expeditionary heroism and non-heroism were communicated, in different ways and at different times, through explorers' bodies (including their skin, muscles, and nerves) and through their forms of dress. I do so because demonstrating the diversity of perspectives within Victorian and Edwardian culture frames the rest of the thesis. Indeed, it is the hybridity of explorers' reputations and writings that make alternative readings aimed at recovering subaltern contributions possible.

Demonstrating the diverse response to explorers within the Victorian and Edwardian era is also important given the politically charged debates about statues and commemoration, such as the Rhodes Must Fall campaign at the University of Oxford, that have asked why images of imperial heroes' bodies still adorn prominent educational institutions in Britain.[5] Recent scholarship has also questioned whether explorers (many

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[4] Jen Hill, *White Horizon: The Arctic in the Nineteenth-Century British Imagination* (New York: State University of New York Press, 2009); McCorristine, *The Spectral Arctic*, 31–39.

[5] Roseanne Chantiluke, Brian Kwaboa and Athinangamso Nkopo, eds. *Rhodes Must Fall: The Struggle to Decolonise the Racist Heart of Empire* (London: Zed, 2018).

of them with troubling legacies) should continue to adorn the walls of Lowther Lodge, the headquarters of the RGS.[6] In emphasising how explorers were not always viewed as heroes, this chapter demonstrates that critical analysis of exploration is not a new development. Consequently, understanding the diversity of contemporary reactions can provide a means to challenge such heroic representations while remaining historically grounded.

BODIES, HEROISM, AND EXPLORATION

There is a vast literature on heroism. As Max Jones notes, "[t]he term hero emerged in antiquity to describe an idealised male warrior, exemplified by the (almost) invincible Achilles described in Homer's *Iliad*."[7] Historically, biographical writing about heroes has focused on the achievements and qualities of adventuresome and physically resilient individuals. This mode of writing gained new traction in the Victorian era with works analysing the personalities and achievements of "great men."[8] More recently, other have taken a broader view. Joseph Campbell, for instance, compared mythological and heroic tales from different regions and periods, arguing these kinds of stories share common features and structures.[9] Many explorers' tales fit quite neatly into the narrative

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[6] Mark Griffiths and Kate Baker, "Decolonising the Spaces of Geographical Knowledge Production: The RGS-IBG at Kensington Gore," *Area* 52, no.1 (2020): 455–58.

[7] Max Jones, "What Should Historians Do with Heroes? Reflection of Nineteenth- and Twentieth-Century Britain," *History Compass* 5, no.2 (2007), 440.

[8] Thomas Carlyle, *On Heroes, Hero-Worship, and the Heroic in History* (London: U.P. James, 1842).

[9] Joseph Campbell, *The Hero With A Thousand Faces*, Bollingen Series, 3rd ed. (1949, Novato CA, New World Library, 2008).

structure of adventure, revelation, and return that, Campbell argues, characterises the basic structure of the "monomyth" found within numerous world mythologies.[10] More recently, though, scholars have studied heroes to offer insights into "the cultural beliefs, social practices, political structures, and economic systems of the past."[11] Adopting this approach shifts the focus away from individuals and examines the processes by which heroes are "constructed by the societies in which they live."[12] Geoffrey Cubitt, for instance, defines heroism as through the level of "collective emotional investment" in an individual, drawing attention to a much broader range of individuals, including "villains."[13]

In recent years academics have also paid attention to the contested reputations of explorer-heroes and their relationship to changing ideas of gender, empire, and identity in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.[14] One approach has been to study the specific forms of "imperial heroism" that emerged in Britain during the eighteenth century, which often lauded men who "displayed a range of exemplary qualities in the

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[10] Campbell, *The Hero*.

[11] Jones, "What Should," 440.

[12] Jones, "What Should," 441.

[13] Geoffrey Cubbitt, Introduction to *Heroic Reputations and Exemplary Lives*, eds. Geoffrey Cubbitt and Alan Warren (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), 3; Jones, "What Should," 441.

[14] Jones, "What Should," 446; Mary A. Conley, *From Jack Tar to Union Jack: Representing Naval Manhood, 1870–1918* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2009); Jones *et al.* "Decolonising Imperial Heroes;" Barczewski, *Antarctic Destinies;* Jones *et al. Decolonising Imperial Heroes.*

service of the nation on the imperial frontier."[15] Some critical studies of exploration have focused on the "instrumental function" of heroes within European imperialism, examining how the valorisation of remarkable individuals contributed to justification and popularisation of European empires.[16] For instance, Stephanie Barczewski has highlighted how the veneration of "heroic failures" made British imperialism appear, to certain audiences, as a "benevolent and just ruler rather than a tyrannical conqueror."[17] These narratives of "heroic failure" differed in important ways from the "monomyth" structure identified by Campbell, perhaps better echoing ideas of sainthood and martyrdom than more secular ideas of heroism. Meanwhile, Berny Sèbe has examined the social, cultural, religious, and economic forces that led to the emergence of imperial heroes in the late nineteenth century.[18] Recently, Max Jones has shown how, before the First World War, explorers could also become "transnational" heroes, though the "machinery of a global mass media, the universalist rhetoric of scientific progress, and the desires of audiences around the world."[19] Accordingly, studying the heroic reputations of explorers has proved a means to use exploration to examine broader issues. However, does it lead us to ignore the diverse ways that explorers' bodies were

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[15] Jones *et al.*, "Decolonising Imperial Heroes," 778–79 Sèbe, *Heroic Imperialists*; Berenson, *Heroes of Empire;* also Berny Sèbe, "The Making of British and French Legends of Exploration, 1821–1914," in *Reinterpreting Exploration*, ed. Dane Kennedy (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 109–34.

[16] Jones, "What Should," 446.

[17] Barczewski, *Heroic Failure*, 11.

[18] Sèbe, *Heroic Imperialists*, 290.

[19] Max Jones, "Exploration, Celebrity, and the Making of a Transnational Hero: Fridtjof Nansen and the Fram Expedition," *The Journal of Modern History* 93, no. 1 (2021), 108.

understood?

Much existing literature on heroism and exploration focuses on three particularly famous explorers: Mungo Park, David Livingstone, and Sir John Franklin. Several scholars have demonstrated how the physical sufferings (and ultimately death) of the African explorer Mungo Park played a central role in his heroic reputation in the early nineteenth century. In focusing on his weakness and suffering in the service of geographical discovery, Park drew on romantic ideas in his own writings and, following his death, was often portrayed by others as a heroic, saint-like martyr.[20] Others have noted that similar narratives emerged around the African explorer Livingstone, who was lauded for his self-reliance and self-control in the face of physical suffering.[21] In overcoming bodily hardship, he "exemplified the ideal of *character*" that was so prominent in the Victorian period.[22] As Felix Driver notes, "myth-makers" posthumously used David Livingstone's physical ailments to highlight his ability to overcome suffering through mental willpower and physical strength.[23] That said,

[20] Thompson, *The Suffering Traveller*, 170–85; Charles W. J. Withers, "Memory and the History of Geographical Knowledge: The Commemoration of Mungo Park, African Explorer," *Journal of Historical Geography* 30, no. 2 (2004): 316–39; Pratt, *Imperial Eyes*, 73. Pratt describes Park as a "sentimental hero."

[21] John MacKenzie, "The Iconography of Exemplary Life: The Case of David Livingstone," in *Heroic Reputations and Exemplary Lives*, eds. Geoffrey Cubbitt and Alan Warren (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000), 84–104; Jones, *The Last Great*, 25.

[22] Jones, *The Last Great*, 24; see also McCornistone, *The Spectral Arctic*, 35.

[23] Driver, *Geography Militant*, 70; Livingstone, *Livingstone's "Lives,"* 102–3, 190, 275; Joanna Lewis, *Empire of Sentiment: The Death of Livingstone and the Myth of Victorian Imperialism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Pres, 2018).

heroism did not necessarily mean that explorers' bodies were viewed in monolithic ways. David Livingstone's dead body was, for instance, the site of "multiple and conflicting meaning" and featured in broader debates about African agency and capacity.[24] There is no doubt that heroism was an important theme in writings about explorers, as recent scholarship has shown.

In focusing on the individual body of the (mostly white, male) explorers, dominant visions of expeditionary heroism "excluded from the pantheon of heroes working men, professionals, women, and foreigners, including 'natives', and was shaped by and buttressed the prevailing rhetoric of imperialism, masculinity, and racial superiority."[25] There were some notable exceptions, and a few Asian and African men did assume a certain heroic status of their own.[26] I will return to this point in more detail in Chapter 5 *Dependent Bodies*; however, at this stage I merely wish to highlight how limited forms of non-European heroism do feature in exploration accounts. Adventurous heroism also presented specific challenges for women travellers. Male travel accounts often centred on their authors' strong bodies and physical prowess, while nineteenth-century stereotypes presented women's bodies as frail, weak, and in need of protection.[27] This view of men's and women's bodies as different put women travellers in an invidious position: if they embodied and represented themselves in typically masculine and heroic

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[24] Livingstone, "A 'Body' of Evidence," 21.

[25] Elizabeth Baigent, "'Deeds Not Words?' Life Writing and Early Twentieth-Century British Polar Exploration," in *New Spaces of Exploration*, eds. Simon Naylor and James Ryan (London: I.B. Tauris: 2010), 30, 32.

[26] Jones, "Local Knowledge," 63.

[27] Foster and Mills ed., *An Anthology*, 253–54.

ways, they risked being seen as unfeminine.[28] Issues of identity played a central role in shaping how certain actions were interpreted.

Existing literature on exploration generally portrays explorers' bodies as heroic. However, scholarship has also begun to recognise the diverse reception of Victorian travellers, demonstrating that they the subject of satire and criticism as well as praise.[29] Felix Driver has demonstrated how Henry Morton Stanley was rebuked in some quarters following accusations of violence and brutality on his expedition, while others criticised the quality of his observations.[30] But such criticism was not incompatible with heroism. As Clare Pettitt argues, the growing criticism of Henry Morton Stanley in the 1890s did not diminish his celebrity, as "his popularity rather grew than suffered by the frequency with which printed images of his face appeared."[31] Conversely, George Nares, was accused of neglecting the bodies of those under his command when there was an outbreak of scurvy on his British Arctic Expedition (1875–76).[32] Nor were all

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[28] Foster and Mills ed., *An Anthology*, 255; Naomi Oreskes, "Objectivity or Heroism? On the Invisibility of Women in Science" *Osiris* 11, no.1 (1996): 87–113.

[29] Hill, *White Horizon*, 4; Spufford, *I May Be Some Time*, 54–57; Janice Cavell, *Tracing the Connected Narrative: Arctic Exploration in British Print Culture, 1818–1860* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008).

[30] Driver, *Geography Militant*, 117–45; Felix Driver, "Henry Morton Stanley and His Critics: Geography, Exploration and Empire," *Past & Present*, no. 133 (1991): 134–66; Verney Lovett Cameron to Richard F. Burton, [1876], acc.7697/118, NLS, f. 11. In this letter, Cameron criticises Stanley for the lack of geographical information in his reports and over-emphasis on heroic deeds.

[31] Pettitt, "Exploration in Print," 99.

[32] John Rae to Charles P. Daly 9 March 1877, AGS AC1 Box 126 Folder 30, American Geographical Society Archive, University of Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Rae was

expeditions successful, and there were several that failed in non-heroic ways. Dane Kennedy noted that the British Congo and Niger Expeditions, both launched in the aftermath of the Napoleonic wars, were "unmitigated failures" that were "soon forgotten."[33] As these examples show, recent scholarship has begun to question the relationship between exploration and heroism, but such works have only occasionally discussed the body.

This is limiting, as the relationship between bodies and heroism changed over the period in question due to technological and cultural transformations. Photography and advances in printing techniques meant that growing numbers of images of explorers entered circulation, helping to make them recognisable household figures.[34] James R. Ryan has argued that expeditionary photographs "constitute the building blocks of the modern myth of the explorer."[35] The growth of the sensationalist and illustrated press also played an important role, and both advertisers and the press sponsored expeditions and promoted images of explorers.[36] At the same time, exploration became increasingly linked to questions of degeneration and national fitness in the latter part of the

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particularly blistering in his criticism, claiming that if the admiralty had not already given him a medal, Nares would have been court martialled when the truth came out; Armston Sheret, "'A Good Advertisement,'"272–75.

[33] Kennedy, "Lost in Place," 237.

[34] Ryan, *Photography and Exploration*, 25–27; Riffenburgh, *The Myth of the Explorer*, 92–94.

[35] Ryan, *Photography and Exploration*, 8.

[36] Ryan, *Photography and Exploration*, 25–27; Riffenburgh, *The Myth of the Explorer*; Clare Pettitt, "Exploration in Print: From the Miscellany to the Newspaper," in *Reinterpreting Exploration*, ed. Dane Kennedy (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 80–108; Sebe, "The Making of British," 109–34.

nineteenth century. These ideas stand in contrast to earlier narratives, discussed above, in which explorers' saint-like suffering rendered them heroic.[37] By the early twentieth century, dominant visions of masculinity increasingly focused on the virtues of physical strength and self-discipline; this led to concerns that modern, sedentary urban life was "degenerating" men's bodies and rendering them soft, flabby, and feminized.[38] As a result, "the virtues of adopting a harder, coarser approach to life" became an important feature of British exploration cultures.[39] These concerns were widespread in the western world but became particularly acute in Britain in the run-up to the First World War partly due recruitment scandals during the second Boer War (1899–1902).[40] Travel was increasingly a way of proving the continuing vitality of the British body and incidents of suffering and vulnerability that featured prominently in earlier travel accounts now went "unspoken."[41] Consequently, a focus on explorers' bodies provides a means to examine changing ideas of heroism and gender identity. As I now show, explorers' bodies were not always understood as heroic and, even when they were, their bodies

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[37] Thompson, *The Suffering Traveller*, 146–85.

[38] Zweiniger-Bargielowska, *Managing the Body*, 1; Christopher E. Forth, "Surviving our Paradoxes: Masculinity, Modernity and the Body," *Culture, Society, and Masculinities* 1, no.1 (2010): 6–32; Forth, *Masculinity in the Modern West*, 141–68.

[39] Michael F. Robinson, "Manliness and Exploration: The Discovery of the North Pole," *Osiris* 30, no. 1 (2015): 89–109; Forth, *Masculinity in the Modern West*, 142.

[40] Zweiniger-Bargielowska, *Managing the Body*, 64–65; George Robb, "The Way of All Flesh: Degeneration, Eugenics, and the Gospel of Free Love," *Journal of the History of Sexuality* 6, no. 4 (1996): 589–603; Edmond, "Returning Fears," 175–96; Larson, *An Empire of Ice*, 147–50.

[41] Fleetwood, "Bodies in High Places," 509.

were the site of multiple and conflicting meanings.

BURTON AND SPEKE: DISGUISE, SCARS, AND CONSTITUTIONS

Burton and Speke's bodies were central to their public and scientific reputations and became implicated in their open disagreement over the source of the River Nile. In the aftermath of the East African Expedition, both men sought to portray their own bodies as heroic, though they did so in very different ways, reflecting divergent understandings of what it meant to be an explorer. They also sought to discredit the other's geographical claims by attacking their physical stamina and bravery.[42] In such instances, the clash over the source of the River Nile brought to the surface conflicting visions of how explorers should dress, behave, and write about suffering. Burton and Speke used and represented their bodies in divergent ways. Burton used his racially ambiguous body, his linguistic skills, and his cultural knowledge to emphasise his worldliness and to foreground his "ambivalence about Western society."[43] In contrast, Speke and his supporters emphasised his muscularity, his Englishness, and his refusal to accommodate to African customs. As I show, neither approach was without pitfalls. Studying these debates offers insights into the complex position of travellers within Victorian British culture.

Burton and Speke: Competing Models of Expeditionary Heroism

Burton's use of disguise was central to his reputation and led to him being rendered as

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[42] Carnochan, *The Sad Story*.

[43] Kennedy, *The Highly Civilized*, 92.

both a hero and a villain. He first came to the attention of the British public after travelling to Mecca and Medina disguised as a Muslim pilgrim in 1853 and subsequently publishing an account of this journey. The apparent success of Burton's use of disguise brought him into the "national spotlight" amongst a domestic population fascinated by the Middle East and Islam and with a "fondness for cross-cultural role playing."[44] In his book, Burton portrayed himself as an accomplished actor. He described how in preparing for the expedition, he practiced the mannerisms of his alter ego, Abdullah, "to ensure they became second nature," changing the way he walked, sat, talked, and stroked his beard.[45] Burton also underwent circumcision, although he only hinted at this in his published book.[46] As Dane Kennedy had argued, Burton's use of disguise was greeted by many as a demonstration of his linguistic prowess and "his skills of impersonation."[47] Many reviews praised his bravery, knowledge about Islam, and his acting skills.[48] Throughout his life, caricatures of Burton also drew attention to his fondness for dressing in Arab clothes (see figure 1). But Burton's use of disguise also proved

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[44] Kennedy *The Highly Civilized*, 58; Godsall, "Fact and Fiction." Both question how successful his use of disguise was.

[45] Lovell, *A Rage to Live*, 52.

[46] Lovell, *A Rage to Live*, 85; Richard F. Burton, *Personal Narrative of a Pilgrimage to El-Medina and Meccah* (London: Longman, Brown, and Green, 1855) 2: 415, in footnote.

[47] Kennedy, *The Highly Civilized*, 67; Lovell, *A Rage to Live*, xvii. Later in life, Burton claimed to speak 29 languages.

[48] Anon., "Personal Narrative of a Pilgrimage to El Medinah and Meccah, by Lieut. R. F. Burton," *The Eclectic Review*, no. 10 (August 1855), 217; Anon., "Personal Narrative of a Pilgrimage to El Medinah and Meccah," *The New Quarterly Review and Digest of Current Literature, British, American, French, and German* 5, no. 18 (April 1856), 138–46.

controversial. In concealing his European identity and through dressing his body in certain ways, Burton opened himself up to accusations, particularly from evangelical Christians who objected to any form of impersonation.[49] Critics argued he was an untrustworthy source as he had gained information by underhand means; others suggested that his conversion to Islam might have been genuine.[50] Even more recent scholarship has suggested Burton's use of disguise was more than simply instrumental.[51] While Burton did not adopt a disguise on the EAE, he advised future travellers to "assume the character of traders" because he thought this would help secure them better treatment.[52] Burton clearly saw deception as a legitimate strategy for an explorer to adopt.

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[49] Kennedy, *The Highly Civilized Man*, 65; Lovell, *A Rage to Live*, 186; On the issue of disguise and its effects on an explorer's reputation see: Keighren *et al.*, *Travels into Print*, 15; Charles W. J. Withers, "Disguise—Trust and Truth in Travel Writing," *Terrae Incognitae* 53, no. 1 (2021): 48–64.

[50] Kennedy, *The Highly Civilized Man*, 65.

[51] Frederic Regard, "Fieldwork as Self-Harrowing: Richard Burton's Cultural Evolution," in *British Narratives of Exploration*, ed. Frederic Regard (London: Pickering and Chatto, 2009), 179–92; Kennedy, *The Highly Civilized*, 58–92; Said, *Orientalism*, 195–96.

[52] Burton, *The Lake Regions*, 2: 82–83.

Figure 1. "Captain Burton, Our Un-Commercial Traveller." Punch's Fancy Portraits, No. 83, *Punch* vol. 82 (13 May, 1882), 226.

Throughout his life, both friends and critics sometimes portrayed Burton as an untrustworthy outsider, due to both his ethnically ambiguous appearance and his use of disguise. Even after removing Arab dress, some Victorian commentators did not view his body as fully British.[53] Richard's wife Isabel Burton claimed that his "brown," "weather beaten" skin and "Arab features" helped him to disguise himself on his Arabian journey.[54] Similarly, Richard Alfred Bate, who studied at Oxford alongside Burton, stated that he had "hands and feet of Oriental smallness," a "distinctly Arab look" and

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[53] Withers, "Disguise," 8, note 19; Similar problems emerged for other travellers. McCook, "It May Be Truth," 190.

[54] Burton, *The Life of Captain*, 1: 167, 170; Lovell, *A Rage to Live*, 49 repeats this claim.

"piercing gipsy-looking eyes."[55] The poet Wilfred Scawen Blunt, who met Burton in Buenos Aires in later life, claimed that his face "lent itself" to disguise "for it had in it little of the European, and there must certainly have been a cross in his blood, gipsy or other."[56] Burton's defenders felt compelled to emphasise that his body was visibly English. His niece and biographer, Georgiana Stisted, complained in racially offensive terms that most portraits of Burton were "simply hideous; the skin is the colour of a brown monkey's, the features coarsened and exaggerated."[57] Indignantly, she claimed that "[w]ith Burton's marked look of race, he never could have been taken, unless purposely disguised, for other than an English gentleman."[58] Like the explorer's critics, Stisted saw the suggestion that he was able to easily disguise himself as an Asian man as an insulting accusation that threw into question his status as a gentleman.

Burton's appearance was often linked to his credibility as a traveller. A scar on Burton's left cheek, received when he was attacked in Somalia, made his appearance particularly striking, giving him what one biographer describes as "slightly sinister expression" (see figure 2).[59] Windham Wyndham-Quin, the fourth Earl of Dunraven,

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[55] Richard Alfred Bate, *A Sketch of the Career of Richard F. Burton* (London: Waterlow & Sons, 1886), 33.

[56]Wilfrid Scawen Blunt, *My Diaries: Being a Personal Narrative of Events, 1888–1914* (London: Martin: Secker, 1932), 546. This issue was brought to my attention, by Kennedy, *The Highly Civilized*, 14.

[57] Georgiana Stisted, *The True Life of Captain Sir Richard F. Burton* (London: H.S. Nichols, 1896), 65.

[58] Stisted, *The True Life*, 65.

[59] Lovell, *A Rage to Live*, 190; Richards, *A Sketch of the Career of Richard F. Burton*, 33; Georgiana M. Stisted, "Reminiscences of Sir Richard Burton," *Temple Bar* (July 1891), 336. Burton's biographers offer different views on what caused this scar. Lovell

even claimed that Burton "prided himself on looking like Satan—as, indeed, he did."[60] Crucially, some writers linked Burton's physical appearance to his credibility as a traveller. Blunt, for instance, claimed Burton had the "eyes of a wild beast" before moving on to question the accuracy of his account of the journey to Mecca and Medina and repeating a rumour that he had murdered an Arab boy who had discovered his identity.[61] Burton appearance was seldom referred to directly in the debates over the Nile's sources. But many within the RGS certainty viewed him as a something of "liability," which shaped their decision to send Speke (rather than Burton) back to East Africa in 1860 to carry out further investigations.[62] Burton's body was not simply "heroic." In fact, Burton's skin, hands, and eyes were at the centre of broader discussions about his racial identity and credibility.

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suggests that the scar on his left cheek was a result of a spear wound received in Somalia. Richards suggests that the large scar on his left cheek was from a "sabre-cut." Stisted claims that there were, in fact, two separate wounds to Burton's left cheek: the spear wound received in Somalia and a "still more noticeable" sabre wound on the same cheek, which seems plausible.

[60] Earl of Dunraven, *Past Times and Pastimes* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1922), 1: 178; this quote was brought to my attention by Brodie, *The Devil Drives*, 15.

[61] Blunt, *My Diaries*, 544–45, 46.

[62] Newman, *Paths Without*, 124; Young, ed. *The Search for the Sources*, 147.

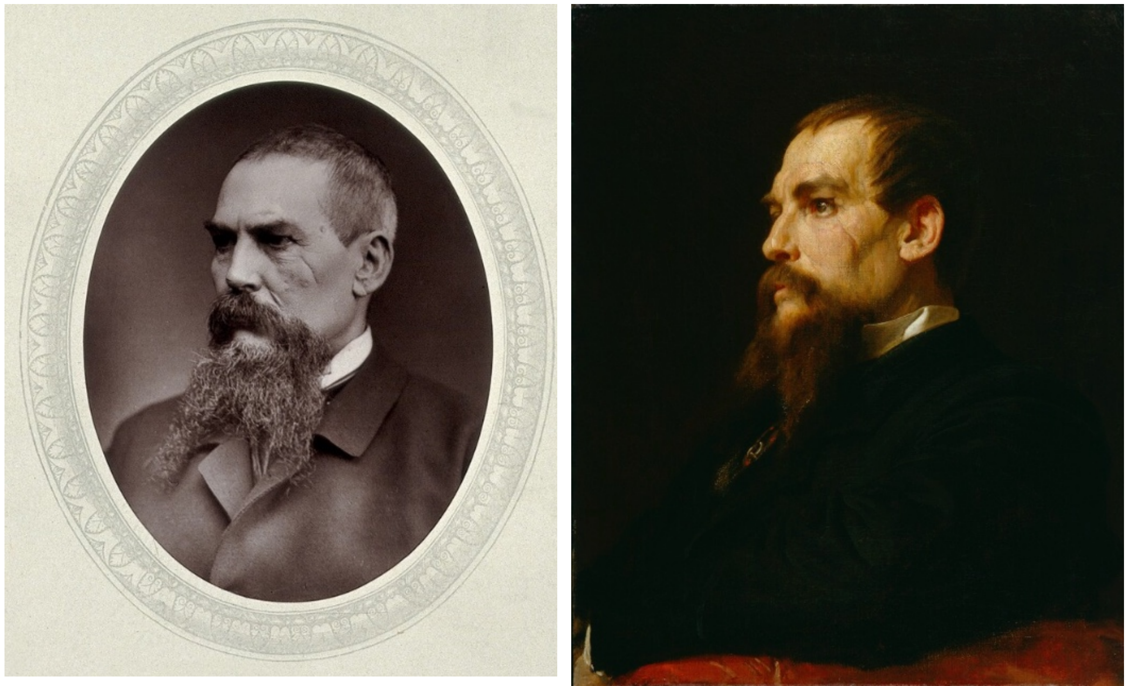

Figure 2. Left Richard Burton by Lock and Whitfield, 1876 courtesy of the Wellcome Collection; right Frederick Leighton's Portrait of Burton (National Portrait Gallery: npg 1070).

Speke embodied a different model of expeditionary heroism. Descriptions of Speke's body often emphasised his blond-hair and decidedly northern-European appearance. The African explorer Sir Harry Hamilton Johnston claimed that Speke's "physique was emphatically Anglo-Saxon," and noted that he was "tall and handsome in the English style, with blue eyes and a brown beard."[63] Similarly, Burton described Speke as "a man of lithe, spare form, about six feet fall, 'blue-eyed, tawny-maned; the old Scandinavian type, full of energy and life.'"[64] Speke's hair and skin colour limited his ability to disguise himself, as did his comparative lack of linguistic skills.[65] But in his

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[63] Harry Hamilton Johnston, *The Nile Quest: A Record of The Exploration of the Nile and Its Basins* (London: Lawrence and Bullen Ltd., 1903), 130, 129.

[64] Burton, *Zanzibar*, 2: 374.

[65] Burton, *Zanzibar*, 2: 381.

public writings Speke claimed to have a moral objection to disguise.[66] He described how on the EAE his guides suggested he should wear Arab clothing "in order to attract less attention."[67] Speke questioned their motives and claimed that he was "more comfortable…both mentally and physical" in European clothing than if had "degraded" himself by wearing "their hot, long, and particularly uncomfortable gown."[68] Similarly, Speke included an image of himself standing before Lake Victoria dressed in distinctly European (if practical) clothes by the Southwell Brothers as the frontispiece to the first edition *Journal of the Discovery of the Source of the Nile* (1863, figure 3). The caption emphasised that the picture showed Speke in the "Dress worn in Africa."[69] As Keighren *et al.* argue that "pictures of the author-explorer included as frontispiece or elsewhere and showing him or her to be distinguished in bearing…could help reinforce the text and the author's standing as credible or intrepid."[70] The contrast between the conventionally dressed Speke and Burton, the enthusiast for disguise, is clear. Speke dressed and displayed his body in ways that that drew attention to his identity as a British gentleman rather than his skills of impersonation.

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[66] Burton, *Zanzibar*, 2: 381; Speke, *What Led*, 23.

[67] Speke, *What led to the Discovery*, HL RFB 1680, 314. Burton objected to this claim, commenting "rot" next to it in his personal copy.

[68] Speke, *What Led*, 314.

[69] Speke, *Journal*, ix.

[70] Keighren *et al.*, *Travels into Print*, 8.

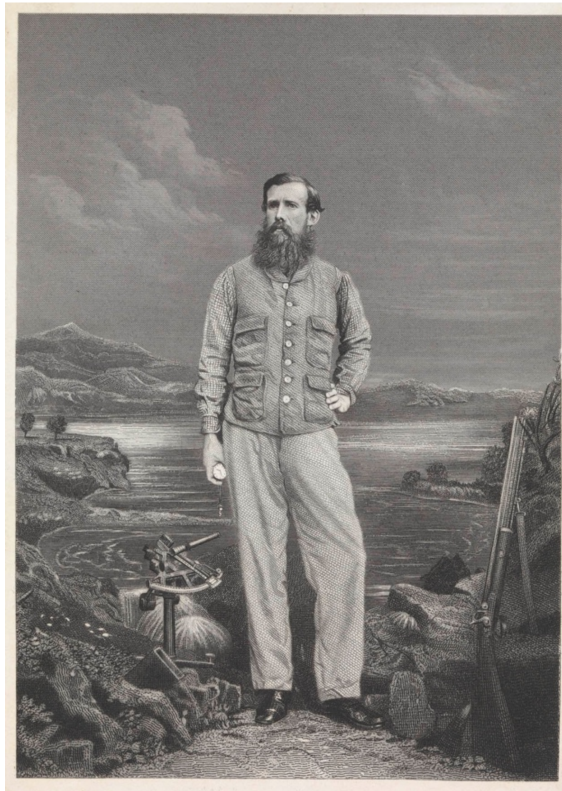

Figure 3. "Portrait of Captain Speke in Dress Worn in Africa," *c.* 1863. This engraving of John Hanning Speke is based on a photograph by the Southwell brothers and was used as frontispiece to *Journal of the Discovery of the Source of the Nile*. (RMG Ref ZBA4486).

Speke's efforts to distance himself from Burton also extended to his mannerisms, which he used to emphasise that he had maintained domestic norms. In *Journal of the Discovery of the Source of the Nile*, he described an incident where he was asked to sit on the floor in front of King Mutesa I, the *Kabaka* of Buganda: "I had made up my mind never to sit upon the ground as the natives and Arabs are obliged to do, nor to make my obeisance in any other manner than is customary in England."[71] This refusal is also reflected in visual representations of Speke and Grant, showing the two men sitting on stools next to the *Kabaka*, while other men sit on the ground (figure 4). In such depictions, Speke suggests that adaptation to local customs is somehow improper,

[71] Speke, *Journal*, 288.

another implicit attack on Burton. Again, Speke's model of heroism seems to be based on emphasising his Englishness. Yet, while it is tempting to view Burton and Speke as opposites in their approach to dress and adaptation, the reality is more complex. The vision of Speke we see in his published accounts also reflects the fact that his books underwent substantial revision. As David Finkelstein has demonstrated, Speke's publisher William Blackwood and a team of editors revised and rewrote his narratives, removing numerous passages considered problematic to domestic audiences.[72] As such, it is hardly surprising that images of Speke's body more readily conform to domestic ideas about what an explorer should look and act like. Our images of Speke thus reflect the complex authorship of his book as much as the realities of his expeditions.

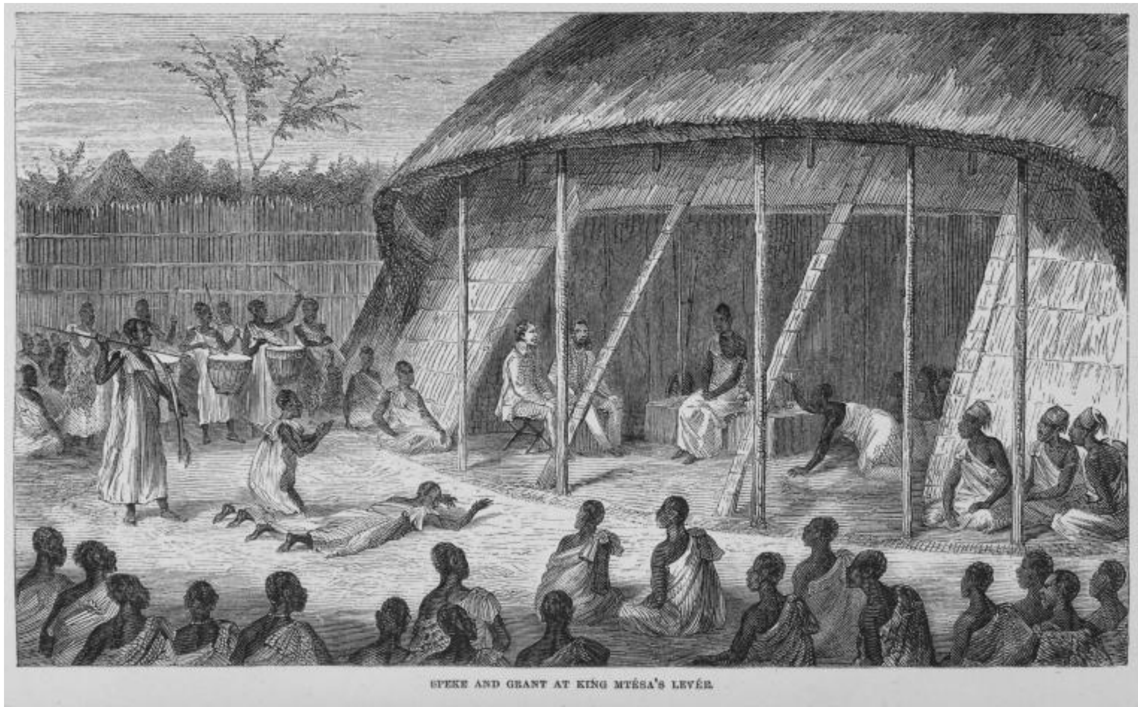

Figure 4. "Speke and Grant at King M'tesa's Levee." John Baptist Zwecker from a sketch by James A. Grant, *Journal of the Discovery*, 421.

Despite these editing efforts, it is still clear from Speke's published accounts that

[72] Finkelstein, "Unraveling Speke," 117–32.

he presented his body dishonestly while travelling. In *Journal of the Discovery*, Speke describes how he pretended to be a British prince to east African leaders in the hope that it would secure him better treatment and a direct audience with African royals.[73] On arrival in Buganda, Speke was offered some huts used by Arab traders to stay in, he protested, claiming that he was a "foreign prince, whose royal blood could not stand such an indignity."[74] Speke continued to portray himself as a man of "high rank and importance in his own country" for the remainder of his journey.[75] As with Burton, Speke's deception earned him criticism, particularly from the armchair geographer James MacQueen, who used it to question his geographical credibility.[76] MacQueen also criticised Speke by suggesting he had sexual relations with African women during his stay at the Buganda court and that future travellers may, therefore, find children "with hair like Speke's."[77] His blonde hair was transformed from a marker of his Englishness into possible proof of an illicit sexual relationship. Consequently, even though Speke portrayed his body in ways that better conformed to some domestic prejudices, it is still clear that describing his body as heroic is reductive.

Burton and Speke's public reputations incorporated issues of dress, identity, and adaptation in different ways. Burton emphasised his cultural knowledge, linguistic skills, and ability to disguise himself. Speke, by contrast, stressed a specifically English version of expeditionary heroism. Both versions were not universally successful and each

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[73] Speke, *Journal*, 179–180,186, 284, 288.

[74] Speke, *Journal*, 284.

[75] Jeal, *Explorers of the Nile*, 155; Humphries, *Search for the Nile's Source*, 105.

[76] James MacQueen, "Captain Speke's Discovery of the Source of the Nile" in Richard F. Burton and James MacQueen, eds., *The Nile Basin* (London Tinsley Brothers, 1864), 106.

[77] MacQueen, "Captain Speke's Discovery," 148.

attracted criticism in some quarters. But the explorers also clashed over the issue of suffering.

Suffering, Fever, and Strength

Burton and Speke's public disagreement about the Niles sources led each explorer to portray the other as less manly and less able to deal with suffering. In seeking to present the other as more unwell and more cowardly, both sought to emphasise that the other's body was a less reliable instrument of observation (a point I return to in Chapter 7 *Sensing Bodies*). But the efforts also show how explorers' scientific and heroic reputations overlapped and that a debate about a geographical feature morphed into a debate about the explorers' health and bravery.

Burton and Speke freely admitted that they had suffered severely on the East African Expedition but did so in different ways. Speke portrayed himself as tough and adventurous. In *What Led to the Discovery of the Source of the Nile* (1864), Speke reports a gory incident where a beetle crawls into his ear and his unsuccessful attempts to remove it with, tobacco, salt, and eventually a knife.[78] Speke claimed the incident was "the most painful thing I ever remember to have endured" but also states coolly that it was "not altogether an unmixed evil."[79] In such passages, he presents himself as able to withstand extreme suffering. In contrast, Burton drew on religiously inspired ideas of sacrifice, stressing the physical price he had paid for the expedition's geographical discoveries.[80] He publicly claimed that fever nearly killed him and prevented him "from walking to

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[78] Speke, *What Led*, 224–26.

[79] Speke, *What Led*, 224.

[80] Burton, *The Lake Regions*, 1: 84.

any distance for nearly a year."[81] Isabel Burton adopted a similar approach in her biography of her husband. She described how on returning from East Africa, Richard "was a mere skeleton, with brown yellow skin hanging in bags, his eye protruding, his lips drawn away from his teeth."[82] In highlighting his sufferings, such descriptions spoke to powerful and pre-existing narratives of "sacrifice and martyrdom" popular in Britain in the nineteenth century.[83]

At the same time, both men sought to portray the other as less manly and less heroic. In public, Speke described the "marvellously rapid manner" in which his severe wounds, sustained during the Berbera attack, healed before the start of the EAE.[84] Speke claimed the recovery was mostly a result of his "strong constitution," and the fact that he had been "living for months in a very abstemious manner."[85] He, therefore, presents his physical strength as a product of his ability to discipline his appetite—an increasingly popular belief in the Victorian period as demonstrated by the emergence of the vegetarian movement.[86] Drawing on such descriptions, later explorers described Speke as a "man of action" who had a "fine figure" and a "martial bearing.[87] In contrast, Speke claimed that Burton "complained about the shock his nerves had received" during the attack in Somalia and suggested this affected his performance and bravery for their

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[81] Burton, *The Lake Regions*, 1: 405.

[82] Burton, *The Life of Captain Sir Richard Burton*, 1: 330.

[83] Thompson, *The Suffering Traveller*, 171.

[84] Speke, *What Led*, 148; Burton, *Zanzibar*, 2: 387.

[85] Speke, *What Led*, 148–49.

[86] Speke, *What Led*, 149. See James Gregory, *Of Victorians and Vegetarians: The Victorian Movement in Nineteenth-Century Britain* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2007), 70–97, 190.

[87] Henry Morton Stanley to George Grey, 9 January 1892, GD S47.1, George Grey Collections, Auckland Public Library, f. 6.

journey.[88] Moreover, Speke claimed that Burton had suffered more severely from fever.[89] Speke sought to portray himself as more muscular and manly than Burton. Burton's comments in the margins of his personal copy of Speke's book demonstrate his annoyance about such claims.[90] Beside one passage describing how Burton suffered severely from fever, Burton commented, "he was worse."[91] Publicly, Burton portrayed the two men's strength in terms diametrically opposed to Speke's. In the *Lake Regions of Central Africa*, he disparagingly refers to Speke as his "invalid companion" and also suggests that he required more assistance on the march.[92] Burton claims that during the accent of one mountain pass they were weakened by fever: "My companion was so weak that he required the aid of two or three supporters; I, much less unnerved, managed with one."[93] Such comments illustrate the petty nature of the dispute between the two men. But, more broadly, they show that Burton, like other explorers, viewed descriptions of his body as an issue worthy of comment and correction. They also show the competing pressures explorers felt around the issue of suffering: both too much and too little hardship could cause problems.[94]

Burton and Speke adopted different models of heroism, drawing on ideas of bodily suffering and strength in complex and contradictory ways. Burton saw the

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[88] Speke, *What Led*, 165 footnote; John Hanning Speke to Norton Shaw, 2 July 1858, RGS/JHS/1/2, RGS Archives, f. 1.

[89] Speke, *What Led*, 165.

[90] Hamilton, *The Nile Quest*, 131; Speke, *What Led*, HL RFB 1680, 165 footnote.

[91] Speke, *What Led*, HL RFB 1680,187.

[92] Burton, *The Lake Regions* 1: 222; Carnochan, *The Sad Story*, 53.

[93] Burton, *The Lake Regions* 1: 213.

[94] Michael F. Robinson, "Shackleton Syndrome," *Isis* 111, no. 1 (March 2020): 112–19.

extreme suffering the men had experienced as laudable; however, he did not want to be seen as weaker than Speke. In their published accounts, both men emphasised that they had been less ill and less unnerved than the other. Such conflicts help explain why, when Speke returned to East Africa in 1860, he travelled with Grant, who was willing to play a more subordinate role. He was, consequently, praised for his loyalty and for being "unselfish."[95] More broadly, though, my analysis shows that the clash between the two explorers about the source of the Nile was not just "conflict of method" as others have argued; it also became a dispute about the way that an explorer should dress, use, and write about their own body.[96] As such, the two men embodied quite different vision of heroism, both of which were not universally acceptable. Throughout the above analysis, issues of gender and manliness were an important theme. As I now show, analysing the role of women travellers' bodies in their public reputations can offer further insights on this subject.

ISABELLA BIRD: HEALTH, STRENGTH, AND DECENCY

Isabella Bird had an even more complex relationship to issues of dress and suffering than Burton and Speke because, in the nineteenth century, dominant visions of expeditionary heroism were "profoundly gendered."[97] As Judith Rowbotham notes, in this period active heroism in "dangerous surroundings" was a "predominantly masculine preserve."[98]

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[95] Johnston, *The Nile Quest*, 132.

[96] Dritsas, "Expeditionary Science," 255–77.

[97] Mills, *Discourses of Difference*, 76.

[98] Judith Rowbotham, "'Soldiers of Christ?' Images of Female Missionaries in Late Nineteenth-Century Britain: Issues of Heroism and Martyrdom," *Gender & History* 12, no. 1 (2000), 84.

Indeed, "[f]eminine personal heroism was not supposed to involve the deliberate placing of her person in peril. Danger was acceptable only by accident, and ideally if experienced in the company of a husband."[99] Consequently, women travellers had to tread a careful rhetorical line when explaining why they had travelled overseas and what they had done when they got there. The gendered nature of Victorian ideas of heroism meant that Bird represented herself particularly carefully but also meant that despite this care, people still wrote about her in both positive and negative terms.

A "Solitary Health-Seeker"

One of the strategies that Bird used to render her travels acceptable to domestic audiences was to portray them as a medically necessary search for health. This claim was not without basis. As discussed above, Bird had a long-standing spinal condition and suffered occasional bouts of near-total prostration.[100] Biographers of Bird have suggested that these breakdowns had psychological as well as physical causes.[101] Bird's medics frequently advised travel as a cure for these ills.[102] In 1871, after a physical collapse, Stoddart reports that Bird's doctors advised her "to shift the scene as much as possible, and to remain within curative influences of the sea and mountain air."[103] The doctor's advice was far from unusual. The idea that a "change of air" could have positive effects on an individual's physical and mental health was widespread within nineteenth-

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[99] Rowbotham, "'Soldiers of Christ?'" 30; See also Mills, *Discourses of Difference*, 77.

[100] Stoddart, *The Life of Isabella Bird*, 25.

[101] Barr, *A Curious Life for a Lady*, 168.

[102] Stoddart, *The Life of Isabella Bird*, 28.

[103] Stoddart, *The Life of Isabella Bird*, 79.

century medicine.[104] Practitioners of these climatic cures argued that moving to mountainous areas or places by the sea was a useful treatment for specific diseases and chronic nervous disorders, particularly when combined with regimes of diet and exercise.[105] Bird's private correspondence suggests that the effect of climate on her health was genuine. "I am most anxious to recover my health which has been failing again considerably," she wrote to her publisher, John Murray III, as she mulled over a trip either to Japan or South America.[106] Even so, the decision to emphasise the medical motivations for her early travels was not accidental, as it helped her justify her journeys to domestic readers. In the introduction to her breakthrough work, *The Hawaiian Archipelago* (1875), Bird emphasised that she had originally gone there "for health" and found "the benefit which I derived from the climate tempted me to remain for nearly seven months."[107] Bird also emphasised the health-giving effects of travel in *A Lady's Life in the Rocky Mountain* (1879) and devoted considerable attention to the health benefits of the region's mountain air, which she described as "the elixir of life."[108] Likewise, she began *Unbeaten Tracks in Japan* (1880) by describing herself, as a "solitary health-seeker."[109] Bird's spinal and nervous conditions were important in providing her with an acceptable public reason for her travels. Some commentators took Bird's claims

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[104] Richard E. Morris, "The Victorian 'Change of Air' as Medical and Social Construction," *Journal of Tourism History* 10, no.1 (2018): 49–65.

[105] Morris, "A Change of Air," 50–51; James Clark, *The Influence of Climate in the Prevention and Cure of Chronic Diseases* (London: John Murray, 1829).

[106] Isabella L. Bird to John Murray, 27 July 1877, Ms. 42024, NLS, f. 86.

[107] Bird, *The Hawaiian Archipelago*, vii.

[108] Bird, *A Lady's Life*, 18, 40, 219; Isabella L. Bird to John Murray, 13 December 1873, Ms. 42024, NLS, f. 57.

[109] Bishop, *Unbeaten Tracks*, ix.

about her health at face value. *Blackwood's Magazine* claimed that, for Bird, "the pursuit of health was the first motive to travel."[110] However, even with such explanations, the reasons behind her journeys were still in question. When reviewing *A Lady's Life in the Rocky Mountains* (1879), *The Athenaeum* claimed that Bird travelled "for the sake of variety of excitement" and that she, therefore, "forfeits all pity" for the suffering she experienced.[111] Reviewers were also divided on whether Bird's early travels should be favourably compared to similar masculine adventures or if she was a feminine "model tourist."[112] A search for health did help Bird to explain her early journeys, but it did not lead to her being viewed in a monolithic way.

In later life, Bird still reported the positive effects of travel on her health in private but did not emphasise it in her published works to nearly the same degree.[113] This shift in emphasis reflected her growing status within geographical and anthropological circles. In *Korea and Her Neighbours* (1898), Bird emphasised her scientific motivations, claiming her trips formed "part of a plan of study of the leading characteristics of the Mongolian races."[114] Meanwhile, in *The Yangtze Valley and Beyond*

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[110] Anon., "Lady Travellers" *Blackwood's Magazine* 160 (July 1896), 58.

[111] Anon., "Book Review: A Lady's Life in the Rocky Mountains," *The Athenaeum*, no. 2722 (27 December1879), 846.

[112] Anon, "A Lady's Life in the Rocky Mountains," *Saturday Review of Politics, Literature, Science and Art* 48, no. 1255 (15 November 1879): 604–605; Anon, "Six Months in the Sandwich Islands," *The Athenaeum*, no. 2474 (27 March 1875): 417–418. The first review describes Bird in adventurous terms. The second describes Bird as a "model tourist."

[113] See, for instance, Isabella Bird to John Murray, 18 February 1895, Ms. 42028, NLS, ff. 5–6.

[114] Bishop, *Korea and Her*, 1: xi.

(1899) Bird said had travelled for “recreation and interest solely.”[115] By this point her reputation was far more established, meaning she did not need to draw on medical justifications to nearly the same degree.[116]

Victorian understandings of Bird’s spinal and nervous conditions played a significant role in justifying her early travels, providing her with a more acceptable explanation for her first overseas voyages. Far from limiting her mobility, Bird’s bodily weakness enabled her, at least from a social perspective, to travel abroad and helped to render these journeys acceptable. Even so, such descriptions were not universally successful, and some reviewers still suggested that Bird’s travels had been unnecessary or simply touristic.

Horse-riding, Dress, and Decency

Bird’s spinal condition not only justified her travels; it also shaped how she travelled. She was an accomplished rider and riding on horseback gave her a level of mobility far greater than when walking. While travelling, she rode cross-saddle, with her feet on either side of the pony, rather than side-saddle, which was generally considered a far more feminine mode of riding. Side-saddle riding was less suitable for cross-country riding and meant that the rider needed greater assistance to mount or dismount a horse.[117] In *The Hawaiian Archipelago* (1875), Bird describes her conversion to cross-

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[115] Bishop, *The Yangtze Valley*, ix.

[116] Bird was cited as an example of a distinguished traveler in the 1892–3 debates over women’s admission to the RGS, for instance Verbatim Report of Special General Meeting, 28 November 1983, “Admission of Women Fellows,” RGS/AP/92/1, f. 7.

[117] Alison Matthews David, “Elegant Amazons: Victorian Riding Habits and the Fashionable Horsewoman,” *Victorian Literature and Culture* 30, no. 1 (2002): 179–210.

saddle riding, reporting that she initially tried to travel side-saddle but found it "insecure," dangerous, and painful because of her spinal condition.[118] After she fell from her horse, her travelling companion suggested she "follow the Hawaiian fashion, and ride astride" on a Mexican saddle.[119] This suggestion was controversial as the Mexican saddle was, at the time, considered "a very masculine affair, ornamented and brass-bossed, with a great horn in front and large wooden stirrups with long leathern flaps and guards of tough hide."[120] Bird felt the need to justify adopting this mode of riding, writing that she could "not ride any distance in the conventional mode."[121] In contrast, cross-saddle riding enabled her to travel further and in greater comfort and was central to the success of Bird's journeys. Even so, in public she emphasised that she "rode sidewise" when she travelled through towns in America but noted that this caused her "severe pain."[122] Stressing the medical necessity of cross-saddle riding due to her spinal condition helped Bird to justify her transgression of domestic social norms. By the 1890s, however, cross-saddle riding had become less controversial and an image of Bird on horseback was used in Stoddart's Edwardian biography of her (figure 5).[123]

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[118] Bird, *The Hawaiian Archipelago*, 66.

[119] Bird, *The Hawaiian Archipelago*, 66.

[120] Barr, *A Curious Life*, 29.

[121] Bird, *A Lady's Life*, 10; Bird, *The Hawaiian Archipelago*, 66–67.

[122] Bird, *A Lady's Life*, 163; Barr, *A Curious Life*, 29. It is less clear if Bird adopted the same practice when travelling in Asia.

[123] David "Elegant Amazons," 202.

This image is not available due to copyright restrictions.

Figure 5. Isabella Bird in Travelling Dress. Stoddart, *The Life of Isabella Bird*, 242.

Cross-saddle riding shaped Bird's choice of outfit. The issue of dress played an important role in Bird's public reputation. On most of Bird's journeys she wore a tweed dress, which she referred to as "the Hawaiian riding dress": "a half-fitting jacket, a skirt reaching to the ankles, and full Turkish trousers gathered into frills falling over the boots."[124] Bird emphasised that the outfit allowed helped her to maintain both her modesty and femininity. In the first edition of *A Lady's Life in the Rocky Mountains*, Isabella Bird wrote that she wore her "Hawaiian riding dress over a silk skirt, and a dust cloak over all."[125] However, Bird grew "annoyed" when one reviewer claimed that she had "donned masculine habiliments."[126] Similarly, another review, claimed that Bird had

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[124] Isabella L. Bird, *A Lady's Life in the Rocky Mountains*, 4th ed. (London: John Murray, 1881), vii.

[125] Bird, *A Lady's Life*, 1st ed., 9.

[126] Anon., "New Books," *The Times*, 21 November 1879, 3.

adopted a "male riding attire" and that she was "at first rather shy of appearing in it."[127] Bird saw such descriptions as a direct attack on her public reputation because of wider expectations about middle-class women's modesty at the time.[128] Writing to her publisher over the affair, Bird claimed that the accusation was "simply horrible and a lady ought to be protected from such truly 'libellous' treatment on the part of reviewers."[129] The Hawaiian riding dress was, she insisted "the dress that is worn by ladies at mountain resorts in America and by English and American ladies on Hawaii" and noted that one of her friends had claimed that "a more feminine dress for rough travelling could not be devised."[130] In later editions of the book, she ensured a note was included to explain her outfit, describing it as "a thoroughly serviceable and feminine costume for mountaineering and other rough travelling."[131] The incident also led to the inclusion of a drawing of her outfit in most future editions of *A Lady's Life in the Rocky Mountains* (figure 6). The image is interesting in that it not only shows Bird's dress, but also portrays her standing at the side of her pony rather than riding the more controversial cross-saddle. Bird's writings about her dress in the American west hence "worked both with and against the hegemonic ideal of genteel-class British chauvinism," highlighting both the practicality and femininity of her clothing.[132] However, her initial efforts to do so were not wholly successful.

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[127] Anon, "A Lady's Life in the Rocky Mountains," *Saturday Review* 48, no.1255 (12 November 1879), 604.

[128] Marni Stanley "Skirting the Issues: Addressing and Dressing in Victorian Women's Travel Narratives," *Victorian Review* 23, no. 2 (1997): 147–167.

[129] Bird to Murray, 21 November 1879, Ms.42024, NLS, ff. 143–44.

[130] Bird to Murray, 21 November 1879, Ms. 42024, NLS, f. 145.

[131] Bird, *A Lady's Life*, 4th ed., vii–iii.

[132] Morin, *Frontiers of Femininity*, 60.

Figure 6. Isabella Bird in her "feminine" attire, included as a frontispiece from the second edition of *A Lady's Life in the Rocky Mountains* (1879).

Dressing differently was not so reputationally damaging when it did not involve wearing men's clothes.[133] When Bird travelled to China in the 1890s, she wore an adapted version of Manchu women's dress.[134] She described "the extreme comfort of a

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[133] Stanley "Skirting the Issues," 160.

[134] Elizabeth Hope Chang, *Britain's Chinese Eye: Literature, Empire, and Aesthetics in Nineteenth-Century Britain* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2010), 166–67. Chang argues that demonstrating Bird's affinity to China's Manchu rulers.

Chinese woman's dress in all classes, no corsets or waist-bands, or constraints of any kind."[135] Indeed, Bird returned from China with samples of Manchu dress, and was included a copy of this image in her *The Yangtze Valley and Beyond*, using it to emphasise her worldliness and appealing to a growing British interest in Chinese culture.[136] Even so, Bird publicly claimed that she was "never became reconciled" to one mode of Chinese dress that included trousers without a covering skirt or petticoat.[137] Consequently, warned by her earlier experiences, Bird sought to emphasise that her embrace of Chinese clothing had not led her to transgress certain domestic social norms. She was, therefore, able to avoid further allegations of crossdressing. How Bird dressed her body was central to her model of heroism which sought to combine modesty and femininity, alongside more masculine activities, such as adventure and worldly knowledge. At the same time, such descriptions were not always successful, and several reviewers claimed that Bird's had worn men's clothes, a suggestion she viewed as insulting. Domestic readers interpreted her choice of dress in ways she could neither control nor anticipate. They also struggled to reconcile the conflicted ways that Bird wrote about her physical strength.

Muscles, Guts, and Adventure

Given the conflicting ideas found within Bird's writings, it is hardly surprising that

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[135] Isabella Bird, *The Yangtze Valley*, 242; Stoddart, *The Life of Isabella Bird*, 350.

[136] Isabella Bird to John Murray, 1899, before September 2, NLS, Ms. 42029, f. 61–62; Shanyn Fiske, "Orientalism Reconsidered: China and the Chinese in Nineteenth-Century Literature and Victorian Studies," *Literature Compass* 8, no.4 (2011): 214–26.

[137] Bird, *The Yangtze Valley*, 242.

domestic commentators were confused by her body. At some points in her narratives, she emphasised her physical frailty in order to foreground her femininity. At one point In *A Lady's Life in the Rocky Mountains*, Bird describes her ascent of Long's Peak in Colorado.[138] She claims that her companion, Jim, "dragged" her up "like a bale of goods, by sheer force of muscle" and afterwards lamented that her companions must be "grievously disappointed" in her "courage and strength."[139] Yet Bird's writings also left readers clear that she "had faced dangers and difficulties from which a man of nerve and courage might have shrunk."[140] For instance, she continued travelling through China even after being attacked by a large and hostile crowd, describing the incident in an off-hand manner.[141] Victorian and Edwardian commentators frequently struggled to reconcile such conflicting descriptions and searched for an explanation. The idea that Bird disciplined her body through acts of mental willpower was a common theme in contemporary commentary on her expeditions. Stoddart's biography noted that "the minor worries of housekeeping assailed and depressed her, while danger and difficulty appealed to her marvellous self-control and resource."[142] The *Geographical Journal*, meanwhile, claimed that Bird's journeys represented "the triumph of human will over the effects of disease and bodily weakness."[143] Meanwhile, an Edwardian book on nineteenth-century women travellers praised Bird for "her true patience, her unfailing

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[138] Bird, *A Lady's Life*, 97–118.

[139] Bird, *A Lady' Life* 109, 116.

[140] Anon, "A Lady's Life," 604; E.g., Bird, *A Lady's Life*, 68–69.

[141] Bishop, *The Yangtze Valley*, 33.

[142] Stoddart, *The Life of Isabella Bird*, 262.

[143] Anon., "Obituary: Mrs. Bishop," *Geographical Journal* 24, no.5 (November 1904), 596.

good humour, and her indomitable 'pluck.'"[144] Bird's weak body rendered her achievements more impressive and was used to emphasise her strength of character, bravery and self-control.

Conversely, some commentators argued that Bird's "complex constitution" was the source of her variable performance.[145] An obituary of Bird in the *Edinburgh Medical Journal* suggested that her health was "very much a paradox"[146] The journal explained such discrepancies suggesting that Bird was "one of those subjects who are dependent to the last degree upon their environment to bring out their possibilities."[147] Climate and situation seemed to play an important role in Bird's capacity for strength and adventure overseas. But the *Edinburgh Medical Journal* also claimed that in order to travel "some 2400 miles in wild and untamed country," Bird must have had "a basis of strength of an unusual kind" and a "large storehouse of energy behind it all" but gave little clue as to what its source might be.[148] Stoddart offered some ideas about how Bird was able to overcome "the serious ailments which exhausted her constitution." [149] She explained that

> her appetite and her power to assimilate large quantities of food healthily never failed…She could go on for days with little more than a bowlful of rice and a handful of dates and raisins; but when substantial food was to be had

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[144] Adam W. H. Davenport, *Celebrated Women Travelers of the Nineteenth Century* (New York: Dutton, 1903), 437.

[145] Stoddart, *The Life of Isabella Bird*, 261.

[146] Anon., "Obituary: Mrs Bishop," *Edinburgh Medical Journal* (November 1904), 383.

[147]Anon., "Review: The Life of Isabella Bird by Anna M. Stoddart," *The Geographical Journal* 29, no. 4 (April 1907): 452–53.

[148] Anon., "Obituary: Mrs Bishop," 383.

[149] Stoddart, *The Life of Isabella Bird*, 260–61.

> she availed herself amply of the opportunity. Indeed, she called herself a 'savage' in the matter of food.[150]

Stoddart also quoted Bird's husband, Dr Bishop, who declared that "Isabella has the appetitive of a tiger and the digestion of an ostrich."[151] She saw this as the source of her strength, claiming that Bird's "healthy appetite must have strengthened her muscular frame, which made up for her feeble spine." [152] In contrast to Speke, whose strong constitution was strengthened by abstention, Bird's weak body needed feeding. Indeed, the idea that a "healthy, stubborn digestion" was an essential quality in a successful explorer was shared by other Victorian travellers.[153] The idea that Bird's strength came from her guts was picked up by other writers: *The Geographical Journal* focused on Bird's "splendid digestion", repeating the suggestion that this was the source of her strength.[154] Likewise, the Edwardian writer Louise Creighton claimed that one thing that helped Bird overcome her physical weakness was the fact that "she was able to eat anything."[155] Guts provided a means to reconcile the diverse ways that Bird wrote about her body, explaining how she overcame her wider physical weakness.

Bird's body was presented and received in multiple and contradictory ways. At times, she emphasised her search for health overseas and suffering while travelling, in

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[150] Stoddart, *The Life of Isabella Bird*, 260–61.

[151] Stoddart, *The Life of Isabella Bird*, 261.

[152] Stoddart, *The Life of Isabella Bird*, 261.

[153] Henry M. Stanley, *How I Found Livingstone: Travels, Adventures, and Discoveries in Central Africa* (London: Sampson, Lowe and Marson, 1872), 416.

[154] Anon., "Review: The Life of Isabella Bird," 453.

[155] Louise Creighton, *Some Famous Women* (London: Longmans Green and Co., 1909), 148.

order maintain her "womanly graces." [156] Bird also used her spinal condition to justify the fact that she rode the more masculine cross-saddle. Despite the care she took, Bird's dress could also be interpreted in very different ways, and she faced accusations that she had cross-dressed and that her suffering had been unnecessary. At other points, Bird was portrayed as a strong-nerved and adventurous hero, more similar to masculine modes of heroism. Still others viewed her body as a medical marvel that required both study and explanation. Bird sought to portray her body in ways that balanced these conflicting understanding. But the reception of her writings demonstrates that contemporary readers sometimes viewed Bird's body in unexpected and unintended ways. Like Burton and Speke, her domestic reputation was far from one-dimensional, in large part because of the ways she both reinforced and transgressed gender norms. But, as I now examine, even more classically masculine explorers could be understood in multiple ways.

SCOTT'S ANTARCTIC EXPEDITIONS: HEROISM, SCIENCE, AND ADVENTURE

Robert Falcon Scott's death on his return from the South Pole in 1912 marks the apogee of the explorer-hero as a prominent figure in British culture.[157] Of all the case studies discussed in this thesis, the bodies of Scott, Wilson, Evans, and Oates are the most unambiguously heroic. Previous scholarship has examined the public response to the death of Scott and his companions, emphasising how they were widely lauded, both

[156] Stoddart, *The Life of Isabella Bird*, vi.

[157] Jones, *The Last Great*, 228.

within Britain and globally.[158] Once news of their death reached the outside world in 1913, the men were frequently described in heroic terms, with Scott's final writings and Captain Oates' self-sacrifice "singled out for praise."[159] Such works have often suggested that Scott's main heroic quality was his character and self-control. Lisa Bloom argues that the focus on character in the aftermath of Scott's death fed into "an ideology of masculinity in which paradoxically the male body is ignored," and suffering demonstrates the triumph of character and control.[160] Similarly, Max Jones emphasises how, following Scott's death, he "and his companions offered a reassuring example of heroic character and idealism."[161] Yet, as I demonstrate in this section, the body continued to play an important role in Scott's public reputation and public responses to Scott were more diverse than has previously been appreciated, particularly before his death.

Conflicting Visions of Antarctic Heroism

Both before and after Scott's death, his body played an important role in his heroic reputations. Before the *Terra Nova* departed for Antarctica in late 1910, James Kinesy, the expedition's representative in New Zealand, gave a press interview. Kinsey claimed that Scott was the ideal person to reach the pole because he had "the physique and the determination, and he can endure severe hardships; Officers and crew of the Discovery

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[158] Jones, *The Last Great*, 109.

[159] Jones, *The Last Great*, 102.

[160] Lisa Bloom, *Gender on Ice: American Ideologies of Polar Expeditions* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1993), 127.

[161] Scott, *The Last Great*, 163.

admitted that he had greater powers of endurance than any other man on board."[162] In such descriptions, his qualities as an explorer were based on both his physical strength and his ability to withstand hardship. These ideas remained powerful after Scott's death. Writing after the First World War, Apsley Cherry-Garrard, the expedition's assistant zoologist assessed the ideal qualities of a polar explorer, explaining them in class-based terms. He claimed that "[i]t was the sensitive men, the men with good nerves, with a background of education—'good blood'—who went farthest, pulled hardest, and stayed longest."[163] Even in the aftermath of the expedition, discussions about abstract qualities such as character and control were explained through discussions of explorers' material bodies.

Scott's body was important in his heroic reputation in more subtle ways. Naval dress linked Scott to a longer tradition of British adventure in the polar regions.[164] From the early nineteenth century, the polar regions were constructed as a places where the "disciplined, resourceful British naval men almost succumb to starvation and madness," and where "the resistant, intact, male body so central to imperial heroic masculinity meets its limits."[165] Throughout his career as an explorer, Scott was depicted in naval uniform. Such images, emphasised his self-control and Britishness, conflating his individual body with the nation.[166] This remained true after his death. An image of Scott

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[162] Anon, "Provisions for the Terra Nova," n.d. [1911] in Official Papers Relation to the Antarctic Expedition Under Captain Scott, Joseph James Kinsey Collection, Alexander Turnball Library: National Library of New Zealand, f. 2.

[163] Apsley Cherry Garrard quoted in George Seaver's Foreword to *The Worst Journey in the World*, by Apsley Cherry Garrard (London: Picador, 1994), xxxiv.

[164] Spufford, *I May be Some Time*, 5.

[165] Hill, *White Horizon*, 31; McCorristine, 31–39.

[166] Hill, *White Horizon*, 30, 46.

in naval uniform was used as the frontispiece to the first volume of his posthumously published diaries (figure 7).[167] Scott's model of heroism did not reject the body. In fact, dress played an important role in Scott's public reputation.

[167] Scott, *Scott's Last Expedition.*

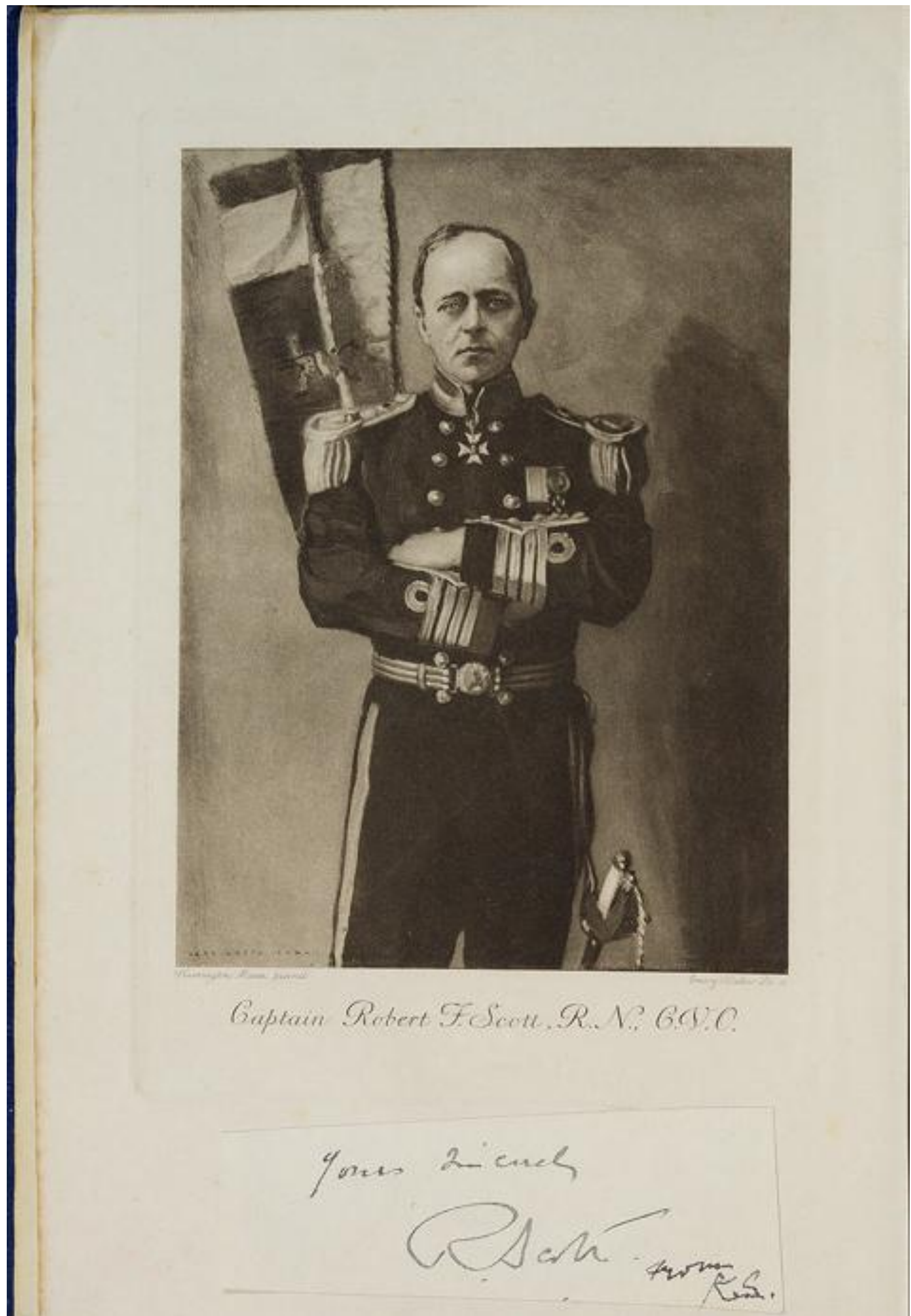

Figure 7. "Captain Robert F. Scott R.N. C.V.C." This image was used as frontispiece to volume 1. Scott's Last Expedition (1913). The image is based on a painting of Scott by the American painter Harrington Mann.

Many images of Scott, Wilson, Evans, and Oates portrayed the explorers in sledging gear. Such depictions emphasised the strains of the polar environment placed upon the explorers' body and show a more rugged vision of expeditionary heroism than images of Scott in uniform.[168] Scott's final message to the public drew on these ideas in a powerful way. He claimed that the expedition had "shown that Englishmen can endure hardships, help one another, and meet death with as great a fortitude as ever in the past."[169] Max Jones argues that the "frenzied" response to Scott's message "exposes an age preoccupied with the endurance of hardship as a test of character."[170] Most importantly, a photograph of the men at the South Pole (similar to figure 8.) was "used as a memento of heroic sacrifice" and featured prominently in the public and press response to Scott's death.[171] The explorers' bodies played an important role in the emotional power of this image. As James Ryan notes, "[e]xhaustion and disappointment are engrained in the faces and bodies of the men who stare towards the operator-less camera, or at the vast expanse of snow beyond."[172] The photo acted as powerful visual proof of the hardships the men had endured; it is also an image quite different from images of Scott as the disciplined and controlled naval officer. Indeed, portraits of the explorers' weather-beaten and sunburned faces played were a major component of the photographic record of the expedition.[173] Unlike Burton, the explorers' darkened skin in the photograph caused few problems for their domestic reputations due to a growing

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[168] Spufford, *I May Be Some Time*, 37.

[169] Scott, *Journals*, 422.

[170] Jones, *The Last Great*, 10.

[171] Jones, *The Last Great.*

[172] Ryan, *Photography and Exploration*, 54–55.

[173] Huw Lewis-Jones, *Face to Face: Polar Portraits* (Cambridge: Scott Polar Research Institute, 2008).

view that "[e]xposure to the elements was salutary for rebuilding manhood."[174] Edwardian visions of heroism approached questions of suffering in ways that differed from earlier periods.

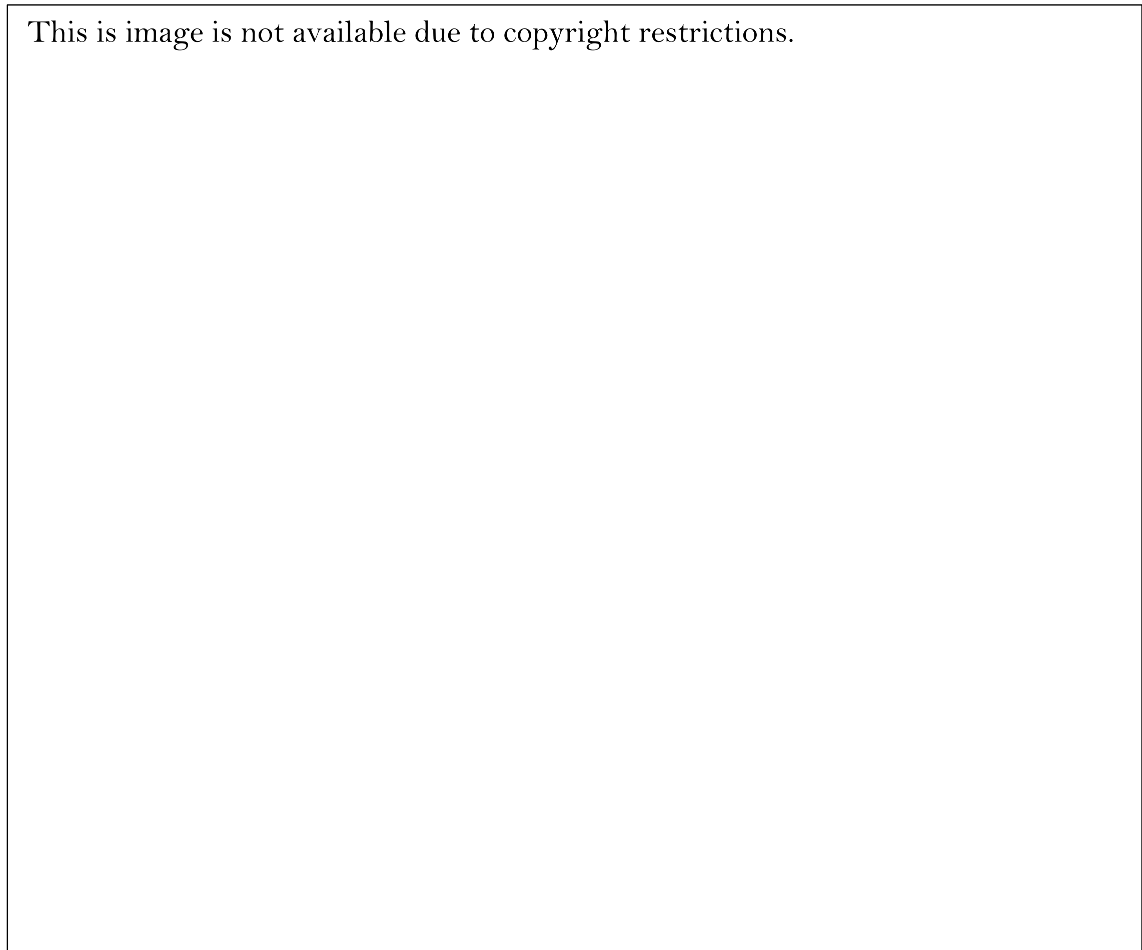
This is image is not available due to copyright restrictions.

Figure 8. Scott, Wilson, Evans, Bowers, and Oates at the South Pole, 1912. (SPRI: Ref p2005/5/1704).

Similar images were often combined with narratives of suffering for science, which emphasised the pain experienced in the process of research.[175] The British explorers were frequently presented as "martyrs of science," through comparisons with

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[174] Forth, *Masculinity in the Modern West*, 160.

[175] Herzig, *Suffering for Science*; Robinson, "Manliness and Exploration," 93.

the more limited scientific fieldwork of the Norwegian explorers, led by Roald Amundsen, who had beaten them to the poll.[176] Lord Curzon, the president of the RGS, claimed that Scott and his companions had "yielded their lives" in the service of science.[177] The publication of *Scott's Last Expedition* in November 1913 "consolidated the representation of the expedition as a scientific quest."[178] In his preface, Markham emphasised that the expeditions primarily objectives "were strictly scientific."[179] Often descriptions of the expedition as a scientific quest ignored the messy material reality of the explorers' death in Antarctica, referring to their suffering and death and contribution to science only in very broad terms—particularly compared to the detailed descriptions of fever included in Burton and Speke's accounts. For instance, the *Daily Mail* referred simply to the "innumerable hardships of the ice and the snow."[180] The explorers' physical sufferings were important within such narratives but were often portrayed in abstract terms.

While character and control were important qualities, the bodies of Antarctic explorers played a greater role in their heroic reputations than previous scholarship has appreciated. The different images of Scott in both naval uniform and sledging gear

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[176] Jones, *The Last Great*, 165.

[177] Lord Curzon, "Our debt to Captain Scott," *Daily Mail*, 15 February 1913, 4; For other examples of the suffering for science narrative see: Anon., "The Journey to the Pole," *The Times*, 14 February 1913, 6; Clements Markham "A Tribute to The Heroes," *Times*, 17 February 1913, 6; Archer M. Huntington, Telegraph to RGS, 13 February 1913, AGS AC1 Box 262, Folder 32, ff. 3–4.

[178] Jones, *The Last Great*, 175.

[179] Clements Markham Preface to *Scott's Last Expedition*, by Robert F. Scott (London: Smith and Elder, 1913), 1: vi.

[180] An Englishman, "The Sacrifice of Captain Oates," *Daily Mail*, 15 Feb. 1913, 4.

reflected competing ways of representing character class, and control: one sought to emphasise Scott's disciplined naval body; the other focused on a more private, personal vision of self-control emphasised by persistence in the face of physical suffering. Conflicting ideas about what it meant to be a heroic explorer continued to play out in discussions concerning the national memorial to Scott, eventually erected in London in 1915. This memorial was sculpted by Scott's widow, Kathleen Scott, and her private perspective on Scott's body shaped the way he was depicted. She drew on the widely circulated images of Scott in sledging gear when sculpting the stature, reflecting the broader popularity of the images. However, her decision to portray Scott in this way was opposed by others involved in the memorial who felt he should be portrayed in naval uniform rather than "working clothes."[181] Even today, the Scott memorial looks somewhat out of place, as the surrounding statues are all dressed in military uniforms. Analysing the different images of Scott brings to the surface underlying tensions in Edwardian visions of heroism. Even more classically heroic explorers had their bodies portrayed in multiple and contradictory ways. However, focusing only on the response to Scott' death can lead us to ignore the more diverse ways that Antarctic explorers were represented while they were still alive. The importance that Scott's death played in establishing his reputation as a hero was even commented on at the time. After Scott's body had been discovered, the expedition's second in command, captain Edward Evans, wrote to the naval officer and polar explorer Albert Markham expressing his expectation that descriptions of the explorers' suffering would squash critics of the expedition. He hoped that once details of the men's last days were made public "those 'rotters' who wrote describing Scott's life work as a 'picnic to the Antarctic' will slink

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[181] Admiral Beaumont quoted Jones, *The Last Great Quest*, 155.

away ashamed."[182] Evans' quote demonstrates that the explorers were not universally lauded as heroes before their deaths. It is to such debates that I now turn.

Scurvy, Suffering, and Scandal

The more complex position of explorers in British culture is best exemplified by press discussions around scurvy on the BNAE.[183] In 1903, while in Antarctica, the expedition experienced numerous problems with its tinned food supplies and an outbreak of scurvy. The disease first manifested itself on sledging trips, but signs of scurvy were also found in many more men on board the ship. Scott, Wilson, and Shackleton also suffered a severe outbreak of the disease on their farthest south journey in 1903, which affected Shackleton particularly severely. The outbreak was dealt with without fatality and, when news reached London, much press reporting of the expedition presented scurvy as an inevitable peril of "Antarctic adventures."[184] However, some viewed the outbreak as a national scandal, suggesting the disease raised broader questions about British institutions.

The critics' major gripe was that the expedition had received significant government funding and that other countries were able to run polar expeditions without such outbreaks. *The British Medical Journal* was particularly scathing, lamenting the fact that the expedition had been "crippled" by the disease.[185] The author claimed that "[s]ome one has blundered" in the organisation of the expedition and suggested that

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[182] Edward Evans to Albert Markham, 13 February 1913, MRK/46, Albert Markham Collection, National Maritime Museum Archive, f. 19.

[183] I draw on research published in Armston-Sheret, "Tainted Bodies."

[184] Anon., "The Voyage of the Discovery," 30 March 1903, *The Scotsman*, 8.

[185] Anon, "Scurvy on the Discovery," *The British Medical Journal*, 4 April 1903, 807.

the problem lay in BNAE's naval organisation.[186] The author noted the "somewhat humiliating contrast" between the British expedition and Norwegian expeditions that had spent much longer periods in the polar region without succumbing to the disease.[187] *The Daily Mail* was even more critical, claiming—inaccurately in the case of the British Arctic explorer Frederick Jackson—that "neither Nansen on the sea nor Jackson on the land had a single case of scurvy. Yet the *Discovery*, in the very first year of her absence is visited by the scourge."[188] *The Daily Mail* argued that the root of the problem lay in the "bickering" between the RGS and RS, which distracted them from their duties.[189] For the paper, scurvy demonstrated the inability of bureaucratic and divided institutions to care for the bodies of those they sent across the world. This was not the first time that a British Naval expedition had been at the centre of a scandal around the issue of scurvy. As noted above, the National Arctic Expedition (1875–76) had experienced similar problems, leading to public concerns about the expedition's use of alcohol.[190] Scurvy linked the expedition to a longer traditional of naval blunders in the polar regions. The outbreak was particularly concerning to the British public because of the Edwardian preoccupation with health and fitness. Moreover, exploration had become a way of "measuring manliness" and Antarctica became a "proving ground for national fitness."[191]

The speeches of RGS president Sir Clements Markham only fanned concerns about the safety of the BNAE. In 1903, around the same time as news of scurvy broke,

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[186] Anon, "Scurvy on the Discovery," 807.

[187] Anon, "Scurvy on the Discovery," 807.

[188] Anon, "Farthest South," *Daily Mail*, 27 March 1903, 5.

[189] Anon., Farthest South, 5.

[190] Armston-Sheret, "'A Good Advertisement.'"

[191] Jones, *The Last Great*, 69; Larson, *An Empire of Ice*, 143.

Sir Clements Markham was trying to muster support for a relief expedition to resupply the *Discovery*. To raise funds, he emphasised the idea that the explorers were in mortal danger if supplies were not sent. Speaking to the RGS, Markham claimed that without further funding "those heroes who have done so much for science and their country's credit will be in grave peril."[192] Such a narrative proved effective at securing government support, but also presented the expedition as weak and emasculated. *The Standard*, for instance, expressed "some anxiety about the safety of the expedition" following news it would spend another winter in Antarctica.[193] Similarly, *The Speaker* claimed that while the scurvy outbreak "was not serious, and yielded readily to treatment *[sic]*…the expedition would certainly have starved to death" if it were not for the relief ship and availability of seal meat.[194] Like others, *The Speaker* saw the near disaster as part of a wider problem, commenting, "[t]here have been too many scandals of the kind in connection with our Polar expeditions." [195] When the relief expedition eventually reached Scott in 1904, *The Evening Telegraph* claimed that the *Discovery* had been "recused" from Antarctica.[196] Such passages show that the idea that something had gone wrong with the organisation of the BNAE was a significant (if not dominant) feature of press reporting.[197] These accounts portrayed the expedition's bodies in terms very different from dominant ideas of masculine heroism in the polar regions. In his book, Scott sought to reframe the expedition's experiences in more conventionally heroic

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[192] Clements Markham "The First Year's Work of the National Antarctic Expedition," *The Geographical Journal* 22, no.1 (July 1903), 19.

[193] Anon., "There can be little doubt…" *The Standard*, 15 May 1902, 6.

[194] Anon., "The Week," *The Speaker*, 17 September 1904, 550.

[195]Anon., "The Week,"550.

[196] Anon., "Rescued from Antarctic Ice," *Evening Telegraph*, 2 April 1904, 3.

[197] Armston-Sheret, "Tainted Bodies."

terms. Scott objected strongly to such claims, arguing that "[n]o healthy man likes to be thought an invalid."[198] He sought to rebut the idea that the expedition had need rescuing in his book, suggesting that life in Antarctica was "very pleasant."[199] While he had some success in recasting the expedition's experiences, and his book was positively reviewed, it is important to recognise that responses to the expedition were not monolithic.[200]

Overall, British Antarctic explorers were more often depicted as heroes than the other case studies discussed. After their deaths, Scott and his companions were widely praised. Yet even representations of Scott's individual body contain different and sometimes contradictory visions of heroism. More fundamentally, focusing only on Scott's posthumous reputation ignores the more complex position that living polar explorers occupied in Edwardian British culture. As debates about scurvy on the BNAE show, expeditions were criticised as well as praised. Importantly, such criticism was part of a longer tradition of concern about the effectiveness of British naval expeditions. Outbreaks of disease could raise broader questions about the ability of British institutions to care for those under their command. As elsewhere, then, a narrow focus on heroism can draw attention away from the variety of positions that explorers could occupy in the Victorian and Edwardian era.

CONCLUSION

Historians of empire often present explorers as having heroic bodies. In this chapter, I

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[198] Scott, *The Voyage*, 2: 329.

[199] Scott, *The Voyage*, 2: 320. See also Anon., "Antarctic Explorers," *The Evening News*, 12 September 1904, 2.

[200] Armston-Sheret, "Tainted Bodies;" Barczewski, *Antarctic Destinies*, 43–45.

have shown that the reality was more complex. While they were alive, explorers were the subject of criticism as well as praise. Explorers knew that representing their own body in certain ways was central to their public and scientific reputations. In their public writings, they focused on their bodily attributes and used physical suffering to demonstrate mental strength. Accordingly, both discipline and bodily breakdown could, at different times and in different ways, be portrayed in positive terms. Dress was also a central issue in an explorer's reputation and could be used to emphasise their gender identity, their cultural knowledge, or their self-control and strength. However, representations of explorers' bodies varied considerably depending on the time period in which they travelled, the location of the journey, and the identity of the individual in question. Moreover, they were not always successful in convincing domestic audiences that they have behaved correctly, and strategies that gain support in one quarter attracted criticism in others. Representations of explorers' bodies were, therefore, far from monolithic: there were deep-seated disagreements about how a traveller should use and represent their body. Although explorers portrayed their experiences carefully, it often proved impossible to reconcile these broader disagreements. As I have shown, the same events could be portrayed in diametrically opposite terms.

Many of the explorers discussed above were seldom referred to as heroes in their own lifetimes. Scott was widely lauded as a hero, but mostly so following his death. Even then, contemporary images portrayed Scott in quite diverse ways. Dane Kennedy's conception of explorers as "celebrities" is perhaps a more helpful framework.[201] Like modern celebrities, explorers were understood in multiple ways, and solicited both criticism and praise. In demonstrating the numerous ways that explorers' bodies were described and analysed by contemporary commentators, this chapter suggests that even the singular body of an individual expedition leader could be read in multiple ways. In

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[201] Kennedy, *The Last Blank*, 233–60.

doing so, I have developed understandings of the relationship between exploration and heroism in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In particular, I have begun to examine the role of identity, location, and period in shaping how these representations differed and began to reflect on the "reputational geographies" of heroism.[202] The diverse reception of explorers' bodies was also a product of their fleshy materiality. While explorers could write about their travels in heroic terms, they could not always prevent incidents of illness and bodily breakdown that raised questions about their conduct and credibility. Again, the importance of such incidents demonstrates the limitations of understanding explorers' texts as only literary sources. There is clearly scope for further research on the role of the body in the reputations of other individuals often referred to as imperial heroes, for instance, soldiers, missionaries, and medics.

Understanding the relationship between, bodies, heroes, and exploration has contemporary implications. Both critical geographers and institutions such as the RGS have begun to examine the organisation's links with imperialism and colonialism.[203] However, the RGS's South Kensington headquarters remains adorned, both inside and out, with images and statues of explorers' bodies.[204] Understanding the powerful role of the body within the mythology of exploration emphasises the need for a more critical

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[202] David N. Livingstone, "Politics, Culture, and Human Origins: Geographies of Reading and Reputation in Nineteenth-Century Science," in *Geographies of Nineteenth Century Science*, eds. David N. Livingstone and Charles W. J. Withers (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011), 180.

[203] James Esson, Patricia Noxolo, Richard Baxter, Patricia Daley, Margaret Byron, "The 2017 RGS-IBG Chair's Theme: Decolonising Geographical Knowledges, or Reproducing Coloniality?" *Area* 49, no.3 (2017): 384–88.

[204] Griffiths and Baker, "Decolonising the Spaces of Geographical Knowledge Production."

discussion about how contemporary geographical institutions explain and interpret statues, photographs, and paintings. My analysis suggests that foregrounding the historical debates around explorers and their conduct might prove a way to challenge such static and one-dimensional images of explorers. More fundamentally, it is the very fact that travel narratives are the site of "multiple meanings" that makes alternative readings possible.[205] If explorers were always heroes there would be comparatively little to say about them and few possibilities for using them to tell different stories. Fortunately, this is not the case, and it is possible to use their writings to surface the narratives of a far broader range of experiences and contributions. It is to these individuals, ignored in the above discussions of heroism, that I now turn.

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[205] Stoler, *Along the Archival Grain*, 234.

5

DEPENDENT BODIES

Over the past thirty years, historians, historical geographers, and other allied scholars have begun to understand exploration as "a collective project of work."[1] In doing so, they have focused on the contributions and agency of guides, intermediaries, and go-betweens who facilitated explorers' journeys. This approach has allowed researchers to shift attention away from the heroic individual and onto the broader range of people who made expeditions possible.[2] Such projects have been described using different terminology, as the "hidden histories" of exploration or through a focus on "indigenous intermediaries."[3] Both terms are far from ideal, as many of the people of colour who contributed to European exploration were "neither 'local' nor 'indigenous'" but were travellers themselves.[4] Meanwhile, terms like "hidden history" risk "minimising the difficulties of engaging with metropolitan archives" examined by postcolonial critics.[5] In this chapter, I offer a new perspective on such efforts in arguing that existing literature has often taken at face value explorers' suggestions that much of the work carried out by Africans, Asians, and working-class expedition members was "simple"

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[1] Driver, "Intermediaries and the Archive," 14.

[2] Driver, "Hidden Histories," 423.

[3] Schaffer *et al.*, eds., *The Brokered World*; Kennedy, "Lost in Place," 243–246; Driver and Jones *Hidden Histories*; Konishi *et al.*, eds., *Indigenous Intermediaries*; Jones, "Local Knowledge."

[4] Driver, "Intermediaries and the Archive," 15.

[5] Driver, "Intermediaries and the Archive," 16.

and "menial."[6] As discussed above, I also develop previous literature by devoting greater attention to human-animal relations. More broadly, in focusing on a diverse range of case studies, I offer insights on how questions of location and identity shaped the way that explorers wrote about and valued certain forms of work. In addressing these issues, I suggest that Linda McDowell's concept of "body work" provides a means to understand the full range of people and animals on which exploration depended.[7] McDowell demonstrates that much labour constitutes servicing the bodies of others (such as through care) and also involves the labourer working on their own body to ensure it is both desirable and disciplined.[8] Although, McDowell analyses these practices in very different contexts, I demonstrate that exploration, too, depended on various forms of body work. Subaltern expedition members both cared for the bodies of others and trained their own bodies in ways that allowed them to carry out specific, and often essential, types of work.

One of the primary problems with studying this subject is the pejorative way that explorers' texts often describe subaltern expedition members and their work. These issues are exemplified by Donald Simpson's *Dark Companions* (1975), which was one of the first efforts to focus on the role of people of colour in the European exploration of Africa. Simpson does foreground African contributions within explorers' accounts; however, his uncritical approach to these texts is limiting. He often echoes explorers' racially offensive descriptions. For instance, he describes one group of Indian expedition members as "dishonest, lazy, malingerers, and unclean," drawing on language similar to that used by Victorian explorers.[9] As such quotations demonstrate, finding descriptions

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[6] Martin, "Indigenous Tales," 25; Kennedy, *The Last Blank*, 131.

[7] McDowell, *Working Bodies*, 10–12.

[8] McDowell, *Working Bodies*, 9.

[9] Simpson, *Dark Companions*, 58.

of subaltern expedition members is only the first step. The challenge is developing an interpretive approach that enables us to unpick the web of prejudice that permeates our understandings of them.[10] Recently, critical writers and museum curators have adopted alternative approaches to grapple with these issues, noting that even basic acts of recovery require "painstaking research," which often involved working "against the grain of the archive."[11] In doing so, they have made "strategic decisions" to foreground the contributions of individual guides and intermediaries.[12] Driver notes of his co-curated 2009 exhibition at the RGS on the "hidden histories" of exploration, that "it was the agency of the headman, the indigenous surveyor, the guide, and the interpreter that took centre stage."[13] These projects have played an important role in displacing the idea that "modern science" emerged in an "autarkic" Europe.[14] This move is important as explorers' accounts frequently (and inaccurately) reduced the contributions of non-Europeans to "logistical practicalities."[15] A focus on guides and intermediaries is understandable, as the biographies (and often even the names) of many of the subaltern people, porters, carriers, and cooks, involved are often unrecoverable from the one-sided evidence base remaining. Frequently, we are left with only a mechanical (or even perjorative) enumeration of the tasks they performed.

To deal with such issues, critical scholarship has deployed the language of heroism, portraying guides and intermediaries as the "alternative" or "true" heroes of

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[10] Similar trends are present in polar exploration. E.g., Williams, *Captain Scott's Invaluable Assistant.*

[11] Driver, "Exploration as Knowledge Transfer," 91.

[12] Driver, "Hidden Histories," 429.

[13] Driver, "Hidden Histories," 429.

[14] Raj, *Relocating Modern Science*, 64.

[15] Martin, "Indigenous Tales," 25.

exploration.[16] Similar issues permeate works that have sought to spotlight the contributions of working-class people to Antarctic exploration. Recent scholarship has sought to recover their contributions by portraying remarkable individuals as either "unsung" heroes or "superheroes."[17] What such works do demonstrate is that expeditionary heroism often rested on individuals whose contributions were ignored within explorers' accounts, but they also reinforce the idea that heroism is a useful medium through which to understand travel. As Driver notes, such an approach risks "replacing one kind of hero myth with another" and it can also reinforce the idea that logistical work is less important and less worthy of study.[18] More broadly, what is the value of elevating a new elevating a new group of heroes if, as I have argued, the framework of heroism is itself limiting?

Another problem is that explorers often celebrate certain kinds of subaltern

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[16] Driver, "Intermediaries and the Archive," 25; Driver, "Hidden Histories," 429.

[17] Anthony, *Hoosh*, 16; Smith, *An Unsung Hero*; Tim Foley, *Crean: The Extraordinary Life of an Irish Hero* (Keel Foley: Machester, 2018); In contrast, Maddison, *Class and Colonialism*, 6–7, writes well about the limitations of heroism but his static and binary conception of power and class-relations means the expedition leader is simply turned from a hero into a villain.

[18] Driver, "Intermediaries and the Archive," 25–6; Shellam, "Mediating Encounters Through Bodies and Talk,",100; Hayden Lorimer and Nick Spedding, "Locating Field Science: A Geographical Family Expedition to Glen Roy, Scotland," *The British Journal for the History of Science* 38, no. 1 (2005): 13–33; Alex Soojung-Kim Pang, "Gender, Culture, and Astrophysical Fieldwork: Elizabeth Campbell and the Lick Observatory–Crocker Eclipse Expeditions," *Osiris* 11, no. 1 (1996): 17–43; Sarah L. Evans, "Terra Incognita: Women on Royal Geographical Society Supported Expeditions, 1913–1970" (PhD Thesis, University of the West of England, 2015).

agency in ways that reinforce colonial stereotypes.[19] Such issues as visible in writing about Sidi Mubarak "Bombay" (1820–1885), who played a significant role in both of Burton and Speke's journeys.[20] He was a Yao man born in around 1820. At the age of twelve he was captured and enslaved by Swahili-speaking coastal merchants.[21] He was then taken to a slave market at Kilwa on the East Coast, sold to an Arab merchant and "taken off to India." [22] "I served this master for several years," Bombay reports, "till by his death I obtained my liberation."[23] Bombay then travelled back to Zanzibar, joining the Sultan's army. While serving, he met Burton and Speke in 1856 and joined the East African Expedition. Burton described him as "[t]he gem of the party."[24] Through his time in India, he had learned Hindustani, a skill which he put to use as a translator on the expedition. Bombay also served on Speke and Grant's 1860 expedition and was photographed in Cairo in 1863 along with the other named "faithfuls," who stayed with Speke throughout the expedition (figure 9). Bombay assumed a certain heroic reputation of his own and was awarded a silver medal by the RGS in 1863 before serving on other prominent expeditions.[25] We therefore have a comparatively detailed knowledge about Bombay's life and involvement in East African exploration. The danger of focusing on

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[19] Driver, "Intermediaries and the Archive," 25–26; Jones, "Local Knowledge," 58–91.

[20] Kennedy, *The Last Blank*, 170–171; Driver, "Hidden Histories," 429, 424; Driver, "Exploration as Knowledge Transfer," 91; Jones, "Local Knowledge," 54, 161, 209; Simpson, *Dark Companions*, 12–13, 17, 18–23, 25–38, 75–12, 138–39.

[21] Speke, *What Led*, 211.

[22] Speke, *What Led*, 212.

[23] Speke, *What Led*, 212.

[24] Burton, *Zanzibar*, 2: 180.

[25] For later accounts of Bombay see Stanley, *How I Found*, 63–5; Verney Lovett Cameron, *Across Africa* (London: Daldy, Ibister & Co. 1877), 9.

prominent individuals like Bombay is that explorers often wrote about such individuals in ways that reinforce negative stereotypes about Africans in general. For example, Speke praised Bombay's intellect after claiming (in racist terms) that Africans had no interest in geography: "Bombay, though, is a singular exception to this rule…he has become a great geographer and delights in pointing out the different features on my map to his envying neighbours."[26] This quote perfectly exemplifies the challenges of focusing on the heroism of individuals. While his contribution to exploration was valuable and should be recognized, there is a danger of using his apparent exceptionality to further perpetuate racist tropes about Africans more broadly.

In this chapter, I seek to further disrupt such heroic narratives by focusing on an even broader range of individuals and expeditionary activities. I argue that, far from being simple, logistical work often involved skilled embodied labour and the cooperation of multiple bodies. I focus on these forms of work, such as transport, cooking, and care to demonstrate the "fundamentally collective" nature of exploration and the interdependence of human and animal bodies.[27] Recovering these contributions is possible because explorers' writings frequently mention subaltern bodies—their strained muscles, sore feet, and caring labour—even when they omit important biographical details. Overall, focusing on the body work of an expedition can, I argue, help us to write a different history of exploration that draws attention to a far broader array of contributions.

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[26] Speke, *What Led*, 350.

[27] Driver, "Hidden Histories," 429; Driver, "Exploration as Knowledge Transfer," 94; Donna J. Haraway, *The Companion Species Manifesto: Dogs, People, and Significant Otherness* (Chicago: Prickly Paradigm Press, 2006).

INTERDEPENDENT BODIES ON BURTON AND SPEKE'S EXPEDITIONS TO EAST AFRICA

There is a growing recognition that Burton and Speke's expeditions to investigate the sources of the Nile depended on numerous bodies. As Stephen J. Rockel has shown, they relied on existing Arab and Asian trade routes and on the human labour of hundreds of individuals, with origins from across Africa and the Indian Ocean.[28] The Nyamwezi, from an area of modern Tanzania, dominated the East-African caravan trade, providing most of its labour.[29] Yet, scholarship on the Nile controversy often struggles to draw attention to the experiences and contributions of the Nyamwezi *pagazi* (porters) who formed an important component of such expeditions.[30] Moreover, there has been little attention to the caring labour on which the expedition leaders depended. In this section, I use a focus on such work to offer insights on the collaborative nature of East African

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[28] Rockel, "Decentering Exploration," 174; Kennedy, *The Highly Civilized*, 93–130; Kennedy, *The Last Blank*, 150–153; Wisnicki, *Fieldwork of Empire*, 39–70.

[29] Stephen J. Rockel, "'A Nation of Porters:' The Nyamwezi and the Labour Market in Nineteenth-Century Tanzania," *The Journal of African History* 41, no.2 (2000), 173–95.

[30] For instance, Wisnicki, "Charting the Frontier," does well to highlight the dependence of the expedition on the caravan system, but the actual embodied work of the porters is only briefly discussed.

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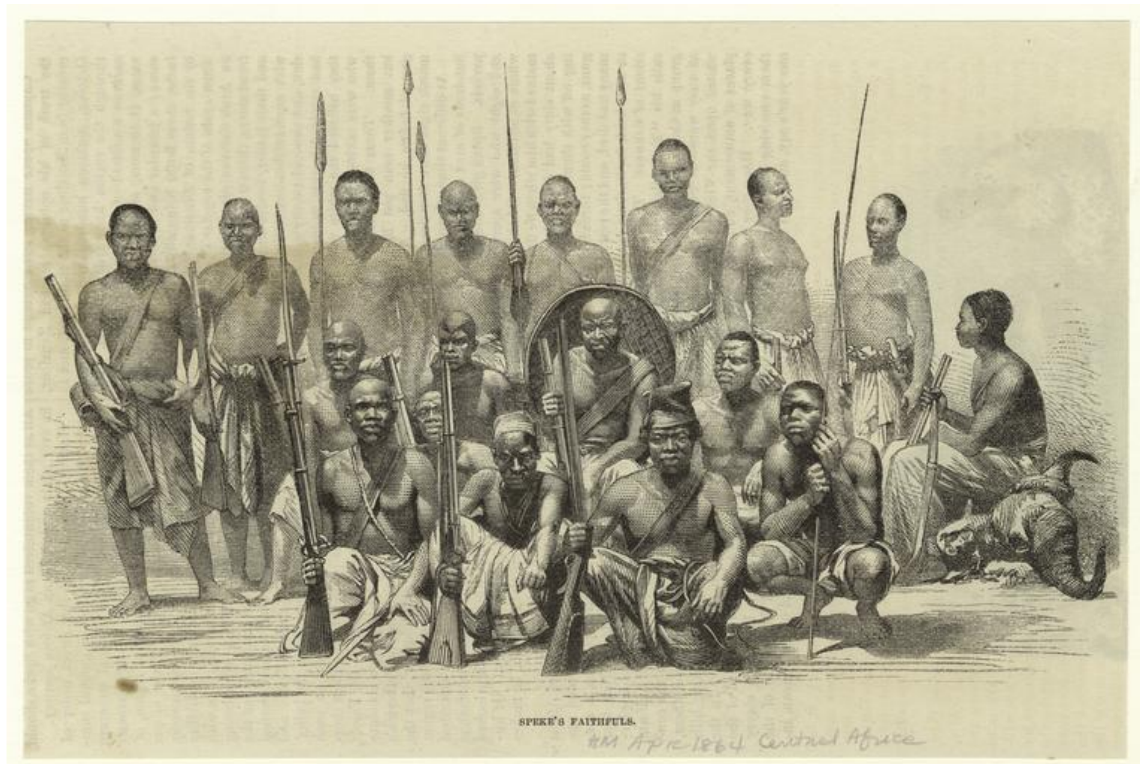

Figure 9. "Speke's Faithfuls," Cairo 1863. Speke, *Journal of the Discovery*, 611 based on a photograph by Royer. Rear: Uligemgo, Ilmas, Matagiri, Khamsin, Baturi, Mkate, Uledi Mapengo, Uledi (Grant's Servant); Centre: Manua, Sadiki, Umbari, Farhan, Mektub; Front: Mabruki, Mtamani, Bombay, Frij, Sangoro.[31]

Muscles: Human and Animal

The challenge of focusing the lives of porters is that we have comparatively little information about their biographies. Indeed, Burton, Speke and Grant do not even record the names of most of the Nyamwezi men they employed. Recovering their contributions is also complicated by the fact their composition shifted over the course of

[31] Caption information from Simpson, *Dark Companions.*

an expedition.[32] Burton reports that the EAE recruited four separate troops of Nyamwezi porters.[33] One hundred Nyamwezi porters carried Speke and Grant's supplies when they set off from the coast, but most soon deserted and had to be replaced.[34] As the parties travelled, porters deserted, were left sick and occasionally died, while others were recruited along the way. Drawing attention to the muscular labour of movement and carrying can shed some light on the contributions and experiences of both expeditions' porters and on the interdependence of humans and animals.

Nyamwezi porters transported much of an expedition's basic equipment including "arms, ammunition, tents and camping equipment, cooking vessels, scientific instruments and books, stationary, medicine chest, tools, clothes, and many other items. In addition there was the 'currency'—cloth, beads and wire—needed for gifts to local rulers and payment for food and passage, which formed a major part of the caravan's burden."[35] Loads were divided depending on the size, weight, and shape of the package in question.[36] Within the East-African caravan system, each porter "usually carried a load of about sixty to seventy pound of trade goods" but might also carry "a sleeping mat, cooking pots and rations. The total load might be one hundred pounds."[37] Stronger men sometimes carried more.[38] Lifting such loads required muscular strength, experience, and physical stamina. Burton claimed that "[i]n many of the pagazi or porters, the neck is bull-like, short heavy, and broad, everywhere a sign of health and

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[32] E.g., Burton, *The Lake Regions* 1: 244, 2: 229.

[33] Burton, "The Lake Regions," 16.

[34] Grant, *A Walk Across Africa*, 23.

[35] Simpson, *Dark Companions*, 13.

[36] Burton, *The Lake Regions* 1: 144–45.

[37] Rockel, "Decentering Exploration," 180; Burton, *The Lake Regions* 1: 144.

[38] Rockel, "Decentering Exploration," 180.

condition, of strength and endurance in man…The back is invariably straight the result of carrying burdens on the head."[39] There are clearly racial stereotypes at play in such descriptions, but there are also elements of truth. As Stephen Rockel has argued, Nyamwezi porters developed a unique and professionalised labour culture that celebrated physical strength and endurance.[40] Within Nyamwezi culture, participation in caravans became a "stamp of true manhood," and men who visited the coast would often change their names "to mark the significance of their visit."[41] As a result, many trained from an early age to become porters. Later European travellers to East Africa reported that Nyamwezi boys practiced carrying loads from an early age.[42] Similarly, the American explorer Mary French Sheldon noted that the Nyamwezi porters had "a muscular development in their shoulders in consequence of their habit of carrying loads upon them."[43] The labour that moved Burton and Speke through East Africa was far

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[39] Burton, "The Lake Regions," 321; see also Burton, *The Lake Regions* 1: 144.

[40] Rockel, "'A Nation of Porters,'" 174.

[41] Rockel, "'A Nation of Porters,'" 179.

[42] Rockel, "'A Nation of Porters,'" 179.

[43] Mary French Sheldon, *Sultan to Sultan: Adventures Amongst the Masai and other Tribes of East Africa* (Boston: Area Publishing, 1892), 121; Stephen J. Rockel, Caravan "Porters of the Nyika: Labour, Culture, and Society in Nineteenth Century Tanzania" (PhD Thesis, University of Toronto, 1997), 148.

from simple and unskilled but was a product of many years of "body work."[44]

Figure 10. "Captain Grant leaving Karague," Speke, *Journal of the Discovery*, 401. Zwecker from a sketch by Speke.

The strong, disciplined porters contrasted strongly with Burton, Speke, and Grant, who were often weakened by the effects of fever, dysentery, and other tropical diseases. Indeed, all three were carried by African people for significant periods.[45] Focusing on the different ways that explorers wrote about such incidents in their published and personal writings demonstrates some of the difficulties of engaging with such texts. In private, Burton described being carried on a stretcher in quite neutral language. He reports that he suffered from numb limbs and was "unable to walk or ride

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[44] McDowell, *Working Bodies.*

[45] Burton, *The Lake Regions*, 1: 176, 215, 219, 222, 391, 405, 2: 131, 157, 162, 229, 236; Speke, *Journal of the Discovery*, 146, 401, 407; Speke, *What Led*, 252.

except in a hammock carried by Wanyamnezy [sic] porters."[46] In public, though, Burton portrayed such incidents differently. He claimed that the Nyamwezi porters who carried him on the return march were insensitive to his suffering and had to be bribed and coerced into moving.[47] In doing so, he devalued the work on which he relied. Similarly, Grant describes being carried in his (ironically titled) book, *A Walk Across Africa* (1864). When leaving Karague, Grant found himself too weak to walk and was carried by a group of men from the East African kingdom of Buganda (figure 10).[48] Grant complained that he found the stretcher uncomfortable, the stops too frequent, and that porters would not carry him feet-first so that he could continue making observations.[49] The discomfort Burton and Grant experienced was perhaps because of their poor physical state while travelling but can also be seen as a rhetorical tool to manage their dependence on others. In focusing on their own experiences, the travellers drew attention away from the skilled embodied labour on which they depended, recasting their dependence as simply another source of suffering.

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[46] Richard Burton to Norton Shaw, 24 June 1858, RGS/CB/4/292, RGS Archives, f. 2.

[47] Burton, *The Lake Regions*, 2: 162–63.

[48] Grant, *A Walk Across Africa*, 189–90.

[49] Grant, *A Walk Across Africa*, 189.

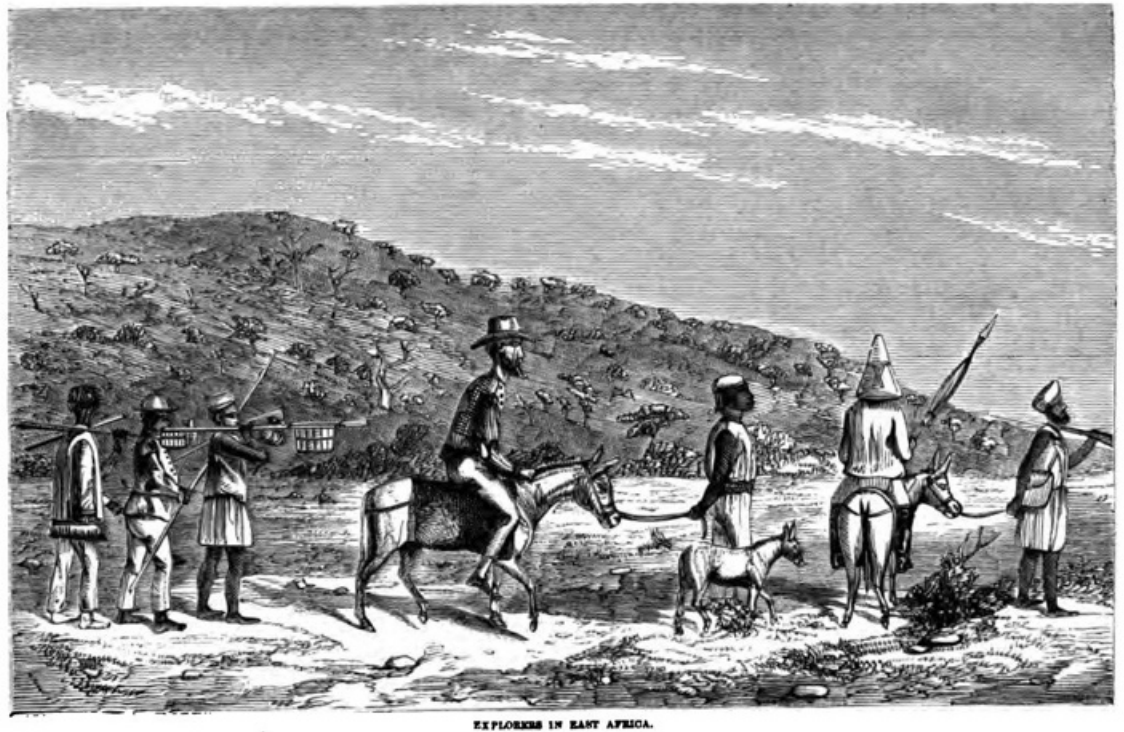

Figure 11. "Explorers in East Africa," Burton, The Lake Regions, 1:127.

The muscular labour of animals also deserves recognition in any account of East African Exploration. Due to problems with the recruitment of porters, mules, donkeys and asses formed an important component of both the EAE and the Speke and Grant's 1860–63 Expedition.[50] Their contributions are often downplayed in recent scholarship of the expedition, as these animals suffered from diseases endemic in the area and were also the prey of hyenas and other animals.[51] Consequently, they are generally seen as a less useful part of the expeditionary party. Yet it is important to remember that where such animals were available (and when physically able) the explorers rode on them and

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[50] Speke, *Journal of the Discovery*, 18–19; Grant, *A Walk Across Africa*, 23; Simpson, *Dark Companions*, 25, 26. Speke and Grant differ slightly on the numbers of porters, mules, and donkeys.

[51] Simpson, *Dark Companions*, 17; Kennedy, *The Last Blank*, 147.

used them to carry supplies.[52] On the EAE, Burton and Speke struggled to recruit porters, so hired donkeys instead.[53] Speke and Grant, took five donkeys "to carry the sick" as well as eleven baggage mules.[54] Speke reported that, at first, the mules carried packs "admirably" and wished he had brought "smaller and better-bred animals."[55] We even know more about the lives of some donkeys than about the biographies of many porters. One donkey bought on the East African Expedition also accompanied Speke on his later 1860 expedition. The animal therefore became a "great pet," of Speke's, and he was aggrieved when the animal (by this time pregnant) was killed in a dispute with local rulers.[56] A focus on the work of donkeys also highlights the interdependence of human and animal labour (illustrated in figure 11). Burton reports that each donkey required "the care of a man" when on the march.[57] East African exploration depended on multiple human and animal bodies to move both the explorers and their supplies. Such labour was far from unskilled, but was the product of training, experience, and interspecies collaboration. By focusing on specific parts of the body, it is possible to take such analysis even further.

Skin and Feet

Attention to the skin and feet can shed some light on the experiences and suffering of

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[52] Burton, "The Lake Regions" 15; Burton, *The Lake Regions* 1: 192.

[53] Burton, *The Lake Regions* 1: 10–12, 46.

[54] Grant, *A Walk Across Africa*, 23.

[55] John Hanning Speke to George Grey, 1 November 1860, George Grey Collection, GL S 39.3, Auckland Public Libraries.

[56] Speke, *Journal of the Discovery*, 165; Grant, *A Walk Across Africa*, 117.

[57] Burton, "The Lake Regions," 331.

an expedition's porters. Sore feet crop up in the published accounts because they slowed up the march, but they also give us some insight into the porters' day-to-day experiences. Most porters on Burton and Speke's expeditions walked hundreds (and possibly thousands) of miles across Africa with bare feet and, occasionally, makeshift sandals. When describing the expedition's march over the Usagara mountains, Burton narrates a typical afternoon march.[58] Burton notes that the porters often arrive after dark with "their faces torn by thorns projecting across the jungly path, with feet lacerated by stone and stub, and occasionally a leg lamed by stumbling into deep and narrow holes."[59] Other comments show that such experiences were commonplace. In *What Led to The Discovery of the Source of the Nile* (1864), Speke notes that on the way to Lake Victoria, "the pagazis' feet were sore from the late long marches, and declared they could not walk."[60] Several pages later, he notes that the party had to stop for "the restoration of wounded feet, the pagazis' being all blistered by the last four long marches."[61] As the quotes show, movement put physical strain on the porters bodies, and when it became too severe the expedition could not proceed.

When Speke returned to East Africa in 1860 with Grant, the porters' feet again suffered. Grant describes a revealing incident in which he hunted a giraffe. He notes "our men benefited by the giraffe's thick skin, which they converted into excellent sandals," which were particularly welcome as they were then traversing "thorny acacia country."[62] The fact that the porters had bare (and probably sore) feet on many other occasions is presented as unremarkable and hardly worthy of comment. Writings elsewhere in

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[58] Burton, *The Lake Regions* 1: 204.

[59] Burton, *The Lake Regions* 1: 204.

[60] Speke, *What Led*, 294.

[61] Speke, *What Led*, 296.

[62] Grant, *A Walk Across Africa*, 34.

Grant's account help us understand why. Later, Grant was forced to walk barefoot through a bog in Uganda. "Tears almost came to my eyes, the suffering from sharp roots was so severe," he reports.[63] Again, Grant used this incident to draw attention back to his own suffering. Meanwhile, he claims that "the natives" had "feet as hard as leather" and therefore suffered less.[64] While the porters' feet may well have been tougher than Grant's, such comments also draw on the racist idea common at the time (and still alive today) that black bodies are less sensitive to pain.[65] Read more critically, though, it again gives us some clues as to the experiences of the East African porters. Walking hundreds of miles barefoot was clearly a painful undertaking that required specific physical and psychological qualities to which explorers' accounts only allude. Overall, attention to skin and suffering allows us to surface something of the experiences of the porters who carried the explorers and their supplies across East and Central Africa. These insights are far from complete and often require careful reading, as such accounts are often laced with prejudice. But a focus on skin does shows that not all suffering was viewed or portrayed equally.

Care and Cooking

What comes through in many of the above passages is the extreme physical weakness of the white explorers on East African expeditions. In such a state, they relied on the labour of others to meet many of their bodily needs. On the EAE, two Goanese servants, Valentine Rodrigues and Gaetano Andrade, acted as valets and cooks to Burton and

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[63] Grant, *A Walk Across Africa*, 212.

[64] Grant, *A Walk Across Africa*, 212.

[65] Joanna Bourke, *The Story of Pain: From Prayers to Painkillers* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 192–206.

Speke.[66] Both Andrade and Rodrigues suffered severely from fever on the journey and Burton complained extensively about their illness, conduct, and cooking skills.[67] Despite their extreme suffering and Burton's grumbles, it is clear that the two men continued took care of them throughout the expedition.[68] Rodrigues also acted as a tailor, making new clothes for the explorers and was, Burton claimed, "as clever at sewing a coat as at cooking a curry."[69] He even notes that Rodrigues learned "to read a chronometer and thermometer" and notes that he played a role in the expedition's scientific work.[70] Taken together, these passages show other expedition members fed and dressed expedition leaders' bodies—even in very difficult circumstances. They also show how a focus on relations of care and dependence brings to the surface the different skills and attributes of subaltern expedition members.

Caring for the explorers when they were ill was also an important part of expeditionary labour, often involving "close and intimate work on the bodies of others."[71] Burton noted that Andrade "had a curious kind of tenderness when acting as a nurse."[72] Bombay also seems to have played an important role in caring for Burton and Speke. On one march Burton was suffering severely from fever but had to walk because of a shortage of transport animals. "Towards the end of that long march," he reports, "I

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[66] Burton, *The Lake Regions*, 1: 358.

[67] Burton, *The Lake Regions*, 1: 358.

[68] Speke spells Valentine's name Valantine.

[69] Burton, *The Lake Regions*, 1: 132., 2: 202.

[70] Burton, *The Lake Regions*, 1: 132. Burton claimed that Rodrigues needed "overseeing" to perform the job accurately perhaps as a rhetorical move to manage the expedition's dependence on an Asian man.

[71] McDowell, *Working Bodies*, 169.

[72] Burton, *The Lake Regions*, 1: 132.

saw with pleasure the kindly face of Seedy Bombay who was returning to me in hot haste, leading an ass, and carrying a few scones and hard-boiled eggs."[73] Bombay also drew on his own experiences of illness to help Speke. On the return march, Speke suffered from a fever known as the "little irons," Bombay (who had already suffered the same illness) "raised his master's [Speke's] right arm, placed him in a sitting position, as lying down was impossible, and directed him to hold the left ear behind the head, thus relieving the excruciating and torturing twinges by lifting the lung from the liver. The next spasm was less severe."[74] Bombay's assistance in this situation demonstrates his detailed understanding of the fever and its effects. It also brings to the surface the weakness of Speke's body, which appears almost infantilised by his total prostration. In their published accounts more broadly, the explorers sought to reassert control by complaining about the quality of cooking and care they received or by emphasising their mental determination. For instance, Speke later wrote that "thought of nothing but the march" despite his physical collapse on his 1860–63 expedition.[75] But it is hard to read such descriptions of total bodily dependence without suspecting that, in the field if not on the page, carers had a significant power over the bodies (and lives) of expedition leaders.

When Speke returned to East Africa, two South African cape riflemen of mixed heritage, privates Vandermerwe and April, were employed as cooks. However, they soon fell ill and were sent back.[76] Waungwana men then took over cooking duties,

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[73] Burton, *The Lake Regions*, 1: 279.

[74] Burton, *The Lake Regions*, 2: 234.

[75] Speke, *Journal of the Discovery*, 145.

[76] Speke *Journal of the Discovery*, 615; Grant, *A Walk Across Africa*, 22. Speke refers to these men using the racist term "hottentot," but they were, in fact, Cape Coloured men of mixed heritage.

particularly Rahan and Frij, who had originally been hired as interpreters.[77] The Waungwana were people who had been enslaved in the East African interior when young, transported to Zanzibar and brought up as Muslims. Though often referred to as slaves, they, in fact, "transcended the rather blurred boundaries between free and slave labour in nineteenth-century east Africa," often working on caravans for money.[78] As Muslims, they ensured the food prepared was halal.[79] Grant was not complimentary about their cooking.[80] Even so, he does include one revealing anecdote, which shows something of the energy and enthusiasm the cooks put into their work. He reports that M'kate

> [A] very tall good-looking lad, ever obliging and good-humoured, one day left a cooking pot twelve miles behind. He was admonished by Frij, and took the matter so much to heart that he travelled back for it alone that same day and returned during the night, having recovered the old pot, which was certainly not worth the journey…he was not asked to go back, and had walked by himself 36 miles in a strange country.[81]

Grant diminishes M'kate's contribution by suggesting that the pot was unworthy of such effort, but read more fairly, the incident highlights how the expeditions' cooks took a pride in their work and cared for their equipment even in the difficult circumstances of the expedition. Again, the incident demonstrates the methodological challenge of

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[77] Grant, *A Walk Across Africa*, 78–79, 75, 109, 113; Speke, *Journal of the Discovery*, 614. Rahan was later "sent back."

[78] Stephen J. Rockel, "Slavery and Freedom in Nineteenth Century East Africa: The Case of the Waungwana Caravan Porters," *African Studies* 68, no.1 (2009), 88.

[79] Speke, *Journal of the Discovery*, xix, 66, 432.

[80] Grant, *A Walk Across Africa*, 75.

[81] Grant, *A Walk Across Africa*, 360.

reading against the grain of explorers' accounts. It is not hard to imagine that if such actions had been undertaken by a white explorer to recover a scientific instrument, they would have been described in altogether more heroic terms. Subjective assessments about the value of different kinds of work provided a way to acknowledge dependence on others while at the same time disparaging incidents of African initiative.

A focus on care is also enlightening in that it draws attention to the presence of women and children in the expeditionary party. Women, both free and enslaved, played a key role in the nineteenth-century caravan system. On these expeditions, women had varying degrees of power: many were the partners of the Nyamwezi and Waungwana porters, sometimes as a result of temporary "caravan marriages."[82] Porters also purchased enslaved women and children in the African interior.[83] They played a variety of roles on the caravan, carrying loads, provisions, and supplying domestic and sexual services.[84] Their contributions are harder to establish from the available sources due to reticence of European explorers to talk about their relationships with African women or their complicity in slavery.[85] We do find occasional references to their presence, which sometimes emphasise the subordinate status of enslaved women and children vis-à-vis the Nyamwezi porters.[86] Other passages reveal the kinds of work they did. Grant notes that "a few" women travelled with the Nyamwezi porters, "generally carrying a child each on their backs, a small stool and et ceteras on their heads, and inveterately smoking during the march. They would prepare some savoury dish of herbs for their men on getting into camp, where they lived in bell-shaped erections made with boughs of

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[82] Rockel," Enterprising Partners," 757.

[83] Rockel," Enterprising Partners," 757–60; Burton, *The Lake Regions*, 2: 161–62.

[84] Rockel," Enterprising Partners," 758.

[85] Rockel," Enterprising Partners," 750.

[86] Burton, *The Lake Regions*, 1: 146, 161–62.

trees."[87] This brief but tantalising quote forces us to recognise the expedition leaders' bodies were not the only ones being cared for. The expedition's Nyamwezi porters also depended on others to feed and care for bodies. Moreover, the women who cared for the porters were themselves carrying both children and equipment. A focus on cooking and care brings to the surface the complex relations of interdependence on East African expeditions.

A focus on body work allows us to see something of the contributions and experiences of the various people and animals that made East African exploration possible. Attention to such issues also exposes the weakness of white expedition leaders and their reliance on the skilled labour of others. The specific conditions of East African exploration, and the extreme weakness of Burton and Speke, often push such relationships into view. Although their attempts to rhetorically manage African and Asian contributions mean such passages require careful reading. It would be wrong to view such relationships as an aberration. Similar patterns of dependency and distortion occurred elsewhere.

ISABELLA BIRD: RIDING, CHAIR-BEARERS, AND CARE

Like Burton and Speke, Bird depended on others, both people and animals, to transport her body and supplies. In this respect, her expeditions have similarities with Burton and Speke's, but she also relied on others in ways that were shaped by her disability, her gender, and the different roles of human and animal labour in the regions through which she travelled. She also adopted similar rhetorical strategies to the East African explorers

[87] Grant, *A Walk Across Africa*, 43; Speke, *Journal of the Discovery*, 612. When Speke arrived in Cairo in 1863 with his "faithfuls," the party included women and girls named Sikujua, Kahala, Mzizi, and Faida.

when it came to managing such relationships, often presenting caring and logistical labour as separate from the real work of exploration or by obscuring the identity of certain subalterns altogether.

Riding Ponies and Yaks: Dependence on Animals

One form of dependence that Bird had little problem acknowledging was her reliance on animals for both transport and companionship. Bird learned to ride horses "almost in infancy."[88] Riding allowed Bird to move in ways that were impossible when relying on her own body, enabling her to cross far larger distances than she was able to walk. Her spinal condition also meant that Bird's relationship to horses was deeper and more complex than many of the relations of human animal dependence discussed in this thesis. Riding was itself a form of physical therapy for Bird that often left her stronger than being stationary. For instance, when she was travelling across Persia in 1890, Bird reported that she was "very far from well in Tehran but the gallop over the desert down here did me great good."[89] Such claims are plausible. More recent scientific research has demonstrated that horse riding can be an effective therapy for people with disabilities, due to the motion of the horse.[90] Riding enabled Bird to increase her bodily capacity, demonstrating relations of dependence that go beyond mere transport, but actually blur the boundaries between the bodies of horse and rider.

Given these positive effects, it is unsurprising that Bird often rode horses, ponies,

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[88] Stoddart, *The Life of Isabella Bird*, 9; Middleton, *Victorian Lady Travellers*, 21.

[89] Isabella Bird to John Murray, 11 April 1890, Ms. 42027, NLS, f. 6.

[90] Hidehiko Uchiyama, Nobuyo Ohtani, and Mitsauki Ohta, "Three-Dimensional Analysis of Horse and Human Gaits in Therapeutic Riding," *Applied Animal Behavioural Science* 135, no. 31 (2011): 271–76.

and mules. Bird also used equine labour to carry her supplies, baggage, and expedition equipment.[91] She depicts such animals in various levels of detail, which parallels the varying degree to which the labours and contributions of her human assistants are visible in her accounts (a point I return to below). She viewed some animals as companions.[92] In *A Lady's Life in the Rocky Mountains* (1879), Bird described "Birdie", the bay Indian pony she rode for much of her trip, as "a little beauty, with legs of iron, fast, enduring, gentle and wise."[93] Throughout their time together, she refers to Birdie by name and became attached to her, describing how she was amused by "her funny ways."[94] Similarly, on her journey to lesser Tibet, Bird rode a horse named Gyalpo. She described him as "a beautiful creature, Badakshani bred, of Arab blood, a silver-grey, as light as a greyhound and as strong as a cart-horse. He was higher in the scale of intellect than any hose of my acquaintance."[95] Other animals get only a passing mention. In *Unbeaten Tracks in Japan* (1880), Bird discusses "the Japanese pack-horse" in general, noting that she had "ridden, or rather sat, upon seventy-six horses, all horrible."[96] In another work, she devoted a chapter to "the Korean pony," again, describing such animals as a group rather than as individuals.[97] Indeed, she reported that these animals "resented every attempt at friendliness with both teeth and heels."[98] As these comments suggest, the degree to which the contributions of different animals are visible depended not just their

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[91] Bird, *Unbeaten Tracks*, 1: 79, 145.

[92] Haraway, *The Companion Species Manifesto.*

[93] Bird, *A Lady's Life*, 156.

[94] Bird, *A Lady's Life*, 181.

[95] Bishop, *Among the Tibetans*, 9.

[96] Bird, *Unbeaten Tracks*, 1: 314.

[97] Bishop, *Korea and Her*, 1: 137–51.

[98] Bishop, *Korea and Her*, 1: 139.

work, but also on the degree to which Bird managed to form a relationship with them. But Human-animal relations were not one directional. Ponies needed people to care for them. Bird reported that Korean ponies were "desperate fighters," meaning each animal had to be accompanied by a guide (photographed in figure 12). These people walked with the ponies, loaded them, and even cooked the ponies a hot meal of beans and grains three times a day, doing so with "[g]reat care."[99] Bird reported that the guides were "very anxious" about the welfare of the animals "and take very great care of them, seeing to what passes as their comfort before their own."[100] These comments demonstrate the hybridity of expeditionary parties. They also show that people we know little about from a biographical perspective were in relations of care and companionship with animals.[101]

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Figure 12. "Mrs. Bishop's Travelling Party" in Korea. Photograph by Mrs Bishop. Stoddart, *The Life of Isabella Bird*, 306.

Bird sometimes depended on animals that were very different from those found

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[99] Bishop, *Korea and Her*, 1: 138–39.

[100] Bishop, *Korea and Her*, 1: 139.

[101] Haraway, *Companion Species.*

at home. Some non-human animals had adaptations that allowed her to travel in areas where her own body struggled or would have struggled. In lesser Tibet, Bird's party found their bodies affected by altitude sickness. She reported, "[h]orses and mules are unable to carry their loads, and men suffer from vertigo, vomiting, violent headache, and bleeding from the nose, mouth, and ears, as well of prostrations of strength."[102] Consequently, several yaks were used to move the expedition's supplies across high, rugged mountain passes.[103] Bird also rode a yak reporting that it had an "uncertain temper, and is not favourably disposed towards his rider."[104] The bodies of yaks are suited to life at high altitudes with larger hearts and lungs, adapted circulatory systems, and high energy metabolism.[105] The animals were also able to cross difficult terrain, and Bird notes that a yak can "carry loads where it might be supposed that only a goat could climb."[106] These animals therefore extended the range of the expedition, enabling the party to travel to areas it would have otherwise proved impossible to reach.

Animal bodies played a central role in Bird's ability to travel. In part, this dependence was a product of the specific effects of riding on Bird's disabled body, which meant she relied on horses for both physical therapy and companionship. Using animal bodies therefore allowed her to travel further and higher than would have been possible unaided. Depending on animals for transport and companionship was also a far from unusual feature of Victorian travel narratives, and she had little trouble acknowledging

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[102] Bishop, *Among the Tibetans*, 62.

[103] Bishop, *Among the Tibetans*, 62, 98.

[104] Bishop, *Among the Tibetans*, 63.

[105] Qiang Qiu,, Guojie Zhang, Tao Ma, Wubin Qian, Junyi Wang, Zhiqiang Ye, Changchang Cao *et al.*, "The Yak Genome and Adaptation to Life at High Altitude," *Nature genetics* 44, no. 8 (2012): 946–49.

[106] Bishop, *Among the Tibetans*, 63.

their contributions. Even so, not all animals are equally visible in her accounts. Japanese and Korean ponies are described in general, while certain allegedly intelligent or well-bred horses are described in more detail. Visibility was often shaped by Bird's relationship to the animals rather than the value of their contributions. Similarly, and as I now show, Bird wrote about the people on whom she depended in various levels of detail.

Chair-Bearers and Disciplined Muscles

Like Burton and Speke, Bird was also carried by people for significant periods. It was in China that Bird relied most extensively on human labour to move her body and equipment. Susan Schoenbauer Thurin calculates that Bird directly employed 134 people during her 15 months in the country.[107] Of these, we only know the names of a handful of men, such as Bird's guide, translator, and "servant," Be-dien, who accompanied her or most of the trip. The rest are unnamed in her account, but, again, a critical focus on their labour allows us to examine the kinds of work they did.

While in China, Bird travelled up the Yangtze by boat. Human labour pulled her craft upstream. Bird refers to the men who pulled her boat as "trackers."[108] At the start of the journey, she reported that her boat had sixteen trackers on board, but the captain recruited more en route to help pull the boat up particular rapids.[109] She often suggests their work is somehow animalistic. Bird describes the "inhuman work" of the trackers, noting that they pull the boat from the shore attached to a rope, often in time with a

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[107] Susan Schoenbauer Thurin, *Victorian Travelers and the Opening of China, 1842–1907* (Athens: Ohio University Press,1999), 144–45.

[108] Bishop, *The Yangtze Valley*, 118.

[109] Bishop, *The Yangtze Valley*, 105.

drum.[110] The men "swing the arms and body forward, stooping so low to their work that their hands nearly touch the ground, and at a distance they look like quadrupeds."[111] Sometimes, the paths were so steep that even the "goat-footed" trackers struggled.[112] Bird notes the effects of this work on their bodies, claiming that "severe strains and hernia are common, produced by the tremendous efforts in dragging."[113] She describes how pulling the boat up one "very severe rapid…took us four hours of desperate dragging".[114] Bird's use of the word "us" is revealing, as she did not personally do any pulling but was "[s]itting shivering for that time on a big boulder".[115] Bird's descriptions of the trackers highlight her dependence on their hard and disciplined muscular labour. She rhetorically manages this dependence by both emphasising her own suffering and by describing the trackers bodies using animalising language.

For much of her 1,200 mile land journey, Bird was carried in a carried in an open chair by Chinese men (differing from the more traditional closed chair in figure 13).[116] Bird describes the chair as a "light, comfortable bamboo chair," which carried "forty pounds of luggage" including her camera.[117] During the first stage, she was carried by three chair-bearers and accompanied by four other men who carried her baggage.[118] Bird describes, but does not name, her first three bearers: "Two were opium smokers, and the

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[110] Bishop, *The Yangtze Valley*, 148.

[111] Bishop, *The Yangtze Valley*, 146.

[112] Bishop, *The Yangtze Valley*, 109.

[113] Bishop, *The Yangtze Valley*, 148.

[114] Bishop, *The Yangtze Valley*, 137.

[115] Bishop, *The Yangtze Valley*, 137.

[116] Stoddart, *The Life of Isabella Bird*, 298–99.

[117] Bishop, *The Yangtze Valley*, 196.

[118] Bishop, *The Yangtze Valley*, 196; Bishop, "A Journey in Western Sze-Chuan,"19.

third was a vegetarian, who abstained from opium, tobacco, and *samshu* [an alcoholic drink made of rice]."[119] These brief comments are revealing. They show the reliance of two men on opium, which may have been a way to cope with the bodily strains involved. For the second leg of her overland trip, Bird and her supplies were carried by a separate group of eight men, whom she describes as "cheerier and better than those from whom I had reluctantly parted."[120] Later, Bird hired a further group of chair-bearers and porters, this time "a family party" recruited on her behalf on "indefinite lines."[121] As with Burton and Speke's expedition, the makeup of Bird's party shifted considerably, and she gives us only scant information about any of the individuals. Even so, occasional references to Bird's chair-bearers scattered throughout her account highlights the degree to which she depended on their skilled bodily labour during the journey and shed some light on their sufferings. In her book, Bird reports that

> Chair travelling is, I think, the easiest method of locomotion by land. My one objection to it is the constant shifting of the short bamboo carrying pole on which the long poles hang, from one shoulder of each bearer to the other. It has to be done simultaneously, involves a stoppage, occurs every hundred yards and under, and always gives the impression that the shoulder which is relieved is in unbearable pain. Chair-bearing is a trade by itself, and bearers have to be brought up to it. It is essential to keep step absolutely, and to be harmonious in all movements.[122]

In describing chair travelling as "easy" Bird draws attention to her own experiences. However, the allusion to the bearer's painful shoulder also sheds some light

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[119] Bishop, *The Yangtze Valley*, 202.

[120] Bishop, *The Yangtze Valley*, 305, 296.

[121] Bishop, *The Yangtze Valley*, 362.

[122] Bishop, *The Yangtze Valley*, 202.

on both the embodied work and suffering involved in moving her across China. Moreover, she also suggests that the work required both coordination and many years of training.

From other comments in Bird's account, is clear that the chair-bearers and porters suffered severely. At one stage Bird described how, in heavy rain, "the bearers were constantly slipping and even falling, I had to do a good deal of being hauled and lifted along."[123] Another group of porters and bearers that Bird recruited to take her towards the Chinese-Tibetan frontier experienced low temperatures, altitude sickness, and over-exertion.[124] Despite their own suffering, the bearers carried out caring duties. Bird reports that over the course of the trip, "we gradually came to understand each other; and I found my cloak put over my shoulders for me, a wooden stool brought for my feet, sundry little comforts attended to."[125] The bearers' labour was a form of "body work" in multiple senses: not only did it rely on the bearers' disciplined muscles and ability and withstand the pain of such labour, but the bearers also worked carried out caring labour on Bird's body.[126]

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[123] Bishop, *The Yangtze Valley*, 263.

[124] Bishop, *The Yangtze Valley*, 426.

[125] Bishop, *The Yangtze Valley*, 207.

[126] McDowell, *Working Bodies*, 119–57.

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Figure 13: "Lady's Sedan Chair (Chinese Propriety)." Bird's chair differed from this one as it was open. Bishop, *The Yangtze Valley*, 259.

Like other explorers, Bird adopted strategies to manage her reliance on the labour of these Asian men in her published narrative. In Szechuan, she left her chair and "walked up part of the colossal staircase by which the road is carried over the Pass of Shen Kia-Chao."[127] She reports that "my bearers showed the construction they put on my doing so by asking, 'Does the foreign woman think us not strong enough to carry her?'"[128] These comments may also have been included by Bird to emphasise that the chair-bearer's labour was voluntary and that Bird was not being exploitative by allowing them to carry her. However, we should not discount the possibility that the bearers did

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[127] Bishop, *The Yangtze Valley*, 182, 207.

[128] Bishop, *The Yangtze Valley*, 182, 207.

genuinely take pride in their work. Elsewhere, Bird reported that she never experienced any "shirking of work" from them.[129] Attention to the embodied labour of moving Bird across China brings to the surface complex relations of interdependence, while also raising questions about the degree to which such comments were accurately reported in her published account.

A focus on the muscular work of moving Bird's body through China shows her dependence on the muscular labour of trackers and chair-bearers. While acknowledging this labour, Bird rhetorically managed it in several way: she obscures the identities of the bearers; she describes the trackers using animalising language; and she emphasises the voluntary nature of their work. As with Burton and Speke's writings, it is difficult to imagine these incidents being reported in such a way if the identity of the workers had been different. These comments expose the degree to which ideas about racial difference shaped how Bird wrote about subaltern labour in her accounts. Such imperatives were particularly central in how she wrote about care.

Guides and Care

Ideas about class, gender, and racial identity shaped how Bird wrote about the work of care. She was prepared to undertake caring labour when travelling in America. When writing about her time in the Rocky Mountains, where she stayed in a hut with a group of white men, Bird emphasised how she took on much of the domestic work. "I felt like a servant," she commented.[130] In these instances, travel enabled Bird to take on forms of work that she considered unacceptable for middle and upper-class women at home and

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[129] Isabella L. Bishop, "Manuscript of a Speech by Isabella Lucy Bishop Entitled 'The Yangtze Valley and Beyond," 7 March 1899, Ms. 42030, NLS, f. 10.

[130] Bird, *A Lady's Life*, 258, 244; Bird, *Letters to Henrietta*, 189.

allowed her to emphasise "a superior English identity and genteel femininity."[131] In her later travels in Asia, though, Bird approached relations of care very differently. Here, her body was fed and cared for by Asian men, emphasising how travel gave her "temporary licence to behave in ways constructed as masculine."[132]

As elsewhere, caring and cooking was a central part of expeditionary labour, but our knowledge about the people who did this work is varied. Sometimes, we know their names and a fair amount about the work they did. For nine months of her expedition through Persia, Bird she employed Mirza Yusuf, "an educated young Brahmin, for some years in the British post-office service in the Gulf, and lately a teacher."[133] She also hired a Persian cook, Hassan.[134] Yusuf and Hassan and other unnamed servants together cared for Bird's body and she describes the work they carried out:

> My servants have fallen fairly well into their work, but are frightfully slow. All pitch tents, and Hassan cooks, washes, packs the cooking table equipments [*sic*] and saddles my horse. Mirza Yusuf interprets, waits on me, packs the tent furnishings, rides with me, and is always within hearing of my whistle. He is good, truthful, and intelligent, and sketches with some talent, is always cheerful, never grumbles, is quite indifferent to personal comfort, gets on well with the people, is obliging to every one [*sic*], is always ready to interpret, and though well educated has the good sense not to

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[131] Morin, *Frontiers of Femininity*, 54.

[132] Blunt, *Travel, Gender, and Imperialism*, 105.

[133] Bird, *Journeys in Persia*, 1: 216.

[133] Bird, *Journeys in Persia*, 1: 210.

[134] Bird, *Journeys in Persia*, 1: 210, 285.

regard any work as 'menial.'"[135]

In this passage, Bird presents the ideal subordinate as someone who is well-educated but prepared to do the "menial," domestic, work of exploration, often undertaken by women in Britain. Although it is clear that the two men did much (if not most) of the day-to-day work of travel, Bird portrays this essential work as that of a loyal servant rather than that of a full member of the expedition. Moreover, she disparages such contributions by complaining about the pace at which it was done.

Bird's dependence on the caring labour of Asian men was a common feature of her later travels. But these relationships were not identical and were shaped by the environments through which Bird travelled and the skills of her carers. In Korea, she was unable to hire a local interpreter and was, instead, accompanied by three men acting as guides and translators: Mr Miller, "a young missionary," and his servant, Che-on-I, whom Miller brought "to supplement his imperfect knowledge of Korean."[136] Bird was also accompanied by "a Chinese servant, Wong" whom she somewhat patronisingly describes as "a big cheery fellow, with inexhaustible good-nature and contentment, never a cloud of annoyance on his face, always making the best of everything, ready to help every one [*sic*], true, honest, plucky, passionately fond of flowers, faithful, manly, always well and hungry and with a passable knowledge of English!"[137] Wong and Che-on-I played an important role in Bird's journey, arranging transport, translating, cooking food, preparing Bird's bedding, washing clothes, and helping move the party's boat up some cataracts.[138] Bird reports that "Wong used to hunt along the river-banks for wild onions and carrots, after the stock of cultivated roots was exhausted, and he

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[135] Bishop, *Journeys in Persia*, 1: 341.

[136] Bishop, *Korea and Her*, 1: 69.

[137] Bishop, *Korea and Her*, 1: 69.

[138] Bishop, *Korea and Her*, 1: 69, 73, 91, 103, 124, 142, 144, 182.

made paste of flour and water [*sic*], rolled it with a bamboo on the top of a box, cut it into biscuits with the lid of a tin, and baked them in the frying pan. Rice fritters too he made morning, noon, and night."[139] In this situation, nourishing the expedition's bodies required both botanical knowledge, ingenuity, and culinary skills. Even so, Bird presents this work as that of a servant rather than an equal expedition member.

Despite her dependence on such skilled embodied labour Bird continued to rhetorically separate such work from the allegedly more valuable intellectual labours she carried out. The most striking example is Bird's writings about her Chinese travelling companion Be-dien, who accompanied her up the Yangtze valley.[140] In one short but revealing passage, Bird describes the sheer variety of work he undertook reporting that he "was active and attentive, was never without leave of hearing my whistle, was always at hand to help me over slippery and difficult places, showed great pluck, never grumbled, arranged and packed up my things, interpreted carefully, improved fairly in English, always contrived to get hot water and food for me."[141] This passage illustrates the multiple forms of work carried out by Be-dien and the essential role this played in her ability to survive, move, and understand what was happening around her. Even so, Bird dismissed this work by claiming that despite his contribution Be-dien only "made a tolerable travelling servant."[142] In doing so, Bird emphasises that the body work of translating and caring for her body is not part of the work of exploration.

In other instances, Bird sought to obscure her dependence on caring labour by

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[139] Bishop, *Korea and Her*, 1: 91.

[140] Bishop, *The Yangtze Valley*, 175–76, 207,210, 245, 262–63.

[141] Bishop, *The Yangtze Valley*, 207; Bishop, "A Journey in Western Sze-Chuan," 19, includes a similar description.

[142] Bishop, *The Yangtze Valley*, 207.

hiding the identities of those who did it. When Bird travelled in western Tibet, much of the hard logistical and caring work was undertaken by expedition members who go unnamed in Bird's published account. They are referred to only in somewhat derogatory terms as "coolies". She reports, for example, that

> I sent a coolie carrying the small tent and lunch basket to await me half-way…On reaching the shelter tent, I halted for two hours, or till the caravan had got a good start after passing me. At the end of the march I usually found the tent pitched on irrigated ground, near a hamlet, the headman of which provided milk, fuel, fodder and other necessaries at fixed prices. 'Afternoon tea' was speedily prepared, and dinner, consisting of roast meat and boiled rice was ready two hours later.[143]

Bird's use of the passive voice to describe putting up the tent and preparing food obscures the labour involved in the activities and the identity of the person who did it. What is clear, though, is that such work was absolutely central to her expeditions.

As these incidents show, a focus on the embodied work of subaltern expedition members brings to the fore the significant role of various people and animals in her travels. Bird's dependence on others took various forms on her different journeys. In all of them, though, she was far from alone. She was often dependent on the muscles and labour of numerous other people and animals who cared for and transported her body. At times, she gives remarkably detailed descriptions of the people and animals who carried out such work. At other points, she obscures their identities. Possibly, these decisions were based on how close her personal relations with individual subalterns were, but racial prejudice was clearly also at play. As such, it is questions of relationship and identity that shape how subaltern contributions are represented, rather than the actual value of the work being carried out. Either way, whether their names are present or absent, Bird generally sought to emphasise how such work was in some way separate

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[143] Bird, *Among the Tibetans*, 34.

from, and less important than, the true work of travel and exploration. But what happened when white explorers travelled to an area where there was no indigenous population to depend on? Was caring labour still portrayed as separate from the real work of exploration?

SCOTT'S ANTARCTIC EXPEDITIONS: CLASS, CARE, AND CANINES

In Antarctica, it was class (and sometimes nationality) rather than racial or gender difference that shaped how the labour of cooking and caring was valued and divided. Compared to the other expeditions discussed, the human component of Scott's Antarctic expeditions was much less diverse in its composition, depending mostly on men from the Royal Navy, the merchant navy, and civilian scientists. We also have better records about the contributions of working-class sailors. Unlike the other expeditions, we know the names and something of the biographies of all those who were involved. In large part, this greater knowledge is a product of the fact that the expeditions had stricter practices of record keeping and that many sailors had some degree of literacy. But we also know more because no one else could be recruited in Antarctica, meaning the borders of the expedition were more clearly defined. Despite the greater archival evidence available, Ben Maddison has demonstrated how most scholarship has devoted comparatively little attention to the labour, contributions, and achievements of many working-class expedition members.[144] My analysis broadly agrees with Maddison's insight that working-class expedition members often did a disproportionate share of the muscular, domestic, and caring labour. However, whereas Maddison is interested in "rigid division" of labour along class lines, I show that these distinctions could also become blurred. Moreover, my comparative perspective allows me to show that, perhaps

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[144] Maddison, *Class and Colonialism;* 1–4; Anthony, *Hoosh.*

because all the expedition members were white men, such work was not generally viewed in such a pejorative way as in other contexts.[145] When the explorers were sledging, cooking and caring could even be rendered a heroic aspect of exploration. I then show that the expeditions also depended on dogs and ponies in ways that challenge the idea that these expeditions were purely British undertakings.

Class and Cooking in Ships and Huts

Cooking and cleaning was an area where expeditionary labour was generally allocated alon class lines.[146] Writing in his diary from the *Terra Nova* expedition, Scott argued this division of labour was important to their scientific productivity: "I think it is a good thing in these matters the officers need not wait on themselves; it gives long unbroken days of scientific work and must, therefore, be an economy of brain in the long run."[147] These comments show that the confined space of the hut and the homogeneity of the party led to a greater recognition of such work as an essential part of expeditionary labour. In Britain, domestic labour was (and is) largely done by women.[148] As numerous scholars have argued, the unequal division of such labour contributes to the exclusion of women from more "heroic" acts of scientific discovery.[149] Nevertheless, we know a

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[145] Maddison, *Class and Colonialism*, 167.

[146] Maddison, *Class and Colonialism;* 1–4; Anthony, *Hoosh.*

[147] Scott, *Journals*, 228.

[148] Linda McDowell, *Gender Place, and Identity: Understanding Feminist Geographies* (Minnesota: University of Minneapolis Press, 1999), 71–96; McDowell, *Working Bodies*, 159–212; more broadly, see Ann Oakley, *The Sociology of Housework* (1974, Bristol: Policy Press, 2018).

[149] Oreskes, "Objectivity or Heroism?,"87–113.

fair amount about who did the domestic work on Scott's final expedition. On the ship, Scott reports that "our two stewards [Frederick J.] Hooper and Neald [*sic*], provide for all requirements—washing up, tidying cabin, and making themselves generally useful."[150] Hooper was so useful that he was transferred to the shore party. In the hut, Thomas C. Clissold cooked, and Hooper did most of the cleaning. Scott describes how Clissold rose at 7 am, before the rest of the party, "to start the breakfast. At 7.30 Hooper starts sweeping the floor and setting the table. Between 8 and 8.30 the men are out and about fetching ice for melting &c."[151] Scott himself got up around 8.30 and ate breakfast with the other officers. Scott reports that after the officers' meal, "Hooper has another good sweep up the hut [sic] after breakfast, washes the mess traps, and generally tidies things."[152] Scott praised the quality of Clissold's cooking and baking.[153] When Clissold served polar animals, such as seal, penguin, and skua, Scott claimed that "I have never met these articles of food in such a pleasing guise."[154] Similarly, Priestley claimed that penguin, when cooked by the northern party's cooks Dickason and Browning, was "a delicacy worth travelling some way to taste."[155] Compared to Burton and Bird, both Scott and Priestley are far less dismissive of the labour involved in cooking and cleaning, even if the such activities were unevenly apportioned. Indeed, Scott directly links such work to the explorers' scientific productivity. In part, the visibility of such labour is

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[150] Scott, *Journals*, 14 and note 14. As Max Jones demonstrates, the man referred to was actually called Neale.

[151] Scott, *Journals*, 227.

[152] Scott, *Journals*, 228; Priestley, *Antarctic Adventure*, 73. Priestley includes a similar description of the daily routine in the Northern party's hut.

[153] Scott, *Journals*, 169.

[154] Scott, *Journals*, 95.

[155] Priestley, *Antarctic Adventure*, 73.

shaped by the fact that white naval men were carrying out such work, which means such writings lack the racial prejudice that permeate explorers' accounts in other contexts. However, the relative homogeneity of the party may also have meant that leaders and cooks were more likely to see eye-to-eye on questions of flavour than in other contexts. The confined space of a polar hut and extreme hunger that the explorers report also contributed to the value attached to the work of cooking in explorers' published accounts. Whatever the cause, in Antarctica, cooking was often presented as a central and valuable part of expeditionary activity.[156]

On the BNAE, Scott was more pejorative about the quality of the cooking. He fired the first cook, Sydney Roper, during the expedition's stay in New Zealand, replacing him with Henry R. Brett.[157] As I discuss further in Chapter 6 *Disciplined Bodies*, Scott had a poor relationship with Brett, whom he described as a "thorough knave" and "dirty."[158] Scott was pleased when Brett returned from Antarctica after the expedition's first winter.[159] Even so, for the first year the expedition depended on the labour of Brett and the cook's mate, Clarke, to provide it with three meals a day during the polar winter.[160] This work was made particularly challenging by the deterioration of the expedition's preserved food supplies. Many tins had spoiled, meaning that the expedition's doctors had to check every can—by taste or smell—before it was served.[161] The fact that this work was carried out by the expedition's medics suggests that Scott did not trust Brett to discard any "tainted" food. Scott's complaints about Brett's cooking

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[156] For a detailed analysis of polar cooking see Anthony, *Hoosh.*

[157] Baughman, *Pilgrims on The Ice*, 88.

[158] Scott, *The Voyage*, 1: 336.

[159] Scott, *The Voyage*, 2:180.

[160] Scott, *The Voyage*, 1: 33, 2: 180.

[161] Wilson, *Diary of the "Discovery" Expedition*, 151; Scott, *The Voyage*, 1: 307.

seem to have been shared by others on the expedition, with Armitage even suggesting that his cooking contributed to the scurvy outbreak the expedition suffered.[162] Scott, meanwhile, reports a marked improvement once Brett left and Clarke took over as cook.[163] The problems with food, cooking, and scurvy on this expedition only emphasised to Scott the importance of such work in maintaining an expedition's physical and mental health, also influenced by a longer tradition of using food to boost morale on British polar expeditions.[164]

Throughout both of Scott's expeditions, many activities remained divided along class lines. The heavy work of collecting "ice for the daily consumption of water for cooking, drinking, and washing" was also a task that fell to the "men."[165] But polar travel also saw the explorers care for each other. Cutting hair was a collaborative undertaking. Raymond notes that "every man was his neighbour's barber."[166] Officers also began to recognise the complexities of some types of labour that they had previously taken for granted. On both of Scott's expeditions officers washed their own clothes.[167] "I shall always have a high respect for laundry-work in future," Scott wrote after the experience.[168] Carrying our such work could lead officers to develop a new-found appreciation of its difficulties. The fact that naval officers partook in work that was, in

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[162] Armitage, *Two Years in the Antarctic*, 138; Scott, *The Voyage*, 1: 336.

[163] Scott, *The Voyage*, 2: 180.

[164] Shane McCorristine and Jane S.P. Mocellin, "Christmas at the Poles: Emotions, Food, and Festivities on Polar Expeditions, 1818–1912," *Polar Record* 52, no. 5 (September 2016): 562–77.

[165] Scott, *The Voyage*, 1: 292.

[166] Priestley, *Antarctic Adventure*, facing page 27; Evans, "Terra Incognita."

[167] Priestley, *Antarctic Adventure*, 66.

[168] Scott, *The Voyage*, 1: 357; see also Priestley, *Antarctic Adventure*, 66.

other contexts, divided along class, racial, or gender lines made such labour more visible in their published narratives. Indeed, Priestley even included images of such work in his published book on the expedition (see figure 13). This visibility of such activities in explorers' published accounts shows that domestic work, when carried out by certain people in certain spaces, could be by rendered a central part of expeditionary activity.

This image is not available due to copyright restrictions.

Figure 14. "Two Methods of Washing Clothes." Priestley, *Antarctic Adventure*, 75.

In general, working-class sailors did much of the work of cooking, caring, and cleaning on Scott's Antarctic expedition, as Maddison argues. The division is particularly noticeable in the expedition's huts and ships. These spaces were viewed as relatively comfortable and domestic compared with the surrounding environments.[169] However, in contrast to other expeditions, leaders wrote in more detail about this work and were more prepared to portray it as a valuable part of expeditionary activity. Scott saw this division of labour as productive because of the extra time it allowed officers and

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[169] Carolyn Strange, "Reconsidering the 'Tragic' Scott Expedition: Cheerful Masculine Home-Making in Antarctica, 1910–1913," *Journal of Social History* 46, no. 1 (2012): 66–88; Armston Sheret, "Tainted Bodies," 25–26.

scientists to conduct their scientific work. In this way the reliance on polar exploration on working-class domestic labour did to lead to their comparative exclusion from more "heroic" activities, as argued by Maddison. Even here though, officers still took on duties that they seldom did at home. As I now show, Antarctic sledging saw the boundaries between different kinds of labour blurred in more fundamental ways.

Care and Coordination while Sledging

Cooking and caring labour was more evenly distributed (and often more collaborative) when the explorers were away from the main hut or ship. These instances show that officers were perfectly prepared to do forms of work that they avoided in the hut while they were sledging. This different attitude was because polar travel put such a strain on the men's bodies that cooperation was essential to survival, but it was also a question of location and identity. In Antarctica, labour that, in other contexts, was dismissed as the work of "travelling servants" was rendered an essential party of expeditionary activity. Again, this different approach to such work seems to have been largely motivated by the fact it was carried out by white men in an extreme environment. In certain circumstances, cooking and care could even be rendered heroic.

The work of cooking is particularly visible in explorers' accounts of sledging. While travelling, they rotated cooking duties, normally taking weekly turns to heat food and water for the party's three daily meals.[170] This was the first time some upper-class expedition members had undertaken such work. Anxious about the prospect of catering for his tent mates, Cherry Garrard even took lessons from the chef of his stately home before joining the *Terra Nova* expedition.[171] Cooking in such situations certainly was a

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[170] Scott, *The Voyage*, 1: 442; Cherry Garrard, *The Worst Journey*, 1: 235–36.

[171] Wheeler, *Cherry*, 61.

work of skill and explorers' accounts comment on the quality of the food prepared by different individuals, suggesting it made a marked difference to how full they felt.[172] Attention to the difficulties of cooking in a polar tent could even lead to these activities being portrayed as one of the heroic difficulties of polar travel. Scott includes a vivid description of polar catering in *The Voyage of the "Discovery"* (1905) emphasising the challenges of handling metal pans with bare hands and rationing out food supplies.[173] He also notes that the men had to move their bodies carefully in the confined space: "elbows and knees have to be managed with caution to avoid disaster to the cooker."[174] Other explorers published accounts include similar descriptions.[175] As such, the labour of cooking is presented in a level of detail absent in other contexts and is rendered an essential part of expeditionary activity.

Antarctic travel also relied on numerous forms of interpersonal care that are described in explorers' published and private accounts.[176] Such were the strains of polar travel, that the breakdown of one expedition member could threaten the safety of the whole party. Consequently, explorers devoted considerable attention to caring for each others' bodies. Wilson's diary from the *Terra Nova* expedition includes numerous passages where he comments on issues such as frostbites, blisters, snow-blindness, and infected cuts.[177] Treating such ailments meant that interpersonal care was an important

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[172] E.g., Cherry Garrard, *The Worst Journey*, 2: 330.

[173] Scott, *The Voyage*, 1: 442–46, 458, 476–78.

[174] Scott, *The Voyage*, 1: 477.

[175] Evans, *South With Scott*, 149, 241–43.

[176] Wylie, "Becoming Icy," 259.

[177] Edward Wilson, Diary from the *Terra Nova* Expedition, entries December 15th 1911, 17th December 1911, 7 January 1912, 20 January 1912, 24th – 28th January 1912, Ms. 1043, SPRI Archives.

part of the explorers' daily routine. As John Wylie summarises,

> Each night, in the tents, eyes blinded by the luminous intimacy of the landscape are treated with zinc sulphate and cocaine, then swaddled in rags and tea leaves. Frozen feet and hands are placed upon the warm chests and stomachs of consenting companions in a series of awkward embraces, unlikely arrangements of body parts.[178]

Just surviving while sledging relied on the explorers cooperating and looking after each other, coordinating their movements and showing close attention to the health of those around them. Importantly, descriptions of such work were included in explorers' published narratives.[179] Unlike elsewhere, they presented interpersonal care and mutual dependence as part of the work of an explorer.

The importance of coordination between bodies was particularly important while travelling. Effective sledging required the men to move their bodies together, with each member pulling "rhythmically" at the right time.[180] Done effectively, the individual explorers' bodies were transformed "into a machine—a machine that must keep moving with that regular swinging step…and can do so without straining its parts."[181] If one member was struggling, or pulled at the wrong time, then sledging became hard, inefficient, and uncomfortable.[182] Scott, for instance, suggests that bad sledging performance could be a result of "bad stepping and want of swing."[183] The embodied

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[178] Wylie, "Becoming Icy," 259.

[179] Scott, *The Voyage*, 1: 478, 485, 2: 6, 73, 101; Cherry Garrard, *The Worst Journey*, 2: 332, 353–55, for example.

[180] Cherry Garrard, *The Worst Journey*, 2: 498.

[181] Scott, *The Voyage*, 1: 491.

[182] Jasper Rees, *Blizzard: Race to the Pole* (London: BBC Books, 2006), 162–63.

[183] Scott, *Journals*, 362.

labour of sledging was collective, and the explorers depended on each other's bodies, cooperating in new ways. These descriptions are suggestive of the skilled muscular labour performed by porters and chair bearers in the other expeditions discussed.

The division of work along class lines was less common while sledging. Living in a small tent in frigid temperatures pushed the men's bodies together in new configurations. The divergent ways that the same forms of labour were treated in different spaces highlights that the value attached to such labour was shaped primarily by questions of identity and space. Instances where expedition leaders carried out allegedly menial and unheroic work demonstrates that such labour could, sometimes, be portrayed as a central part of exploration. Polar travel blurred the boundaries between different kinds of work in ways that were seldom acknowledged elsewhere; as I now examine, it also saw human and animal bodies depend on each other in new and complex ways.

Coordinated Bodies: Men, Dogs, and Ponies

On sledging journeys, the explorers depended on the bodies of specially adapted animals to travel through the continent. Ponies were also a source of food as well as transport. Focusing on these various bodies draws attention to the fact that polar exploration was a multispecies endeavour, relying on the work of both human and animal bodies. Attention to animals also highlights the international nature of the expedition. More broadly, Scott's expeditions also demonstrate the two-way relations of care and dependence between humans and animals.

Scott depended on animal labour on both of his expeditions. The 23 huskies of the BNAE were born in indigenous communities in Siberia, but were purchased for the

expedition via agents in Archangel, Russia.[184] The animals were transported to Britain, where they stayed at London Zoo before being shipped to join the expedition in New Zealand.[185] Huskies are well-adapted for life in cold environments: they are light, allowing them to walk over the snow bridges; have thick coats; can hydrate themselves with snow (saving fuel); and pant rather than sweat when hot and on the march, meaning (unlike ponies and humans) they do not get cold.[186] Moreover, they require less food than a man to pull the same load.[187] Well used, as by Roald Amundsen as on his later expedition, they allowed an explorer to travel with comparative ease (at least for the humans).[188] Yet this is not what happened on the BNAE. On the expedition's farthest-south journey, Scott took nineteen dogs with him. Suffering from bad food and poor handling, the dogs soon died.[189] Some were euthanised by Wilson.[190] This experience had an important impact on Scott's understanding of the cost of relying on canines. In *The Voyage of the "Discovery,"* (1905) Scott commented on the hardship that dogs experienced and argued that this "did rob sledge travelling of much of its glory."[191] His attitudes to animals were partly shaped by changing understanding of masculinity and heroism discussed in Chapter 4 *"Heroic" Bodies.*[192] Scott conceded that using dogs was

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[184] Scott, *The Voyage*, 1: 471.

[185] Scott, *The Voyage*, 1: 471.

[186] Barczewski, *Antarctic Destinies*, 50.

[187] Scott, *The Voyage*, 1: 464.

[188] Huntford, *The Last Place*, 410–507.

[189] Scott, *The Voyage*, 1: 463–73; Jones, *The Last Great*, 66.

[190] Scott, *The Voyage*, 2: 103–4.

[191] Scott, *The Voyage*, 1: 467.

[192] Forth, *Masculinity in the Modern West*, 160–64.

advantageous and could be ethical, provided the animals were well-cared for.[193] Scott's problems with and concerns about the use of dogs on the BNAE demonstrate how relations of dependence were two-directional. The men relied on the dogs for transport, but the animals required appropriate food and care from the explorers. When such relations broke down, the animals suffered and died, while Scott was left with ethical gripes.

When Scott returned to Antarctica, he continued to depend on the bodies of both men and animals. Scott also took motor sledges, but these broke down after only 50 miles on the southern journey. Despite his negative experiences on the BNAE, Scott also took a party of 30 dogs on his second expedition and made extensive use of them. Dogs hauled supplies south, and he later relied on a dog party to meet the polar party returning from the role.[194] Warned by his past experiences, Scott outsourced much of the dog driving to Cecil Meares, the expedition's chief dog hander, with better results.[195] But this time, Scott also took Siberian ponies. These animals were purchased near

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[193] Scott, *The Voyage*, 1: 465–67; Jones, *The Last Great*, 118; Wilks, "The Coldest Dog and Pony Show," 93–109.

[194] Karen May, "Could Captain Scott Have Been Saved? Revisiting Scott's Last Expedition," *Polar Record* 49, no. 1 (2013): 72–90; Karen May and George Lewis "'Strict Injunctions That the Dogs Should Not Be Risked': A Revised Hypothesis for This Anecdote and Others in Narratives of Scott's Last Expedition," *Polar Record*, 2019: 1–12; Bill Alp "Commentary on Could Captain Scott Have Been Saved? Cecil Meares and the 'Second Journey' That Failed," *Polar Record* 54, no. 2 (2018): 181–83; Karen May, "Could Captain Scott Have Been Saved? Cecil Meares and the 'Second Journey' That Failed: A Response to Bill Alp," *Polar Record* 54, no. 2 (2018):183–87.

[195] Bill Alp, "Dogs of the British Antarctic Expedition 1910–13," *Polar Record* 55, no. 6 (November 2019), 480, 484.

Vladivostok by Meares, who also purchased the expedition's dogs.[196] In Siberia, Meares recruited two men with experience in animal husbandry—Anton Omelchenko and Demetri Gerof—to care for the animals on their journey to New Zealand, where they joined the rest of the expedition.[197] However, Cherry Garrard reports that "they proved such good fellows and so useful" that they joined the expedition and travelled to Antarctica.[198] The British often described the Russians is patronising term, referring to these adult men as "boys."[199] Even so, it is clear that they played a key role in caring for the animals—Omelchenko specialising in ponies and Gerof in dogs.[200] The animal component of Scott's expedition show its reliance on international networks of trade and Russian labour.

With some justification, Scott has been criticised for his decision to take ponies (and the way in which they were selected) by polar historians.[201] Even so, the choice was not as illogical as it now seems: Shackleton had some success with Manchurian ponies on his *Nimrod* expedition, coming within 90 miles of the pole using only four animals.[202]

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[196] Karen May and George Lewis, "'They Are Not the Ponies They Ought to Have Been': Revisiting Cecil Meares' Purchase of Siberian Ponies for Captain Scott's British Antarctic (Terra Nova) Expedition (1910–1913)," *Polar Record* 51, no. 6 (2015): 655–66. As they note, primary sources disagree on the exact details of this purchase.

[197] Joseph James Kinsey to Robert Falcon Scott, 20 August 1910, Joseph James Kinsey Collection, Alexander Turnball Library: National Library of New Zealand, f. 4; Cherry Garrard, *The Worst Journey*, 1: 224.

[198] Cherry Garrard, *The Worst Journey*, 1: 224.

[199] Scott, *Journals*, 95; Cherry Garrard, *The Worst Journey*, 1: 224.

[200] Scott, *Journals*, 73, 85, 95, 170, 177, 187.

[201] Huntford, *The Last Place on Earth*, 256, 309–10.

[202] May and Lewis, "'They Are Not the Ponies,'" 655.

In 1910, Scott left New Zealand with nineteen ponies, most of which were of a larger Siberian type.[203] Scott hoped that with more animals and people, he could easily reach the pole. Over the course of the expedition, Scott increasingly viewed ponies central to his transport plans.[204] Scott's preference was partly because one of the most experienced dog handlers on the expedition, Gerof, was Russian, which would have complicated a British claim to the pole.[205] Scott felt the ponies worked with "extortionary steadiness" while the dogs were "fickle," meaning the former seemed easier for the British to use without Russian assistance.[206] On the southern journey, the ponies would haul supplies to the foot of the Beardmore Glacier, but Scott decided to rely on human muscle from this point on, mostly due to concerns that animals would fall down crevasses.[207]

The ponies required huge amounts of attention to survive in Antarctica. Such care was partially a product of the fact that some animals were "very poor material."[208] But the ponies were not well-suited to Antarctic travel in more fundamental ways: their bodies sweated and the sweat froze on their skin; their hooves sank into the soft snow,

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[203] Joseph James Kinsey to Robert Falcon Scott, 29 September 1910, Joseph James Kinsey Collection, National Library of New Zealand f. 2; Scott, *Journals*, 13; May and Lewis, "'They Are Not the Ponies,'" 659. Confusingly, as May and Lewis note, these animals are often referred to as Manchurian ponies despite their Siberian origins.

[204] Scott, *Journals*, 192.

[205] Bill Alp, "Dogs of the British Antarctic Expedition 1910–13," *Polar Record* 55, no. 6 (2019), 480, 484.

[206] Scott, *Journals*, 104; Alp, "Dogs of the British Antarctic Expedition," 481; Wilks, "The Coldest Dog and Pony Show on Earth," 108.

[207] Alp, "Dogs of the British Antarctic Expedition," 483–84.

[208] Cherry Garrard, *The Worst Journey*, 1: 114.

and their stomachs could only digest bulky food.[209] Consequently, the explorers had to go to great lengths to protect them from the environment: building a specially heated stable for them; cooking them hot food; exercising them daily during the polar winter to strengthen their muscles; making special clothes to keep them warm; and constructing snow walls at the end of a day's march to protect their bodies from the wind overnight.[210] The care devoted to the ponies bodies is suggestive of relationships of mutual dependence and companionship described by Donna Haraway.[211] However, the fact that one of the ponies was named after an ethnic slur—"Chinaman"—again shows how a study of animals can expose expeditionary racism.[212] Focusing on them also shows the expedition's dependence on often ignored forms of caring labour. Both officers and men played a significant role in training and caring for the ponies, and Cherry Garrard comments that the sailors had a "profound" love of animals.[213] Omelchencko often rose before the others to feed the equines.[214] The explorers spent a great deal of time looking after the ponies' bodies, forming affective bonds with them in the process. Despite such relationships, as they headed south, the explorers stopped viewing the ponies as companions. According to the plan of the expedition, they began killing the ponies, using their carcases as food for both men and dogs.[215] Scott's

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[209] Riffenburgh, *Shackleton's Forgotten Expedition*, 119–20.

[210] Scott, *Journals*, 15–16, 85, 124, 118, 138, 154, 228, 318; Cherry Garrard, *The Worst Journey*, 1: 218–24.

[211] Haraway, *The Companion Species Manifesto.*

[212] Scott, *Journals*, 265.

[213] Cherry Garrard, *The Worst Journey*, 1: 219.

[214] Scott, *Journals*, 227, 268.

[215] Scott, *Journals*, 335, 338, 404.

expedition saw equines treated as objects of care, beasts of burden, and as a food source.

Despite all the problems Scott experienced with equine labour, he even decided to recruit further animals while the expedition was in Antarctica. On the advice of Lawrence Oates, Scott requested "Indian Transport Mules" from Shimla in northern India in case the ponies broke down.[216] Specially trained and equipped before despatch, these seven animals reached Antarctica in 1912 and were used on the journey that discovered the fate of Scott and his companions.[217] Studying the animal component of the expedition demonstrates its hybridity, international nature, and blurry boundaries.[218] Not only did it rely on both human and animal bodies, but the animals had diverse origins. Such a focus also shows the importance of both training, care and examination in bringing healthy animals to Antarctica.

Relations of care and cooperation on Scott's expeditions had important similarities with the other case studies discussed in this thesis. As in other contexts, successful travel relied on cooperation between individuals, interpersonal care, and on a combination of human and animal labour. In Antarctica it was largely class rather than gender or racial difference that shaped the division of cooking, care, and cleaning. But polar travel did see leaders engage in such activities in ways that we seldom see elsewhere. In contrast to the other case studies, Scott often described the work of cooking and cleaning in non-pejorative language and as an important part of the expeditionary work. Indeed, while sledging, upper- and middle-class white men took

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[216] Joseph James Kinsey to Mr C. Holdsworth, Joseph James Kinsey Collection, Alexander Turnball Library: National Library of New Zealand, 15 May 1911, ff. 1–2.

[217] Cherry Garrard, *The Worst Journey*, 2: 410, 437.

[218] For a broader study of the trade of equids in this period see: William G. Clarence-Smith, "Equids Across the Indian Ocean *c.* 1800–1918," *Journal for Maritime Research* 22, no 1 – 2 (2020): 41–57.

part in activities that they seldom carried out in other contexts, most notably cooking. Their accounts even render such activities as a heroic aspect of polar travel. This different attitude towards such work demonstrates how questions of location and identity were central in how domestic work was valued. The presence of Russian huskies, ponies, and men as well as Indian mules demonstrates that even these comparatively homogenous expeditions were the product of diverse connections. My analysis also brings our attention to interspecies relations of care and dependence: humans relied on the bodies of specially adapted animals for transport and food. But to survive and thrive on an expedition animals needed the correct care from humans.

CONCLUSION

Focusing on the multiple bodies of an expedition and the work of moving, nourishing, and caring for them provides a way to recover the contributions and experiences of subaltern expedition members. Previous literature on the intermediaries and the "hidden histories" of exploration has only begun to examine the multiple others on whom expedition leaders depended. Previous biographical approaches to this subject often struggle with the limited and partial nature of explorers' writings. But I have shown that drawing attention to the "body work" of exploration allows us to see both a greater variety of individuals and numerous often ignored forms of work.[219] More biographical accounts have tended to focus on named individuals at the expense of the hundreds of unnamed men and women who helped, to varying degrees. My approach is particularly useful in situations where the boundaries of the expedition not clear cut—as on Burton and Speke's expeditions and Isabella Bird's travels in China. In such instances, porters and chair-bearers joined and left the expedition along the way and the explorers do not

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[219] McDowell, *Working Bodies.*

record the names of most individuals. Yet, as I have shown, it is possible to recover something of the contributions and experiences of these individuals through close attention to the forms of work they did. Such a focus also demonstrates how their contributions were far from simple but involved having bodies that had themselves been worked on through years of training.[220] Even where we have a clearer idea about the composition of an expedition, as on Scott's Antarctic expeditions, focusing on the skilled and embodied labour highlights the significant contribution of working-class and Russian expedition members to the exploration of Antarctica. More broadly my analysis shows the problems with focusing on individual bodies. As people and became dependent on each other, they often had to use their bodies in coordinated, collective ways. Moving large loads often required self-control and strength. The porters and chair-bearers who carried explorers had to carefully coordinate their movements to lift them across difficult terrain. In Antarctica, too, sledging often blurred the boundaries between individuals' bodies, relying on coordination and interpersonal care. Overall, I have demonstrated that exploration was a fundamentally collective endeavour.

The above analysis has also revealed the importance of animals in the history of exploration. All the expeditions discussed above depended on animals to varying degrees. In East Africa, diseases made mules, ponies, and donkeys less useful than elsewhere. Even so, when they could, the explorers still used them to transport both their bodies and their supplies. For both Scott and Bird, ponies were central to their journeys. Riding had beneficial effects on Bird's health, demonstrating the complex and deep ways that humans and animals could become interdependent. Furthermore, specially adapted animals were important in allowing explorers to move through environments that pushed the human body to its limits. Yaks enabled Bird to travel through mountainous regions of Tibet, while Siberian huskies and ponies played a vital

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[220] McDowell, *Working Bodies.*

role in Scott's Antarctic expeditions. But relations of care and dependence were not one directional: animals performed body work in the form of muscular labour, while humans performed caring labour on the bodies of animals. In numerous ways, then, attention to the body work of exploration highlights the degree to which travel was a fundamentally collective endeavour.

As I have shown, explorers adopted several strategies to downplay their dependence on African and Asian people in their published accounts. One tactic was to disparage the quality of subaltern labour or to describe Africans and Asians in language that likened them to animals. Another tactic was to present logistical work as somehow separate from and subordinate to the real work of exploration, an approach adopted by Burton, Speke, and Bird. Here, Antarctic exploration serves to demonstrate how arbitrary distinctions between kinds of work could be. While sledging, officers and scientists cooked and cared for each other, presenting such work essential (and perhaps even heroic). Meanwhile, when carried out by Asian men travelling with Burton or Bird, cooking could be portrayed as the "menial" work carried out by a "travelling servant" rather than work essential to progress of the expedition. Similarly gender also interacted with ideas of racial difference in complex ways. Bird was prepared to carry out manual labour while staying with white men in America but avoided similar work when travelling in Asia. What kinds of work counted as "exploration" and which forms of work were "menial" was, primarily, a question of identity and location. As I have begun to examine, a focus on subaltern contributions requires attention to the rhetorical strategies that explorers used to describe such work. It is to the most important of these strategies—discipline—to which I now turn.

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DISCIPLINED BODIES

Critical literature on exploration struggles to deal with the issue of discipline. Explorers and their domestic sponsors portrayed the ideal expedition as orderly and hierarchical.[1] Before the departure of the British Arctic Expedition in 1875, for example, the Admiralty advised that the potential for "undisciplined crews" was one of the main "dangers of the Arctic regions."[2] But self-control was also an important quality an expedition leader. Burton, for instance, suggested that "study and discipline" were essential qualities in any "first-rate traveller."[3] Similarly, one travel guide advised explorers that an "even temper" was crucial when dealing with subordinates and that "[g]reat allowance should be made to the reluctant co-operation of servants."[4] Here, it is the self-control and patience of the expedition leader, rather than the led, which is vital.

One challenge of the above descriptions is the ambiguous way the word discipline is used. The term refers to the ability of a leader to control their own mind, body, and observations but also their ability to command an expedition more broadly. Contradictory discussions of such issues are also found in recent critical works on

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[1] Lyle Dick, 2001 *Muskox Land: Ellesmere Island in the Age of Contact* (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2001), 382.

[2] Anon., "The Equipment and Fitting Out of the Arctic Expedition of 1875" in *Report of the Admiralty Arctic Committee* (1875), Albert Markham Collection, MRK 45/3, National Maritime Museum Archives, f. 5.

[3] Burton, *Supplementary Papers to the Mwata Cazembe*, xxviii.

[4] Francis Galton, *The Art of Travel; or Shifts and Contrivances in Wild Countries*, 2nd ed. (London: John Murray, 1856), 79, 80.

exploration.[5] Dane Kennedy notes the inconsistent ways that explorers wrote about questions of command, although he does not examine these tensions in detail.[6] In contrast, this chapter takes the paradoxical ways that explorers wrote about discipline as its central focus. In doing so, I offer new insights on the role of subaltern agency in geographical expeditions.

Discussing disciplinary issues is an essential part of efforts to recover subaltern contributions. As Felix Driver has argued, the fact that explorers mention their dependence on African and Asian expedition members does not mean that they were willing to acknowledge their agency.[7] Instead, leaders often sought to portray the bodies of subaltern expedition members as "muscular extensions of their master's will."[8] Even critical works sometimes fail to challenge such descriptions. For instance, Ben Maddison argues that British Antarctic expeditions were characterised by rigid disciplinary regimes in which all had to acknowledge "the ultimate authority of the expedition leader."[9] Through understanding power in such binary terms, Maddison—like the explorers themselves—leaves little room for discussions of working-class initiative. Again, the challenge is in how to successfully interpret discussions of command and authority within explorers' accounts. In this chapter, I suggest that recovering instances of subaltern agency requires a close and careful reading of explorers' published and private writings, attentive to tropes about order and authority and to the distinctive ways that they wrote about such issues in different contexts. In doing so, I use a focus on the body to offer an original perspective on the subject. I argue that expeditionary

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[5] Fabian, *Out of Our Minds*, 78.

[6] Kennedy, *The Last Blank Spaces*,131,150–55; Kennedy, "Lost in Place," 243–46.

[7] Driver, "Intermediaries and the Archive," 12.

[8] Shapin, "Invisible Technicians," 557; Driver, "Intermediaries and the Archive," 12.

[9] Maddison, *Class and Colonialism*, 187.

discipline was more complex than previous studies have appreciated: explorers often found themselves with limited control over either their own bodies or those they nominally commanded. Nevertheless, expeditions often continued to move even when leaders were not fully in control. Moreover, as I show, leaders often relied on the innate self-control of subordinate members and forms of discipline over which they had little influence. This chapter builds on the previous chapter *Dependent Bodies*, by moving beyond discussions of multiple contributions to address the significant role that subaltern agency played in Victorian and Edwardian exploration.

DISCIPLINED AND DOCILE BODIES

The disciplining of bodies is a longstanding feature of western society. Pre-modern ideas were shaped by religious notions about the need to resist temptations of the flesh.[10] Different conceptions emerged in the 1800s, brought about by broader economic and political changes in Europe.[11] As discussed above, Michel Foucault's work on power is particularly important in academic understandings of discipline. The ideal disciplinary institution was, in Foucault's eyes, Jeremy Bentham's model prison, the panopticon. In this building, inmates could not tell if they were being observed by a guard in the central tower, meaning that they were forced to behave as if they were always being watched.[12] Foucault argues that this period saw similar methods spread from prisons to society more broadly, through the military, schools, factories, asylums, and hospitals. Within them, bodies were "manipulated, shaped [and] trained" by these regimes of power—a

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[10] Augustine. *Confessions*, trans. Henry Chadwick (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992).

[11] Forth, *Masculinity in the Modern West*, 4–6.

[12] Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, 195–228.

process that both developed and contained the body's capacities.[13] The period saw the new "forms of coercion [and] schemata of restraint, applied and repeated," including exercise, rigid schedules, compulsory activities, work in common, control of space, and solitary confinement.[14] In Foucault's work, the perfectly disciplined body was the "analysable and manipulable" "docile body."[15] As recent scholarship has demonstrated, attempts to discipline, control, and classify bodies were a major feature of colonial rule and a medium through which resistance was expressed.[16] Indeed, ideas about discipline were heavily shaped by understandings of class, gender, and racial difference. Upper- and middle-class writers often portrayed black and working-class bodies as in need of external discipline and imperial rulers often applied extreme forms of discipline and punishment in the colonial context.[17]

As Chris Otter has argued, actual relations of power and observation in Victorian

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[13] Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, 128, 136.

[14] Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, 136.

[15] Driver, "Power, Space, and the Body," 427; Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, 135–70.

[16] Stoler, *Race and the Education of Desire;* Stoler, *Carnal Knowledge and Imperial Power;* Arnold, *Colonizing the Body;* Sudipa Topdar, "The Corporeal Empire: Physical Education and Politicising Children's Bodies in Late Colonial Bengal," *Gender & History* 29, no. 1 (2017): 176–97.

[17] Steven Pierce and Anupama Rao, "Discipline and the Other Body: Humanism, Violence, and the Colonial Exception," in *Discipline and the Other Body: Correction, Corporeality, Colonialism*, eds. Steven Pierce and Anupama Rao (Durham: Duke University Press, 2006), 2.

Britain differed significantly from the model panopticon.[18] Even so, the period clearly saw changes. Cities were redesigned in ways that encouraged self-restraint and mutual observation, and self-imposed disciplinary regimes were a growing feature of late Victorian society.[19] In part, this was a response to fears about the effects of modern urban life on the body. Numerous writers feared that the comforts of urban life would trigger "a downward spiral of disease, insanity" as individuals lost the toughness and discipline that, they argued, had made Britain successful.[20] People were encouraged to adopt new regimes of diet, dress, and exercise to maintain a healthy and hardy body.[21] Given this context, it is hardly surprising that similar qualities were emphasised in explorers' accounts and travel advice manuals. As Felix Driver notes, the period saw the publication of a growing number of manuals for would-be explorers, intended to help them to regulate and standardise their observations in the field. These instructions went beyond advice about the correct procedures for recording scientific findings and, instead, covered a "range of mental and physical facilities [that] were to be exercised in the process of observation."[22] These publications can be seen as part of an effort to "discipline observation in the field, rendering some kinds of observation as scientific and

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[18] Chris Otter, *The Victorian Eye: A Political History of Light and Vision in Britain, 1800–1910* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008); Driver, "Power, Space, and the Body," 433.

[19] Otter, *The Victorian Eye*; Zweiniger-Bargielowska, *Managing the Body;* Gustav Jäger, *Selections from Essays on Health Culture: And the Sanitary Woollen System.* (Jäger: London, 1884), offers an exemplary regime for "hardening" the body.

[20] Robb, "The Way of All Flesh," 589.

[21] Zweiniger-Bargielowska, *Managing the Body*, 64–66; Jones, *The Last Great*, 25.

[22] Driver, *Geography Militant*, 49.

others as unscientific."[23] However, in reality, there was little consensus on these issues, a fact exposed by the varying responses to explorers' findings and the differences between guidebooks in terms of the recommendations they made.[24] Organisations such as the RGS could only give "hints" on how travellers should behave in the field, rather than definitive instructions. Despite these disagreements, self-control was a valuable quality in an explorer. Driver notes, for example, that while domestic commentators praised the African explorer David Livingstone for his self-discipline, Henry Morton Stanley attracted fierce criticism for his apparently unpredictable behaviour and accusations of violence and cruelty surrounding his expeditions.[25] Questions of discipline were a make-or-break issue for an explorer, meaning such issues were often approached carefully in their writings.

Similarly, Johannes Fabian argues that explorers viewed discipline as "the quality most likely to ensure the success of scientific work under difficult circumstances."[26] They also sought to portray themselves as independent and self-directed: as an "individual, often solitary agent, fully in control of himself and others."[27] But Fabian also gives us reasons to be sceptical of such claims, demonstrating that travellers frequently lost control of their minds and their bodies. Indeed, he argues that the idea of exploration, as "an arduous battle over self and nature," is a retrospectively created myth.[28] Writing about exploration could be a means to reassert control, something addressed by more recent scholarship. Lachlan Fleetwood, for example, has

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[23] Driver, *Geography Militant*, 58.

[24] Driver, *Geography Militant*, 58.

[25] Driver, *Geography Militant*, 117–45.

[26] Fabian, *Out of Our Minds*, 78.

[27] Fabian, *Out of Our Minds*, 7.

[28] Fabian, *Out of Our Minds*, 5.

shown that altitude sickness on early nineteenth-century surveying expeditions in the Himalayas could threaten the authority of British expedition leaders, requiring both practical and rhetorical management.[29] Such works are important as they draw attention to one of the main challenges when reading explorers' accounts on this subject. Because discipline was such an important quality, expedition leaders had strong incentives to emphasise their command, authority, and self-control. As I show, a critical approach requires being attentive to such pressures. But it also requires picking up on the contradictory statements, often brief and suggestive, that offer an alternative picture. In this chapter, I propose that a close reading of explorers' public and private writings can allow us to weigh up the comparative value of these competing claims.

A final aspect, which I return to below, is the relationship between leadership and gender. As previous works have shown, questions of discipline were more complicated for women explorers. Alison Blunt has highlighted how travel advice publications were highly gendered: those addressed at men "emphasised methods and equipment necessary for scientific observation and the management of indigenous servants."[30] In contrast, books for women travellers focused on "appropriate behaviour of the traveller…in terms of fulfilling behavioural rather than scientific expectations."[31] How women explorers managed to balance the need to conform to satisfy "feminine codes of conduct" while exerting disciplinary authority is a particular theme in the discussion on Isabella Bird below.[32] Much previous scholarship on Victorian women travellers has emphasised how their relationship to questions of authority were shaped by ideas of class and racial difference, and the importance attached to these identities in

[29] Fleetwood, "No Former Travellers."

[30] Blunt, *Travel, Gender, and Imperialism*, 65.

[31] Blunt, *Travel, Gender, and Imperialism*, 65; Foster and Mills ed., *An Anthology*, 8.

[32] Blunt, *Travel, Gender, and Imperialism*, 105.

different places.[33] Dea Birkett argues that women travellers' authority depended on their whiteness, which allowed them to assume authority over men of colour.[34] The connections between travellers' gender, class, and racial identities were complex and time and place specific.[35] Again, these different pressures on women explorers illustrate the interpretive challenges of studying discussions of discipline in their accounts. As with masculine travellers, we cannot always take their public claims at face value. I responded to this issue by a close reading of all Bird's published works, combined with analysis of available archival evidence to try and understand her different approach to this issue at home and in the field.

Previous studies of exploration have recognised that discipline was an important question on Victorian and Edwardian expeditions. But much existing literature has either taken explorers' claims at face value or has failed to discuss issues of command and authority in detail. In what follows, I examine the ways that explorers approached such issues in their public and private writings. In doing so, I highlight how a fresh reading of explorers' accounts can demonstrate their dependence on the disciplined bodies of subaltern expedition members in ways that previous studies have failed to fully appreciate.

BURTON AND SPEKE: DISCIPLINE AND DISORDER IN EAST AFRICA

Burton and Speke's writings often portray their own disciplinary influence as central to the success of their expeditions in East Africa. Drawing on broader racist stereotypes, they depict the African and Asian expeditions members—on whom, as discussed in

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[33] Blunt, *Travel, Gender, and Imperialism*, 105.

[34] Birkett *Spinster Abroad*, 116–18.

[35] Blunt, *Travel, Gender, and Imperialism*, 108.

Chapter 5, *Dependent Bodies*, they relied on for transport, food, and care—as inherently undisciplined, suggesting they required compulsion by the explorers in order to work. African agency is, therefore, equated with desertion and disorder in Burton and Speke's accounts. That said, their approaches do differ. Speke presents certain Africans as amenable to his paternalistic influence. In contrast, Burton portrays all Africans as inherently undisciplined and animalistic, controllable only though fear and coercion. Discussions of discipline reflect the men's broader prejudices about African agency rather than a neutral assessment of subaltern contributions. By refusing to take such claims as accurate and honest, we can begin to unpick some of the cultural baggage that limits our understandings of the expeditions.

Tropes of Indiscipline and Disorder

In his writings about the EAE, Burton frequently presented Africans as uncontrollable, reflecting his view that they were innately physically inferior to white Europeans. In one paper, he complained that "there was not an attendant, from Said bin Salim to the most abject slave, who did not plan, attempt, or carry out desertion."[36] Writing later, Burton emphasised the expedition's achievements, noting they had been made despite the fact that he "led the most disorderly of caravans."[37] Burton also used animalising language to describe Africans, claiming that some of the enslaved porters and the expedition's asses "formed a mass of stubborn savagery which proved a severe trial of temper."[38] Moreover, he even suggested that in East Africa "tame animals…relapse into

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[36] Burton, "The Lake Regions," 16; Wisnicki, "Cartographical Quandaries," 164.

[37] Burton, *Zanzibar*, 2: 320; Wisnicki, "Cartographical Quandaries," 164.

[38] Burton, "The Lake Regions," 16.

wild habits."[39] This quote suggests that Burton saw the area as a space that actively encouraged disobedience in both humans and animals.

Speke had different view of the physical and mental capacity of Africans, often portraying certain Africans as childlike rather than animalistic. On his 1860–3 expedition, He brought along a group of South African Cape Riflemen of mixed heritage. In private, he hoped that they would show "the tribes through which we pass…how far advanced the black man becomes when serving under us."[40] In Zanzibar he tried to recruit more men "accustomed to discipline."[41] In practice, this meant Waungwana, particularly those with military experience.[42] As noted, these men were important cultural brokers and provided much of the manpower for his trip into the East African interior. In public, Speke was often wrote in disparaging terms about their lack of self-control, declaring that "[l]aziness is inherent in these men…although extremely powerful, they will not work unless compelled to do so."[43] Drawing on broader racial and climatic stereotypes, Speke presents the Waungwana as "a creature of impulse—a grown child" and asserts that "[e]conomy, care or forethought never enters his head."[44] Speke also suggests that this lack of discipline extended to their sexual and moral behaviours, claiming their "greatest delight is in the fair sex…next comes beer, song

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[39] Burton, "The Lake Regions," 331, in footnote.

[40] John Hanning Speke to Roderick Murchison (photocopy), 11 May 1860, Ms. 20311, NLS, f. 2; Speke was disappointed with their performance and sent most back early on the expedition. John Hanning Speke to George Grey, 1 November 1860, George Grey Collection, GL S39.3, Auckland Public Libraries.

[41] Speke, *Journal of the Discovery*, 11.

[42] Speke, *Journal of the Discovery*, 11.

[43] Speke, *Journal of the Discovery*, xxvii.

[44] Speke, *Journal of the Discovery*, xxx.

and a dance."[45] Speke includes numerous accounts of drunken squabbles amongst the African members of his expedition, playing into broader racialised tropes of African indiscipline.[46] Nevertheless, Speke claimed that such men can be "trained to work" through a combination of "[g]reat forbearance, occasionally tinctured with a little fatherly severity."[47] In doing so, he highlights his self-control and leadership skills, but also hints that European colonisation might be possible and productive. Even though his views were more nuanced than Burton's, his writings about expeditionary discipline were shaped by his prejudiced understandings of African capacity.

Burton and Speke emphasised that they pushed their parties forward despite such resistance. In *The Journal of the Discovery of the Source of the Nile* (1863), Speke notes, for example, that he preferred "forced marches" to other forms of travel, as it meant the men did not have time to "become irritable and truculent."[48] Similarly, in *The Lake Regions* (1860), Burton claimed that "the more I worked the men the harder they worked."[49] In *What Led to the Discovery of the Source of the Nile* (1864), Speke also described expeditionary discipline in racist language, claiming "the black man's belly is his god," and describes an incident where he cut off rations altogether to break a strike amongst his porters.[50] Burton argued that his authoritarian influence was what held the EAE together. Burton claimed that the expeditions' Nyamwezi porters wrote a song about him, which described him as "Muzungu mbaya," meaning "the wicked white man."[51]

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[45] Speke, *Journal of the Discovery*, xxx.

[46] Speke, *Journal of the Discovery*, 187, 190, 216–17.

[47] Speke, *Journal of the Discovery*, xxx.

[48] Speke, *Journal of the Discovery*, 51.

[49] Burton, *The Lake Regions*, 1: 184.

[50] Speke, *What Led to the Discovery*, 302–3.

[51] Burton, *The Lake Regions*, 1: 361–62.

Burton wears this insult as a badge of honour, declaring that a "good white man" would have been "flayed without flinching" in East Africa.[52] Burton suggests that his attempts to discipline the expedition were, in the end, successful and that it was only a "want of supplies" that forced the expedition to turn back.[53] As such he present the movement of the expedition as dependent on his influence.

In writing about violent punishments, the explorers portrayed black skin as a surface on which they felt entitled to inflict pain and violence. In *A Walk Across Africa* (1864), Grant claimed that "discipline had to be upheld in several instances by inflicting corporal punishment" and describes a disturbing incident where one porter "roared for mercy during his flogging" after being accused of stealing cloth to buy food.[54] This use of force was by no means an aberration.[55] Burton also reports incidents where he ordered floggings for disobedience and says he showed himself "ready to enforce obedience by any means and every means."[56] The use of corporal punishment against black bodies was representative of a broader trend within Victorian racism. While the mid-nineteenth century saw the "demise in the use of flogging against 'whites' within the British Empire," its use against people of colour continued for much longer.[57] Flogging was

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[52] Burton, *The Lake Regions,* 1: 361; Newman, *Paths Without Glory,* 127. Newman argues that Burton's nickname was more likely a reflection of caravan customs of joking.

[53] Burton, *The Lake Regions* 1: 4, in footnote.

[54] Grant, *A Walk Across Africa,* 32.

[55] Speke, *Journal of the Discovery,* 164.

[56] Burton, *The Lake Regions,* 2: 239; Galton, *The Art of Travel,* HL RFB 381, 84–86. Burton's comments on the latter also demonstrate his support for violent punishments.

[57] Dinesh Joseph Wadiwel, "Thick Hides: Whipping, Biopolitics and the White Soul of Power," *Social Semiotics* 19, no. 1 (2009): 54–55.

justified, in part, by portraying black skin as less sensitive to pain and non-Europeans as incapable of being controlled or disciplined by non-violent means.[58] Accordingly, whipping was a punishment that "participated in the making of racialized subjects" in explorers' accounts of travel.[59] In contrast to Burton, Speke was keen to downplay his reliance on physical force (although as Grant's comments above show, he still used violence where he thought it would be helpful). At one point in *Journal of the Discovery*, Speke reported that his porters were deliberately going slower than they ought to. He claims he was "reluctant to apply the stick, as the Arabs would have done."[60] Such comments were largely directed at domestic audiences, as violence that appeared gratuitous or callous could harm the reputation of an explorer, but they also reflect his desire to emphasise his leadership qualities.[61]

The explorers' writings contain contradictions that throw into question many of their claims. Most obviously, Burton and Speke's poor physical state for most of the EAE meant that they were unable to control their own bodies let alone the bodies of those around them.[62] Although they adopted a variety of measures to maintain their personal health, protecting themselves from the sun, drinking medicinal brandy, as well as tablets laced with quinine and laudanum, they succumbed to fever at numerous points.[63] Burton's private correspondence often emphasised his weakness. In one letter

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[58] Wadiwel, "Thick Hides," 54.

[59] Wadiwel, "Thick Hides," 50.

[60] Speke, *Journal of the Discovery*, 39.

[61] Driver, *Geography Militant*, 117–45; Driver, Henry Morton Stanley as His Critics," 134–66.

[62] Newman, *Paths Without*, 101–2.

[63] Burton *The Lake Regions*, 1: 151; Burton, *Zanzibar*, 2: 256. At this time, Burton was unfamiliar with the prophylactic use of quinine.

to the RGS written from the Lake Regions, Burton complained of both an inability to walk and of the "terrible wear & tear of mind."[64] Elsewhere, Burton reported one fever lasting 20 days in which he often experienced "a queer conviction of divided identity, never casing to be two person that generally thwarted and opposed each other" as well as vivid and disturbing hallucinations.[65] Speke and Grant were both unwell for significant periods of their later expedition, experiencing periods of near total prostration.[66] Grant suffered from a fever that recurred every fortnight for the entire duration of the trip.[67] Simply understanding the explorers' poor physical state is enough to make one sceptical about their disciplinary claims, but the ability of the porters to desert also raises important questions Both Burton and Speke readily acknowledge that in the East African interior porters could (and did) "run away at any moment."[68] This factor clearly limited the ability of an expedition leader to command through coercion alone. Speke more readily acknowledges this dependence than Burton. He claimed that the Waungwana men of his party often retorted when he chastised them: "[f]log me if you like, but don't keep count against me, else I shall run away; and what will you do then?"[69] The ability of the expedition members to leave highlights how subordinates' participation could not simply be instilled by authoritarian commands, but depended, to some degree at least, on their cooperation. Even a reading of the tropes present in

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[64] Richard Burton to Norton Shaw, 24 June 1858, RGS/CB4/292, RGS Archives, f. 2.

[65] Burton *The Lake Regions* 1: 84.

[66] Speke, *Journal of the Discovery*, 37, 96, 144–45, 414–15, 565.

[67] Speke, *Journal of the Discovery*, 37.

[68] Speke, *Journal of the Discovery*, xxx; Richard Burton to Norton Shaw, 24 June 1858, RGS/CB4/292, RGS Archives, f. 2.

[69] Speke, *Journal of the Discovery*, xxx; Burton, *The Lake Regions*, 1: 142 reports similar responses.

Burton and Speke's published accounts exposes more complex dynamics.

As I have shown, in their public writings, both Burton and Speke asserted that their external authoritarian commands were central to the success of an expedition. They claimed that Arab, Asian, and African expedition members could only be driven forward through the disciplinary influence of the white expeditionary leader. However, even their published accounts show the problems with taking such claims at face value. The poor physical state of Burton, Speke, and Grant and the ability of porters to desert shows that there must have been other influences holding a party together. As I now demonstrate, close attention to the workings of the East African caravan system allows us to better understand these forces.

Were The Explorers Really in Control?

Understanding the broader context of the East African caravan system allows us to appreciate the broader systems that contributed to order and discord on East African expeditions. As Stephen J. Rockel has demonstrated, the African and Asian members of Burton and Speke's expeditions were part of a disciplined and professionalised "caravan culture," mostly composed of Nyamwezi and Waungwana men (although, as noted, many caravans also contained Arab and Asian men as well as African women). For them, travel provided opportunities to gain both material wealth (through labour and trading) and social status. In their published accounts, both Burton and Speke describe caravan cultures and these passages often sit at odds with their suggestions that African expedition members lacked discipline. In private, the prejudiced Burton conceded that for certain parts of the EAE the party had "behaved tolerably well."[70] Elsewhere, he even

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[70] Richard Burton to Norton Shaw, 6 September 1857, in *The Search for the Source of the Nile*, ed. Donald Young, 97.

admitted that many of the porters' departures were the result of "custom" rather than desertion.[71] Focusing on this caravan culture highlights how the expeditions' porters were far from undisciplined but were part of a sophisticated and pre-existing arrangements, which Burton and Speke relied on, worked with, and adapted to.

Nyamwezi porters had established systems of leadership that the explorers adapted to. Burton's public writings contain numerous references to these structures. He notes that the caravan's *mtongi* "oversaw the allocation of loads."[72] This task, he reports, was a "work of skill," as "each individual… must choose or, at any rate, consent, to his burden."[73] Meanwhile, the "*mganga* or traditional doctor and diviner, another important caravan official, acted as advisor and provided ritual protection against the dangers of the road."[74] The *kirangozi* was an elected leader who guided the march, navigating it along the correct route, marking a trail which the other porters would follow (see figure 14).[75] In return for such work, he "carried a lighter load" and was often attended to by an enslaved person.[76] In public, Burton described the important role of this figure in maintaining discipline, at the same reinforcing wider tropes about the difficulty of controlling African porters. For instance, he reported that "[t]he only way of breaking the perverse and headstrong heard into a semblance of discipline, is to support the kirangozi at all conjunctures, and to make him, if possible, dole out the daily rations and portion the occasional presents of meat."[77] Burton also reported that he

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[71] Burton, "The Lake Regions," 16.

[72] Rockel, *Carriers of Culture*, 70; Burton, *The Lake Regions* 1: 144.

[73] Burton, *The Lake Regions*, 1: 144.

[74] Rockel, *Carriers of Culture*, 70; Burton, *The Lake Regions*, 2: 338–39.

[75] Rockel, *Carriers of Culture*, 73.

[76] Burton, *The Lake Regions*, 1: 143–44.

[77] Burton, *The Lake Regions*, 1: 144.

avoided giving orders directly to the porters and instead issued all commands through the kirangozi or another intermediary "having been warned by experience" that this was "proper channel."[78] Although, Burton intends to draw attention to the difficulties of managing African men, such quotes demonstrate that the kirangozi took the lead on day-to-day disciplinary matters and suggests that Burton often supported him without fully understanding the issue at hand. They also give some clues at how the expedition continued despite Burton and Speke's poor physical state. More broadly, the kirangozi's dress played a prominent role in instilling the status of the expedition on surrounding villages and amongst its members. He would lead the march, dressed in "scarlet broadcloth" and a "wonderful headdress," carrying a "blood-red" flag as a sign of the Zanzibari Sultan's authority (figure 14.).[79] The Sultan's authority was no minor matter. On his later expedition with Grant, Speke had eleven men imprisoned in Zanzibar for desertion.[80] The kirangozi therefore played a leading role in directing the expedition's movement through East Africa and in maintaining order.

[78] Burton, *The Lake Regions*, 1: 357.

[79] Burton, *The Lake Regions*, 1: 346–47.

[80] Simpson, *Dark Companions*, 38; Kennedy, *The Last Blank Spaces*, 120–24.

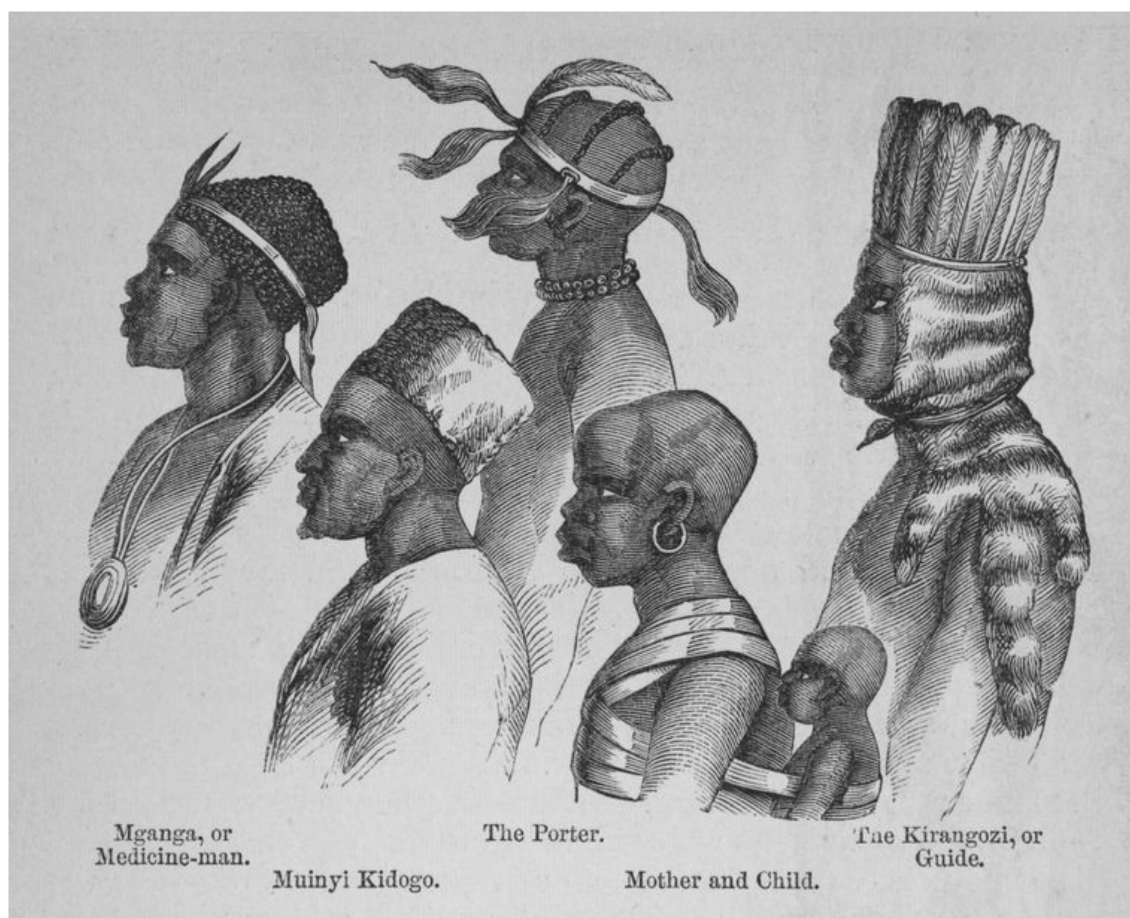

Figure 15. Portraits of Muinyi Kidogo, the Kirangozi, The Mganga etc.," Burton, *The Lake Regions*, 2: 155.

A focus on caravan culture also helps to explain incidents of disorder on the EAE. Burton had particular problems with a group of men referred to in his account as "the sons of Ramji." They were group of enslaved men, legally owned by Banyan Ramji, an Indian merchant, who were employed by Burton (for wages) as "interpreters, guides, and war-men."[81] Their position highlights the "rather blurred boundaries" between slavery and freedom in pre-colonial East Africa.[82] Their leader, Muiyni Kidigo (figure 14) had "great influence" over other expedition members.[83] Initially, the men were

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[81] Burton, *The Lake Regions*, 1: 140–41.

[82] Rockel, "Slavery and Freedom,"88.

[83] Burton, *The Lake Regions*, 1: 140–41.

"servilely civil," but relations between Burton and them soon soured.[84] This breakdown in relations seem have been the result of Burton's failure to understand the "Sons of Ramji's" position within the East African context.[85] Because of their familiarity with costal Swahili society, the men saw themselves as soldiers, superior in status to the Nyamwezi porters, and above carrying loads.[86] Burton, in contrast, treated the men as slaves, which triggered growing resentment and a protracted dispute about their payment.[87] This incident demonstrates that Burton's problems with discipline on the expedition were in large part a product of his failure to understand the situation in which he was operating.[88]

Speke's writings about discipline on his 1860–63 expedition are equally conflicted. As noted, Speke publicly portrayed Africans as in need of a stern but paternalistic commander. But his private writings show a more nuanced picture. Before his departure, he claimed Grant was an ideal companion because of "his conciliatory manner with coloured men" and "for his general good temper & patience."[89] This quote suggests that the successful explorer was an individual who recognised that adaptation and tolerance was the key to their success. Speke's private assessment of the Waungwana also differed from his public pronouncements. In one letter, he noted that

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[84] Burton, *The Lake Regions*, 1: 141.

[85] Burton, *The Lake Regions*, 1: 140–142; Rockel, "Slavery and Freedom," 95–96.

[86] Burton, *The Lake Regions*, 1: 140–42.

[87] Richard F. Burton to Norton Shaw (and enclosure), 16 March 1860, RGS/CB4/292; John Hanning Speke to Norton Shaw, January 1860, RGS/JHS/1/19. Young, ed. *Search for the Source*, 166–81.

[88] Kennedy, *The Last Blank*, 155.

[89] John Hanning Speke to RGS, 25 January 1860, RGS/JHS/1/23a, RGS Archives, f. 7.

they do "all the work and do it as an enlightened and disciplined people."[90] His published writings and the work of East African historians allows us to examine some of attributes reflected in such comments. The term Waungwana, which translates as "free men," reflected "their desire for respected status vis-à-vis coast-based Swahili society."[91] Waungwana identity had connotation of "urbane gentility" that did not always sit easily with the "crew culture" of the East African caravan in which "physical strength and endurance, or load-carrying and camp-making skills" were privileged.[92] For instance, Waungwana men often wore white robes, which were not the most practical outfits for travel through the East African interior.[93] In public, Speke was dismissive of their knowledge about and belief in Islam.[94] But it is clear that they went to significant lengths to follow Muslim dietary rules, turning down incorrectly prepared meat when hungry.[95] Speke even adapted his hunting methods so that the throats of animals could be cut, rendering the meat halal.[96] When the Waungwana found some meat they were hoping to consume had spoiled, Speke notes that the others accused the cook Frij of having "unclean hands" because they thought that "unless the man's hands are pure who cuts

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[90] John Hanning Speke to Colonel Rigby, 12 December 1860, RGS/JHS/1/41, RGS Archives.

[91] Ruth Rempel, "'No Better Than a Slave or Outcast:' Skill, Identity, and Power Among the Porters of the Emin Pasha Relief Expedition, 1887–1890," *The International Journal of African Historical Studies* 43, no. 2 (2010), 286.

[92] Rempel "No better," 286.

[93] Rempel "No Better," 306.

[94] Speke, *Journal of the Discovery*, xxvii.

[95] Speke, *Journal of the Discovery* 432–33, 592.

[96] Speke, *Journal of the Discovery*, 66.

the throat of an animal, its flesh will not last half the ordinary time."[97] Speke openly portrayed the Waungwana as child-like and undisciplined; however, reading his public and private writings more critically, it is clear that their behaviours were shaped by different, but equally powerful, ideas of discipline and conduct.

Discipline on Burton and Speke's East African expeditions was a complex affair governed by the cultures and conventions of the East African caravan system. Many of the explorers' claims about their ability to command simply appear implausible based on what we know about their physical and mental health at the time. Indeed, explorers' own writings contain numerous contradictory comments. It is only though a critical reading of their public and private writings that a more realistic picture emerges. While Burton, Speke, and Grant also sought to portray Africans as unruly, it is clear that the behaviours of African expedition members were governed by pre-existing and dynamic structures that the European explorers had to adapt to. For instance, they gave orders through intermediary figures or changed the way they killed animals to conform to Muslim dietary norms. When they failed to understand these structures, as with the Sons of Ramji, was when they encountered most serious problems. Explorers in other areas also depended on the self-discipline of subaltern expedition members. The circumstances in which explorers operated shaped how they approached questions of discipline. As I now examine, the identity traveller in question, was also a crucial factor.

ISABELLA BIRD: IDENTITY AND AUTHORITY

The challenge of correctly interpreting Bird's writings is different from Burton and Speke's. At times, Bird downplayed her disciplinary influence to ensure her accounts conformed to nineteenth-century class and gender norms, which often focused on

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[97] Speke, *Journal of the Discovery*, 513.

women "who were heroic in ways that related more to a passive endurance of unpleasantness or hardship."[98] That said, the differences between Bird and the other case studies can be overstated. Travel provided Bird opportunities to command and control the bodies of others in ways impossible at home.[99] She also had few reservations about emphasising her control over Asian men. As with Burton and Speke, though, it is important not to take these claims at face value either. A close reading of Bird's accounts suggests that, while travelling, she also found her authority contested. Like Burton and Speke, she also depended on disciplinary systems outside of her control (and sometimes her understanding). These competing dynamics mean that her writings emphasise the complex interaction of gender, class, and racial difference, both in terms of how she approached disciplining bodies in the field but also in how she wrote about such incidents at home.

Writing Discipline Differently

Bird was particularly keen to highlight her conformity to domestic social norms when writing about her early journeys in North America. Partly, this reflected her relative lack of experience at this point, but it was also shaped by the fact that, in such instances, she often travelled with white men. Her American travels highlights how Bird's writing about discipline was shaped by the interplay of gender, class, and racial difference. In *A Lady's Life in the Rocky Mountains* (1879), Bird describes an unsuccessful expedition—made by Mr and Mrs Chalmers, a settler couple, and Bird—towards Estes Park in 1873. Bird emphasises that she initially took a subservient position, allowing the man to guide the party. However, she describes how Mr Chalmers "who had started confident,

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[98] Rowbotham, "Soldiers of Christ?," 84.

[99] Foster and Mills, *An Anthology*, 256; Blunt, *Travel, Gender, and Imperialism*, 161.

bumptious, blatant, was ever becoming more bewildered."[100] Soon they were lost and without water, leading to falls and injuries.[101] Eventually, when Chalmers confessed he was lost, Bird stated that she had "much experience in travelling and would take control of the party."[102] Bird perhaps felt confident to assume control of the working-class couple because of her upper-middle-class background. Even so, what is striking about the incident is how long Bird claims to have waited before she took control, despite Mr Chalmers' incompetence and the danger it posed. The incident shows that Bird treated incidents where she asserts her control over white men with extreme caution in her writing.

In contrast, Bird was far less reluctant to write about her attempts to discipline the bodies and behaviours of Asian men. Her biographer Pat Barr notes that on her later expeditions she imposed a "strict daily marching routine" on subaltern expedition members, "allotting fixed hours for travelling, eating, pitching tents and so on."[103] Similarly, when Bird travelled through Lesser Tibet, she forced her Afghan guide, Usman Shah, to walk in front of her. Travelling behind Shah, allowed Bird to watch his movements and interactions with local people, a step that she felt necessary as she was concerned about his treatment of villagers and attempts to extort money from her.[104] In *The Yangtze Valley* (1899), Bird reports that she hired her Chinese guide Be-dien because he had never served Europeans before and would be, in her eyes, more easily controlled.[105] Bird also reports that during her journey he was "never without leave out

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[100] Bird, *A Lady's Life*, 67.

[101] Bird, *A Lady's Life*, 67–69.

[102] Bird, *A Lady's Life*, 71.

[103] Barr, *A Curious Life*, 202.

[104] Bird, *Among the Tibetans*, 22–23.

[105] Schoenbauer Thurin, *Victorian Travelers*, 143.

of hearing of my whistle," a device she used to attract his attention when she needed assistance.[106] As Susan Schoenbauer Thurin notes, "Be-dien is described with the language one might use about a good dog" and her efforts to recruit an inexperienced guide seem "aimed at securing docility and loyalty in her servant."[107] Taken at face value, such passages suggest that in America, Bird was reluctant to exert authority over white men, while she had few qualms about disciplining the bodies and movements of Asian men on hr later travels.

Where Bird's approach differed from male travellers was in the means she used to enforce discipline. She presented herself as able to control Asian men under her command through negotiation and persuasion. Her Bird's biographer Anna Stoddart claimed that despite the "strenuous dominance which she was repeatedly forced to exercise" she did not lose "her womanly graces of tranquil manner, gentle voice, reasonable persuasiveness. Wherever she found her servants—whether coolies, mule-drivers, soldiers or personal attendants she secured their devotion."[108] This approach is particularly prevalent in Bird's writings about Shah in other passages of *Amongst the Tibetans* (1894). When the expedition reached Leh, Bird was informed that her guide Shah was, a murderer and a mutineer who had stabbed an officer to death when stationed at a small fort some months before.[109] When she discovers his true identity, Bird initially refused to check her belongings to see if anything had been stolen: "I had trusted him, he had been faithful in his way, and later I found that nothing was missing."[110] In emphasising how she had successfully turned this mutineer into a faithful follower, Bird

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[106] Bird, *The Yangtze Valley*, 207.

[107] Schoenbauer Thurin, *Victorian Travelers*, 143.

[108] Stoddart, *The Life of Isabella Bird*, vi.

[109] Bishop, *Among the Tibetans*, 49, 60.

[110] Bishop, *Among the Tibetans*, 60.

demonstrates her ability to inspire loyalty in even the most unpromising individuals.[111] Like Burton and Speke, she often sought to demonstrate her control over the expedition, but she suggested that she did so through more subtle, and perhaps more effective, means.

Bird's writings about discipline present a different interpretive challenge from those of Burton and Speke. Even when commanding and controlling Asian men, she often sought to emphasise how her authority was based not on coercion, but on her ability to instil trust and confidence in those around her. In part, her reliance on these qualities was a product of the distinct way that Bird travelled: she was often the only white woman in an expeditionary party and was physically far smaller than many of the men she commanded, giving her little ability to enforce her authority through violence. It is also important to remember that Bird would have reluctant to describe any incidents where she did use force, as she was concerned about maintaining her respectability and conformity to domestic behaviours in her travel accounts. Yet the differences between this approach and more masculine modes of expeditionary writing can be overstated. Like male explorers, Bird portrayed her authority as central to the success of a journey. Moreover, as I have shown above, masculine explorers often relied on subaltern cooperation more than they cared to admit. More generally, there are reasons to suspect that in the field Bird's approach to discipline was more complex than the above accounts suggest.

Discipline Contested

It is tempting to view Bird's approach to discipline in binary terms: travel (and Bird's skills of persuasion and alignment with both whiteness and colonial power) allowed her

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[111] Bishop, *Among the Tibetans*, 49.

to command Asian men in ways impossible when it came to white men in Europe and North America. Yet Bird's writings about her Japanese travels provide a particularly compelling counter example. In her published account, *Unbeaten Tracks in Japan* (1880), Bird often mentions the ways that her guide Ito Tsurukichi contested her attempts to discipline his body and exerted his own disciplinary influence on her. The contest over discipline is particularly evident because this book dealt with the first of Bird's Asian expeditions and came relatively early in her career. Even so, she intended her book on the journey to be more "painstaking and durable" than her previous writings.[112] As a result, the book includes nuanced discussions of discipline that do not fully fit into dominant tropes of travel writing.[113]

Read superficially, *Unbeaten Tracks* contained numerous passages that conform broader norms within women's travel writing and which reflect Bird's personal prejudices. Early in the book, she emphasised her discomfort with a position of management over her guide Tsurukichi: "I have never been able to manage anybody in my life, and will surely have no control over this clever, cunning Japanese youth."[114] As the comment about his "cunning" nature shows, Bird's approach to him was heavily shaped by her prejudices. Her discussion of leadership in the quote is best viewed as a literary trope inserted to emphasise her feminine discomfort with authority. In reality, Bird was a relatively experienced traveller and, as discussed above, had assumed

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[112] Isabella Bird to John Murray, 29 April [1879], Ms. 42024, NLS Archives, f. 115.

[113] Andrew Elliot "'It's Japan, But Yet There is a Difference Somehow:' Editorial Change and Yezo in Isabella Bird's *Unbeaten Tracks in Japan," Journeys* 9, no.1 (2008): 1–20. Indeed, the later and more widely read "popular edition" of the book removed many of such passages, creating a narrative that more fully conforms to dominant modes of travel writing.

[114] Bird, *Unbeaten Tracks* 1: 51; Kanasaka. *Isabella Bird*, 84.

command in demanding situations. Indeed, more generally, she emphasised that, under her guidance, Tsurukichi had acted a faithful and docile subordinate.[115] In private, Bird stressed her dominance over him, suggesting that it was "wonderful" that she felt safe to travel with "only a boy of 18 as interpreter." In refusing to recognise Tsurukichi's as an adult, Bird emphasises her authority over to him. In public, too, she also described how she succeeded in getting him to stop wearing a hat that she thought "obnoxious."[116] More broadly, "the image of Ito that emerges…is of a capable, dependable 'boy,' a servant over whom Bird is able, from an early point, to gain control."[117] As with Shah, Bird's writings about Tsurukichi emphasise her ability to discipline Tsurukichi's body, turning him into a useful instrument of exploration. But even in her descriptions of his service, it is clear that Bird relied on his self-control. For instance, she lauds the fact that he avoids alcohol, takes "great pains to be accurate" and sends any spare money back to his mother.[118]

There are other themes in Bird's account that highlight how Tsurukichi contested her authority, and which raise questions about who was in charge. Elsewhere in her narrative, Bird suggests that the relationship between the two of them was far from a clear hierarchy. "I am trying to manage him, because he meant to manage me," she reported.[119] She also had concerns about the fact that Tsurukichi beat his horse

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[115] Bird, *Unbeaten Tracks*, 2: 318.

[116] Bird, *Unbeaten Tracks*, 1: 144; Andrew Elliot, "Ito and Isabella in the Contact Zone: Interpretation Mimicry, and *Unbeaten Tracks in Japan*," *Electronic Journal of Contemporary Japanese Studies*, December 2008, http://www.japanesestudies.org.uk/articles/2008/Elliott.html.

[117] Elliot, "Ito and Isabella."

[118] Bird, *Unbeaten Tracks*, 1: 311.

[119] Bird, *Unbeaten Tracks*, 1: 156.

"unmercifully" and called him a "bully" and a "coward" for doing so. "I am now making Ito ride in front of me," she continued, "to make sure that he does not beat or otherwise misuse his beast."[120] Initially, her description of this incident shows how she used the order of march to instil her authority and to ensure that animals were be controlled in humane ways (probably to emphasise her compassion and femininity). However, Tsurukichi's response, as recorded by Bird, also illustrates his agency and self-control. She reports that when they next stopped, he "brought out his notebook, and quietly asked me the meanings of the words 'bully' and 'coward.'"[121] He uses Bird's attempts to punish him as an opportunity to improve his language skills, a move that inverts the power relationship causing Bird "aggravation."[122] Because her authority was based on negotiation and persuasion, it was open to challenge through questioning and misunderstanding.

The issue of manners was an area in which the conflict over authority is particularly visible. When they parted, Bird told Tsurukichi of her "objection to his manners."[123] Bird reports that he "promised to amend them" but also retorted that her manners were "just missionary manners!"[124] Elsewhere, she also reported that he "delights in retailing stories of the bad manners of Englishmen," and "is very anxious about my good behaviour, and as I am equally anxious to be courteous."[125] These comments suggest that, while in Japan, Tsurukichi attempted to regulate Bird's manners and behaviours to comply with local codes of etiquette. Moreover, she implies

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[120] Bird, *Unbeaten Tracks*, 2: 137.

[121] Bird, *Unbeaten Tracks*, 2: 137–38.

[122] Bird, *Unbeaten Tracks*, 2: 137.

[123] Bird, *Unbeaten Tracks*, 2: 21.

[124] Bird, *Unbeaten Tracks*, 2: 21.

[125] Bird, *Unbeaten Tracks* 1: 156; Elliot, "Ito and Isabella in the Contact Zone."

that she did actually alter her habits in order to avoid causing offense, suggesting that the power relationship in the field was not always the clear master-servant binary that Bird elsewhere presents it as.[126] Previous scholarship has suggested that these contests can be read as reflection of broader western anxieties about the emerging power of Japan.[127] However, studied alongside other expeditions, it is clear that contested power relationships were a common feature of Victorian travel and exploration. Importantly, a close reading of Bird's writings show that Tsurukichi's power over Bird could be productive. He sought to both ensure she does not offend people in the areas through which she travelled and to improve his own skills as a guide and translator.

Bird Dependent on Chinese Self-Discipline

Japan was not the last time that Bird's guides attempted to get her to comply with Asian forms of discipline. When she travelled in China in the mid 1890s, she was compelled to comply with numerous local customs covering her behaviours. She describes how "In China everything is ruled by rigid etiquette. There are four things to be attended to on getting into a cart, and rigid rules govern the getting into a chair or boat."[128] Bird reports that the crew of the houseboat viewed such rules as a matter of life and death that "draws the vengeance of the gods."[129] Such comments are typical of Orientalist writing about China that sought to emphasise its conformity to custom and superstition.[130] Nevertheless, in the field, Bird reports that she conformed to such

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[126] Elliot, "Ito and Isabella."

[127] Elliot, "Ito and Isabella."

[128] Bird, *The Yangtze Valley*, 136.

[129] Bird, *The Yangtze Valley*, 136.

[130] Chang, *Britain's Chinese Eye*, 144, 168; Bird, *The Yangtze Valley*, 135–36.

requests and carried out many of her behaviours "according to the rules of etiquette."[131] As these passages show, the movements of her body were shaped by forms of discipline that pre-existed her journeys and over which she had comparatively little influence.

The important and productive role of pre-existing structures is visible in Bird's account of her trip up the river Yangtze by boat. The river was a long-established trade route: even the dangerous Three Gorges had been open to "regular shipping" for nearly one thousand years by the time she travelled there.[132] The waterway was also governed by an established system of customs and regulations which made her movement possible.[133] In much of Bird's book, the role that such structures played in her ability to travel is not obvious.[134] However, her account of the ascent of the Hsin-tan rapids, demonstrates how the disciplined and coordinated bodies of the boat's crew played a key role in her movement up the river.[135] The rapids were a dangerous stretch of water that the boat had to cross to proceed inland. She describes how local pilots helped her vessel to navigate:

> A curious functionary came on board my boat, a well-dressed man, carrying a white flag; on which was written, 'Powers of the waters, give a lucky star for the journey.' He stood well forward, waving this flag regularly during the ascent to propitiate the river deities, and the cook threw rice on the billows with the same object. The pilot was a quiet, well-dressed man, giving orders by signals which were promptly

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[131] Bird, *The Yangtze Valley*, 202.

[132] Nanny Kim, "River Control, Merchant Philanthropy, and Environmental Change in Nineteenth-Century China," *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient* 52, no. 4/5 (2009), 666–68.

[133] Kim, "River Control," 666–68.

[134] Schoenbauer Thurin, *Victorian Travelers*, 143.

[135] Bird, *The Yangtze Valley*, 124.

> obeyed. Indeed, the strict discipline to which these wild boatmen submit in perilous places is remarkable.[136]

The boat's ascent of the rapids was possible because ordered and coordinated labour that required many years of training. Bird had little control over this process and generally walked on the shore alongside the river as she was "nervous" of rapids after an accident in Korea.[137] The movement of the boat up the river was carried out by an orderly crew over which Bird had almost no control at this crucial point.

As this incident highlights, discipline on Bird's expeditions was a complex affair. On the one hand, her accounts often highlight her ability to command expeditions, inspiring loyalty through allegedly feminine qualities such as persuasion and negotiation. Bird' racial identity shaped how she wrote about such issues. She was able to exert, or at least write about exerting, authority over people of colour in ways she avoided when describing her relationship with white men in America. On the other hand, her writings also included incidents where others, most notably Ito Tsurukichi, tried to manage her. Studying her travels alongside Burton and Speke's brings to the surface important similarities. Like Burton and Speke, Bird depended on pre-existing and collective forms of discipline, as her writings about China illustrate most vividly. Here, the specific dangers of river travel up rapids seem to have instilled a particularly keen sense of cooperation within the boat's crew. The importance of discipline on board boats

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[136] Bird, *The Yangtze Valley*, 124.

[137] Bird, *The Yangtze Valley*, 117; Isabella Bird to John Scott Keltie, 5 October 1894, RGS/CB, RGS Archives, f. 5.

is also something that comes through strongly in writing about Antarctic exploration.

SCOTT'S EXPEDITIONS: DISCIPLINE, DOGS, AND DRUNKENNESS

Questions of discipline in Antarctica were shaped by the background of many leaders, officers, and men. Almost all expedition members were British. Many had military (particularly naval) backgrounds, meaning the primary difference between leaders and subordinates was one of class. As most expedition members came from the same institutions and countries (undergoing rigorous selection processes), instilling discipline appears in many ways less complex than it was for Burton, Speke, and Bird who sought to lead expeditions in unfamiliar cultural contexts. Yet, the isolation of Antarctica also posed problems, making it was comparatively hard for any disgruntled expedition members to leave. Like other explorers, Scott's published accounts often present subordinates as lacking the self-control of the officers, particularly in how they dressed, ate, and drank. Scott suggests they would often be ineffective expedition members without his paternalistic command. Where they exist, sailors' accounts of polar expeditions seldom discuss matters of leadership, due to both levels of literacy and the disciplinary risks of writing about such matters. The absence of much unmediated working-class testimony means addressing this issue presents similar challenges to the other case studies. As elsewhere, a close and critical reading of published accounts alongside archival sources demonstrates that officers also acted in unruly ways and that Scott relied on the self-control of the sailors at several key points. Finally, I show how Scott also had to adapt to non-human forms of discipline in his dealings with the expeditions' huskies. As a result, an analysis of Antarctic exploration shows that even in this more hierarchical and homogenous context, order was a product of subaltern self-discipline, cooperation, and adaptation.

Naval Leadership, Class, and Paternalism

The naval identity of Scott's first expedition was central to how it dealt with disciplinary issues. Scott had been appointed for his naval background: Sir Clements Markham, the President of the RGS, claimed that naval officers from the regular line (rather than the surveying branch) should lead the expedition because they were "able, resourceful, lovers of order and discipline able and accustomed to management of men."[138] Markham also saw youth as an important quality in a leader, claiming that officers over the age of 40 were "physically unfit" to lead a polar expedition.[139] In his eyes, retaining control relied on an expedition leader having a healthy disciplined body of his own.

Training, disciplining, and selection started well before the expedition reached Antarctica. Most of the *Discovery*'s crew were also naval men. Scott claimed they "brought with them a sense of naval discipline" and felt that this made his leadership far easier.[140] Consequently, the institutional background of the officers and men meant that they had a shared understanding around issues of behaviour and conduct, having been through many years of training. Indeed, the organisers of the BNAE took numerous steps to ensure that the *Discovery* was crewed by healthy, reliable men. All crew were volunteers, warned on application that they would be "selected for their physique,

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[138] Clements Markham, 1898, "Considerations Respecting the Choice of a Leader of An Antarctic Expedition," Antarctic Expeditions Collection, RGS/AA 3/2/1, RGS Archives, f. 4.

[139] Markham, 1898, "Considerations Respecting," f. 1.

[140] Scott, *The Voyage*, 1: 75, 36.

conduct, ability, and recommendation, but a clean medical history is essential."[141] Medical examinations were conducted both on board the ships from which volunteers were enlisted and by the Admiralty.[142] Sailors with bad teeth or other health problems were rejected.[143] The importance of physique resulted in many of the sailors having impressively (perhaps even ideally) muscular bodies.[144] Albert Armitage, the expedition's second in command, later claimed that the "chest expansion of some of the crew was very fine indeed" and that their physical proportions would have "called forth admiration from the Sandowists."[145] Armitage's reference here is to followers of Eugene Sandow, "the father of modern bodybuilding and the first man to make a comfortable living by displaying his muscular physique."[146] Different standards applied, however, to the expedition's officers and scientific staff. They were examined separately and

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[141] Anon., "Service in the Antarctic Expedition," 1901, RGS/AA/4/1, RGS Archives, f. 1.

[142] See file "Crew," RGS/AA/3/4/1–48, Antarctic Expedition Collection, RGS Archives.

[143] "Crew," RGS/AA/3/4/1–48, Antarctic Expedition Collection, RGS Archives; Armitage, *Two Years*, 8.

[144] Tomasz Filip Mossakowski, "The Sailors Dearly Love To Make Up": Cross-Dressing and Blackface During Polar Exploration" (PhD Thesis: Kings College London 2014), 200; Begiato, *Manliness in Britain 1760–1900*, 196.

[145] Armitage, *Two Years*, 121.

[146] Mossakowski, "The Sailors Dearly," 200; Patrick Scott, "Body-Building and Empire-Building: George Douglas Brown, The South African War, and Sandow's Magazine of Physical Culture," *Victorian Periodicals Review* 41, no. 1 (Spring 2008): 78–94.

interviewed about their alcohol consumption.[147] Some were treated more leniently in respect to their physical strength than the sailors. Edward Wilson, the expedition's junior surgeon, was accepted onto the expedition, despite suffering with lung problems, due to Scott's intervention.[148]

The different standards of physical discipline expected of officers and men is also evident in the selection of Scott's *Terra Nova* expedition. The shore party were drawn from over 8,000 volunteers, through a process less well-documented than on the BNAE.[149] Five *Discovery* sailors joined the *Terra Nova* expedition on account of their polar experience and previous good conduct.[150] These returnees included Petty Officer Edgar Evans and stoker William Lashly, who both had strong disciplined bodies. Scott described Evans as "a man of herculean strength."[151] Likewise, Scott claimed that Lashly was "never in anything but the hardest [physical] condition" on account of being "a teetotaller and non-smoker all this life."[152] Petty Officer George Abbott in Campbell's

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[147] Anon., "Report of Medical Examination of Officer of Expedition," 7 January 1901, RGS/AA 3/1/5, Antarctic Expedition Collection, RGS Archives; Medical Department Admiralty to Secretary of the National Antarctic Expedition, "Medical Report on Scientific Members of the Expedition," July 10 1901, RGS/AA/3/1/18, Antarctic Expedition Collection RGS Archives; Anon,. Average Consumption of Alcohol Beverages (undated) RGS/AA/3/2/11, Antarctic Expedition Collection, RGS Archives.

[148] Comments in Clements Markham's hand on Letter from Medical Department Admiralty," July 10 1901, RGS/AA/3/1/18, RGS Archives.

[149] Cherry Garrard, *The Worst Journey*, 1: 2.

[150] Huxley, *Scott of the Antarctic*, 186.

[151] Scott, *The Voyage*, 2: 545.

[152] Scott, *Voyage*, 2: 545.

Northern Party was also physically impressive.[153] Richer men required no such credentials. Scott chose to take Lawrence Oates to care for the expedition's ponies and Apsley Cherry Garrard as an assistant zoologist after the two men gave large donations to the expedition.[154] Edward Evans, meanwhile, managed to secure a place as second-in-command by cancelling plans for a separate Welsh expedition.[155] Selection practices on Scott's two expeditions differed, reflecting both different degrees of official involvement and hierarchies of class and wealth. Officers and scientists could secure places while having less impressive bodies.

Once in Antarctica, naval hierarchies influenced the living arrangements and division of work on both expeditions, as Ben Maddison has demonstrated.[156] Reflecting naval customs, officers and men ate, slept, and socialised separately on-board *Discovery* (although they ate largely the same food).[157] Even on Scott's second expedition, which had little direct naval involvement, certain forms of naval hierarchy were transposed to the expedition's hut. The interior was divided between officers and men, with a partition between the two sections. "I am quite sure it is to the satisfaction of both," Scott commented in his diary.[158] The sailors' views on the matter are harder to recover. Similar measures were even introduced in the ice cave that the Northern Party was forced to overwinter in.[159] To expedition leaders, polar exploration was a hierarchical undertaking which required the physical separation of officers and men. Indeed, in his

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[153] Hooper, *The Longest Winter*, 29.

[154] Max Jones, Introduction to *Journals*, xxvi.

[155] Jones, Introduction to *Journals*, xxvi.

[156] Maddison, *Class and Colonialism*, 167–93.

[157] Scott, *The Voyage*, 1: 292–307.

[158] Scott, *Journals*, 92.

[159] Hooper, *The Longest Winter*, 220–21.

published writings, Scott often suggested that sailors required his paternalistic influence to be successful polar explorers. For instance, In *The Voyage of the "Discovery"* (1905), he reports that the main problem with many of the BNAE's working-class sailors was their inability to admit that they were worn out. In the expedition's second sledging season, Scott and a party of men journeyed to reach the polar plateau. Scott intended to send some of the sailors back and to proceed with only the strongest men. He claimed that none of the sailors wanted to return, viewing it as a sign of weakness and failure. "What children these men are! and yet what splendid children! They won't give up till they break down, and then they consider their collapse disgraceful," Scott explained in his published account.[160] In this passage, Scott portrays the sailors as unable to fully understand the physical limits of their own bodies, suggesting that they need his paternal guidance. Such descriptions echo Speke's writings discussed above. Later, similar ideas about the naval ratings' lack of self-control also cropped up in some of the discussions about the death of Petty Officer Evans on his return from the South Pole in 1912. Several writers suggested that working class men were less able to withstand the mental strains of polar travel.[161] Officers' published accounts imply that while working-class bodies were a key component of a polar expedition, they required directions from their officers.

More broadly, Scott, drawing on ideas loaded with class prejudice, publicly portrays the working-class sailors as lacking his own foresight and self-control. He criticised their "wasteful use of food, clothes, and equipment" [162] After describing various attempts to reduce their consumption, he concludes that it might be impossible "to alter

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[160] Scott, *The Voyage*, 2: 256–67; Jones, *The Last Great Quest*, 110–12.

[161] Jones, *The Last Great*, 112–14.

[162] Scott, *The Voyage*, 1: 335.

their happy-go-lucky-nature."[163] He expressed similar paternalistic attitudes in his discussions of sailors' enjoyment of the midday "tot" of rum. This drink was an established part of naval tradition and Scott reluctantly allowed it to be issued on board *Discovery.*[164] However, in public, he claimed that he was "not at all sure the men would not be better without it."[165] On the issue of drink, Scott presents the officers as having a higher-level of self-control than most sailors. In *The Voyage of the "Discovery"* (1905), he claimed the wardroom was a largely "abstemious community" and notes that some of the officers were "practically teetotalers."[166] Discussions of drink could be used to present the officers as more temperate and disciplined than the men.

Scott suggests that his expedition had relatively few problems with indiscipline and disorder. He did, however, have the expedition's cook, Henry Brett, "locked in irons for eight hours" for his failure to follow orders and cook hygienically.[167] Scott, like other explorers, felt entitled to inflict some limited forms of violence on the bodies of subordinate expedition members. He also reported some grumbles amongst the crew, such as complaints about the quality of food supplies on the BNAE, suggesting that there were a few discontented individuals.[168] In this respect, the inaccessibility of Antarctica was both a blessing and a curse for enforcing discipline. While isolation made it possible to preselect a disciplined party in ways impossible elsewhere, it also made it difficult for those unwell or dissatisfied to leave. The arrival of the relief ship in 1903

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[163] Scott, *The Voyage*, 1: 335.

[164] Armston-Sheret, "'A Good Advertisement,'" 257–85.

[165] Scott, *The Voyage*, 1: 295.

[166] Scott, *The Voyage*, 1: 302; Edward A. Wilson, "The Medical Aspect, of the Discovery's Voyage to the Antarctic" *British Medical Journal*, July 8 1905, 77.

[167] Anthony, *Hoosh*, 20.

[168] Scott, *The Voyage*, 1: 299.

enabled Scott to send home those who he viewed as "undesirable" or physically unfit.[169] On this occasion, Scott emphasised that he expected the expedition's officers to be more physically fit than the men as they may be called on to undergo "hardship" and "exposure" "at any moment." [170] Like Markham, Scott claims that polar leadership relied on having a physically resilient body. Before the expedition, sailors required stronger bodies than officers, but once in Antarctica, Scott viewed the issue in quite different terms.

Explorers and sponsoring societies conceived of polar exploration as a hierarchical undertaking, relying on strong leadership and disciplined subordinates. Whether physical strength and self-control were more important attributes in leaders or led was, however, a source of debate. In his published accounts, Scott presented officers and scientists as self-controlled, while he often portrays the sailors as lacking this quality in terms laced with paternalism. At numerous points, he suggests that the sailors do not know what is good for them and that his external disciplinary influence can help the sailors achieve their full potential. These descriptions have much in common with Speke's writings about the undisciplined behaviours of Waungwana. Both employ similar motifs, such as the emphasis on subordinates' child-like behaviours and intemperate habits. Like Speke's writings, there are reasons to doubt the accuracy of such assertions.

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[169] Scott, *Voyage*, 2: 179–80; Robert Falcon Scott to Reginald Koettlitz, 19 February 1903, Ms. 366/14/24, SPRI Archives; Koettlitz to Scott, 19 February 1903, Ms. 366/25, SPRI Archives.

[170] Scott to Koettlitz, 19 February 1903, SPRI Archives; Koettlitz to Scott, 19 February 1903, SPRI Archives.

Officer Drunkenness and Sailor Self-Discipline

A close comparison of explorers' public and private writings throws into question some of Scott's claims about the comparative self-control of officers and men. As I now show, not only did officers sometimes behave in undisciplined ways, but explorers' writings also suggest that they often depended on the orderly habits of the seamen. As on other expeditions, polar discipline was more complex than a superficial reading of explorers' published accounts suggests. One of the most striking examples of such distortion was on the question of drink. Despite public professions of sobriety, it is clear from their private accounts that the officers got drunk on numerous occasions. The officers certainly seem to have enjoyed drinking far more than they professed in public. Lieutenant Royds reports in his diary numerous instances where the officers celebrated minor events, such as wedding anniversaries, with several glasses of wines, liqueurs, or champagne at the wardroom dinner table.[171] Similarly, on 5 December 1901, Wilson, the expedition's junior surgeon, who claimed to drink no alcohol except for medicinal purposes, reported waking up with "a splitting headache, the result of drinking bad wine in large quantities" with the officers and scientists of *Discovery*.[172] These records suggest

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[171] T. Roger Royds, *The Diary of Lieutenant Charles W. R. Royds RN Expedition to the Antarctic, 1901–1904* (self-published: Braidwood, 2001), 150, 206, 235, 253.

[172] Edward Wilson, *Diary of the* Discovery *Expedition to the Antarctic Regions 1901–1904*, edited from the original manuscript by Ann Savours (London, Blandford Press, 1966), 83; Anon,. "Average Consumption of Alcohol Beverages," RGS Archives; Henry R. Guly, "Use and Abuse of Alcohol and Other Drugs during the Heroic Age of Antarctic Exploration," *History of Psychiatry* 24, no. 1 (2013): 94–105; Armston-Sheret, "A Good Advertisement."

that the officers were not the controlled, abstentious community presented in Scott's public account. While minor in and of itself, the incident again demonstrates the problems with taking explorers' public-facing writings about discipline at face value.

Even Scott's public writings demonstrate his dependence on the self-discipline of naval ratings. Despite being organised in ways that reflected Scott's naval background, the *Discovery*'s crew were employed through civilian contracts. Scott did not think these regulations strict enough for a polar service, so the explorers "lived exactly as though the ship and all on board had been under the Naval Discipline Act."[173] The Act, passed in 1866, set out a broad array of punishable offenses, including drunkenness, sodomy, and uncleanness, and also regulated publish worship.[174] It also laid out punishments, which were shaped by the divide between officers and men. Sailors were more likely to be punished through imprisonment or detention, while officers were more likely to be dismissed.[175] By Scott's time, the act had been amended several times to restrict (but not totally ban) the use of violent punishments.[176] Scott reports that the crew continued to observe these far stricter regulations even though there was no legal requirement for them to do so.[177] Consequently, the crew contributed significantly to

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[173] Scott, *The Voyage*, 1: 75.

[174] Mathew S. Seligmann, *Rum, Sodomy, Prayers, and the Lash Revisited: Winston Churchill and Social Reform in the Royal Navy, 1900–1915* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), 43, 82.

[175] Jason Sears, "Discipline in the Royal Navy, 1913–1946," *War & Society* 9, no. 2 (October 1991), 43–51.

[176] Seligmann, *Rum, Sodomy, Prayers*, 96–97, 138–39; Sears, "Discipline in the Royal Navy," 39–60.

[177] Scott, *The Voyage*, 1: 75.

the discipline and order that Scott elsewhere describes.

Because it had less naval involvement, Scott's second expedition was even more reliant on the self-discipline of working-class expedition members. The composition of this expedition was more varied, with fewer sailors and greater number of civilian scientists. As a result, the day-to-day life in the hut was characterised as much by a culture of joking and care as much as it was by naval regulations and self-mastery.[178] The lack of formal discipline on Scott's second expedition could cause problems, although explorers' accounts are circumspect in their discussions of such issues. Apsley Cherry Garrard reports that until the last year (following Scott's death) the explorers relied on volunteers for many task "that should have been organised as routine."[179] The result, he claimed, was "that the willing horses were overworked."[180] From other accounts, it seems that the sailors who conducted themselves in "conservative naval way" carried out much of this labour.[181] In contrast, the expedition's second in command, Edward Evans, complained that some civilian scientists "had never come under any sort of naval or military discipline" and lacked the sailors' self-control.[182] The presence of such descriptions in Evans' account was no doubt shaped by his own naval background and more general shifts in the cultural position of sailors.[183] But Scott also hints at his general reliance on the self-control of sailors, expressing his surprise when a job was not done with "seamanlike care."[184] While a criticism, this quote suggests that the rest

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[178] Strange, "Reconsidering the 'Tragic' Scott Expedition," 80.

[179] Cherry Garrard, *The Worst Journey*, 2: 547.

[180] Cherry Garrard, *The Worst Journey*, 2: 547.

[181] Evans, *South with Scott*, 116.

[182] Evans, *South with Scott*, 116.

[183] Conley, *From Jack Tar to Union Jack.*

[184] Scott, *Journals*, 469.

of the time, he expected particularly high standards of work from the expedition's seamen.

At times, the sailors' disciplined conduct was central to the scientific work of the expedition. In the *Terra Nova* expedition's Northern Party, one of the main daily scientific tasks was the collection of two-hourly meteorological observations, which provided a record of temperature, pressure, and wind patterns.[185] At first, this task was carried out by the scientific staff, but they struggled to maintain these regular observations. However, Raymond Priestley reports that the two cooks, Able Seaman Harry Dickason and Petty Officer Frank Browning, "learned to read the thermometers and barometers accurately" and took over the role.[186] In contrast to the scientists, the two men missed very few observations.[187] The same qualities that made a successful seaman, such as self-control and timekeeping, were transferable to this meteorological work. Disciplined and regular observations were increasingly important within meteorological fieldwork, providing domestic scientists with the data needed to construct climate models. The importance of working-class naval ratings in such work stands in contrast to existing literature that emphasises the importance of naval officers in nineteenth-century meteorology.[188]

In this section, I have questioned the idea that officers and scientists had more disciplined bodies that those of men on several fronts. As with the other case studies,

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[185] Priestley, *Antarctic Adventure*, 80.

[186] Priestley, *Antarctic Adventure*, 80. The two men were not cooks before the expedition but took on this role.

[187] Priestley, *Antarctic Adventure*, 80.

[188] Simon Naylor, "Log Books and the Law of Storms: Maritime Meteorology and the British Admiralty in the Nineteenth Century," *Isis* 106, no. 4 (December 2, 2015): 771–97.

the nature of explorers' public writings means that much of the challenge of recovering sailors' approach to discipline is an interpretive one. For instance, I have suggested that the private accounts of officers and scientists give us reasons to doubt the idea that they were more temperate and restrained than the sailors. More fundamentally, explorers' accounts also contain numerous suggestions that they depended on the self-disciplined conduct of the naval sailors who formed the mainstay of many polar expeditions. Within officers' accounts there are also suggestions that sailors, through either choice or habit, voluntarily upheld far higher standards of discipline than they were compelled to. Sometimes, such accounts even present sailors are more reliable than civilian scientists. But, generally, Scott's reliance on the self-control of sailors often goes unmentioned, as he had grown accustomed to working with disciplined subordinates. What happened then when Scott was required to work with forms of discipline that he did not understand?

"You Can't Change Dog Nature:" Non-Human Discipline

Scott's reliance on naval self-discipline explains some of the problems he experienced when trying to control the dogs on his two Antarctic expeditions. As noted in Chapter 3, *"Heroic" Bodies* and Chapter 2, *Literature Review*, critics, most notably Roland Huntford, have accused Scott of irrationally valorising man-hauling. More recently, Scott's defenders have highlighted how Scott was prepared to use dogs and talked little about man-hauling in the publicity material for his expedition.[189] What often goes ignored in such debates, is Scott's actual understanding of dogs and their usefulness and

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[189] Jones, *The Last Great Quest*, 117–20.

the importance of questions of discipline within his thinking.[190]

In his public writings Scott often presented huskies as undisciplined. Scott argued that "the dog is fickle and unstable." [191] He claimed that dogs performed well "on short journeys, over beaten tracks, and with a light load; sustained effort with a heavy loads over a new track seem always to have shown the dog in a much less favourable light."[192] Such ideas were shaped by Scott's experiences using dogs on the BNAE, where—in his eyes—both men and dogs succumbed to scurvy.[193] While the men were able to overcome the disease through grit, determination, and self-control, the dogs lacked such qualities.[194] More fundamentally, Scott struggled to come terms with the disciplinary structure within huskie packs.[195] In *The Voyage of the Discovery*, he describes his shock at the egalitarian but hierarchical nature of dog society and the hostility of the group to any dog that received special treatment from the men.[196] He was horrified by such violent forms of discipline, noting his distress when the pack of dogs killed two of their companions who had been treated differently.[197] He responded by punishing the "murderers": "one by one," he wrote, "they were led out and severely chastised in front of their victims."[198] This punishment had little effect and Scott conceded that "the dogs

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[190] Murray, "The Use and Abuse of Dogs," 303–10.

[191] Scott, *Voyage*, 1: 464.

[192] Scott, *Voyage*, 1: 464–65.

[193] Armston-Sheret, "Tainted Bodies," 23–29.

[194] Armston-Sheret, "Tainted Bodies," 23–29.

[195] Alp, "Dogs of the British Antarctic Expedition," 479.

[196] Scott, *The Voyage*,1: 255–58, 472.

[197] Scott, *The Voyage*, 1: 257.

[198] Scott, *The Voyage*, 1: 257.

evidently didn't know what it was all about. You can't change dog nature."[199] Unable to enforce their own standards of discipline on the dogs, the explorers worked with the dogs' hierarchical structures.

After his futile attempts to impose his own standards, Scott grew more adept at working with the disciplinary structures of the dog pack. Each group had one leader who, Scott reported, "is unceasingly watchful, he never pauses to parley, but attacks at the first sign of insolence, for he knows well that the sharpest and quickest fang commands the situation."[200] On the BNAE, the lead dog was "a black dog with some tawny markings" and was named after a racial slur.[201] He reported that they had to put the alpha dog at the front while sledging, as "he chose his place naturally as the leader, and if put in any other position would make himself so unpleasant to his neighbours, and generally behave so ill, that he was very quickly shifted."[202] Scott also claimed that this lead dog would enforce discipline among the others, acting as an intermediary of sorts.[203] As these examples show, the humans relied on canine forms of discipline, and the success of their journey depended on their ability to adapt to and work with the disciplinary structures of the dog pack. However, Scott continued to have reservations about the violent behaviour of some of the dogs.[204] Because of such concerns, he outsourced much of the work of caring for and commanding the dogs to Cecil Meares the chief dog handler and Demetri Gerrof on the *Terra Nova* expedition. Due to their experience, practices of dog driving differed from the BNAE and followed "the orthodox

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[199] Scott, *The Voyage*, 1: 257.

[200] Scott, *The Voyage*,1: 256.

[201] Scott, *The Voyage*, 2: 13, see also, 1: 327, 472.

[202] Scott, *The Voyage*, 2: 13.

[203] Scott, *The Voyage*, 2: 14.

[204] Scott, *Journals*, 116.

Siberian model" with far better results.[205] When the explorers were able to use dogs with some success, it was because they understood the animals they were working with and cooperated with the existing disciplinary structures of the pack.[206] Even in Antarctica, then, explorers had to adapt their modes of leadership to the conditions in which they were operating.

Scott's discussions of dog discipline bring to the surface several broader issues. They show that while he felt comfortable using animal bodies to facilitate polar travel, he struggled to come to terms with animal agency. This reflected both his own ideas about animal welfare but perhaps also the broader conception that polar expeditions should be orderly and hierarchical undertakings. Despite his reservations, he had to adapt to non-human forms of discipline, accepting and working with the leaders of the dog pack. On his second expedition, he hired intermediaries who knew more about huskies to do much of this work but remained concerned when the dogs behaved in ways that he neither fully understood nor approved of. These incidents again demonstrate the importance of subaltern agency within the history of exploration. Although Scott's expeditions are often conceived of as comparatively homogenous and hierarchical, they too relied on forms of discipline outside of the control of expedition leaders.

CONCLUSION

Discussions of discipline present a significant challenge for historians and historical geographers seeking to draw attention to subaltern agency and contributions. Explorers used discussions of this issue to manage their dependence on others. Describing subordinate expedition members as lacking in self-control or motivation (at least

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[205] Alp, "Dogs of the British Antarctic Expedition," 482.

[206] Alp, "Dogs of the British Antarctic Expedition."

without the firm, paternalistic leadership of the expedition leader) allowed explorers at the same time to acknowledge and minimise the contributions of others to their expeditions. Subaltern members were useful provided they were under the control of expedition leaders. Their agency was often equated with indiscipline and disorder. Such descriptions are often laced with racial or class prejudice: Burton and Speke drew on tropes of African disorder and savagery in their writings about the East African caravan system. In an analogous way, Scott drew on paternalistic language when describing the allegedly carefree and child-like attitude of the sailors on the BNAE, but he was more willing to acknowledge their disciplined naval behaviour in other ways. Bird's discussions of discipline are more complex because of the gendered dynamics involved. She often sought to highlight how she successfully controlled Asian men through the allegedly feminine skills of negotiation and persuasion. Even so, the realities of her expeditions are also more complex than they first appear.

While tropes around discipline and authority are prevalent in explorers' accounts, a close and contextualised reading of public and private sources suggests the reality was more complex. In addressing these issues, I have adopted a methodical strategy for reading accounts that takes account of their complicated nature as historical sources. In some instances, I have read "along the grain," focusing on what they are trying to communicate about the issue of discipline.[207] Doing so has enabled me to explicitly address broader tropes that are present in their writings. At other points, I have drawn on archival sources and a close reading of other sections of explorers' accounts to read such narratives "against the grain."[208] This task involves demonstrating the implausibility of some of explorers' claims, but also picking up on more nuanced reflections within their published accounts as well as contradictions

[207] Stoler, *Along the Archival Grain*, 46–53.

[208] Stoler, *Along the Archival Grain*, 46–53.

between the writings of different expedition members.

Deploying such techniques shows that control over expeditions was often contested, with subordinates disciplining the manners and movement of the expedition leaders. Indeed, I have shown that explorers often had to regulate their own behaviours to fit in with pre-existing customs and conventions and often relied on the authority of intermediaries. At the same time, leaders often depended on the self-control of subalterns to a degree that often goes unappreciated. When Burton and Speke travelled through East Africa, they depended on the complex and sophisticated structures of the East African caravan network. Meanwhile Bird depended on the pre-existing forms of discipline on the Yangtze river. Scott's approach to such issues was more straightforward, as he was operating in a naval context which he was familiar with. But he too depended on the self-control and acquaintance of the working-class crew. Focusing on the ways bodies were disciplined thus allows our discussions to move beyond simply listing subaltern contributions and to foreground something of their agency within the history of exploration. In some of Raymond Priestley's discussions about the importance of the cooks within the party's meteorological fieldwork, we also see the important role that a broader range of individuals played within scientific research. It is to such practices of knowledge production that this thesis now turns its attention.

7

SENSING BODIES

Postcolonial critics of empire frequently portray the explorer as a "seeing man" "whose imperial eyes passively look out and possess."[1] Such descriptions echo the ways that explorers were instructed to observe. The RGS advice manual, *Hints to Travellers* (1893), advised that "[t]he first and best instruments are the traveller's own eyes. Use them constantly, and record your observations on the spot." [2] In reality, explorers often struggled to make sense of what they had seen—an issue that Isabella Bird discusses in *The Yangtze Valley and Beyond* (1899). She describes the difficulty of reconciling her experiences with existing knowledge about the country, noting how it was "not an easy matter" to even identify many of the places she had been to in the secondary literature.[3] Such difficulties led her to "agree with the dictum of Socrates—'the body is a hindrance to acquiring knowledge, and sight and hearing are not to be trusted.'"[4] The contradiction between Bird's views and the advice given in *Hints to Travellers* suggests that exploration raised profound question about the reliability of the senses. In this chapter, I argue that the idea that geographical knowledge was simply a process of recording of ocular "on-the-spot" observations is a myth and that the reliance on visual

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[1] Pratt, *Imperial Eyes*, 9; Gillian Rose, "On The Need To Ask: How, Exactly, Is Geography Visual?" *Antipode* 35, no. 2 (2003): 217.

[2] Douglas Freshfield introduction in *Hints to Travellers: Scientific and General* 7th ed., eds. Douglas Freshfield and W. J. L. Wharton (London: Royal Geographical Society 1893), 5.

[3] Bird, *The Yangtze Valley*, ix.

[4] Bird, *The Yangtze Valley*, ix.

metaphors within much critical scholarship is also limiting. Part of the problem here is that terms like "the gaze" are frequently used to refer to both specific visual practices and power relations in general.[5] In contrast, I study observations in the field on a more granular level to examine the multiple senses and individuals involved.[6] In doing so, I build on recent scholarship that has devoted attention to ways that nineteenth-century geographers relied on locally gathered oral information.[7] Developing such works, I argue that exploration depended on a wider range of senses—including sound, smell, touch—and individuals than previous works have acknowledged. Subaltern people played a variety of roles—translating, directing observations, enabling leaders to navigate new environments, and understand what they were looking at. Accordingly, I argue that despite the emphasis on the vision of a solitary traveller within many guidebooks, Victorian and Edwardian geography relied on multiple senses and numerous bodies. In doing so, this chapter displaces the idea that the scientific work of an expedition was conducted by white explorers using their eyes and ears alone and, instead, draws attention to the collective and embodied labour involved in geographical research.

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[5] There is a vast literature on "the gaze." John Berger, *Ways of Seeing* (London: Penguin, 1971); *Foucault*, *Discipline and Punish*; Said, *Orientalism*; Chris Otter, *The Victorian Eye*; Foucault, *The Birth of the Clinic*; bell hooks, *Black Looks: Race and Representation* (Boston: South End Press, 1992), 115–31.

[6] Paul Carter, *The Road to Botany Bay: An Essay in Spatial History* (London: Faber and Faber, 1987).

[7] David N. Livingstone, *The Geographical Tradition: Episodes in the History of a Contested Enterprise* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1992), 99, 130–33.

THE SENSES IN NINETEENTH-CENTURY GEOGRAPHY

The cultures and conventions around geographical exploration were shaped by the longstanding valorisation of vision within Western systems of knowledge.[8] On the surface, the importance attached to sight can be viewed as a product of the specific biological capabilities of the human body. The eye can, in general, gather information from a greater range than other sensory organs, meaning it allows a much broader area to be surveyed.[9] As Fabian has argued, this distance also helped to instil explorers' observations with a level of detached objectivity.[10] Moreover, the optic nerve is some eighteen times more sensitive than the cochlear nerve of the ear and "is able to transfer an astonishing amount of information to the brain and at a rate of assimilation far greater than that of any other sense organ."[11] Vision also had the advantage that it could be deliberately directed in ways that hearing, smell and taste could not.[12] However, recent research has questioned the idea that individual senses are "autonomous, with each organ responsible for its own perceptual task." [13] In reality, the geographer Rob

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[8] Martin Jay, *Downcast Eyes: The Denigration of Vision in Twentieth-Century French Thought* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 22.

[9] Jay, *Downcast Eyes*, 6; Paul Rodaway, *Sensuous Geographies: Body, Sense, and Place* (Abingdon: Routledge, 1994), 27.

[10] Fabian, *Out of Our Minds*,185–86.

[11] Jay, *Downcast Eyes*, 6.

[12] Fabian, *Out of Our Minds*,185–86.

[13] Rob Sullivan, *The Geography of the Everyday: Toward an Understanding of the Given* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2017),144; Mark Paterson, "Haptic Geographies: Ethnography, Haptic Knowledges and Sensuous Dispositions," *Progress in Human Geography* 33, no. 6 (1 December 2009): 766–88.

Sullivan argues, "the sense organs seem to operate together."[14] This "cooperation" between the senses is foundational to our sensory experience of the world: "Think of gazing at a concrete wall. Via memory, we know that its surface is rough; this haptic memory informs our sight so that our vision 'feels' the wall as well as sees it."[15] Indeed, there is a growing interest in using the body, including the sensations of touch and feeling, as both an "instrument of research" and as a subject of historical study.[16] The relationship between the sight and other senses is, therefore, a subject I return to throughout this chapter.

But there are also specific histories to consider. Vision was particularly important within nineteenth- and twentieth-century geography because of social and cultural developments brought about by modernisation and the Enlightenment.[17] Dramatic changes in technology, government, trade, migration, and culture in the nineteenth century transformed the sensory experiences and perceptions of the British public.[18] Visual representations of the world became increasingly important in popular, scientific, and political cultures.[19] As a result, they were increasingly seen as "the only

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[14] Sullivan, *The Geography of the Everyday*, 144.

[15] Sullivan, *The Geography of the Everyday*, 145.

[16] Mike Crang, "Qualitative Methods: Touchy, Feely, Look-See?" *Progress in Human Geography* 27, no. 4 (August 2003): 494–504; on touch historically, see Constance Classen, *The Deepest Sense: A Cultural History of Touch* (Champaign, IL: University of Illinois Press, 2012).

[17] Otter, *The Victorian Eye.*

[18] Constance Classen, "Introduction: The Transformation of Perception," in *A Cultural History of the Senses in The Age of Empire* vol. 5, ed. Constance Classen (London: Bloomsbury, 2014), 23.

[19] Otter, *The Victorian Eye.*

reliable way of knowing it."[20] More broadly, Victorian culture saw "expanding the visual field" as an important undertaking.[21] The development of glass windows and lighting technology made sight an increasingly important sense within the Victorian city.[22] The period also saw a growing interest in panoramic views and the use of maps to transform "multisensory environments into visual icons."[23]

These wider processes shaped the cultures and conventions surrounding geographical exploration.[24] Soon after the founding of the RGS in 1830, there were attempts to define geography as a visual discipline. In 1832, the English topographer and diplomat Martin Leake read a paper before the society on the mapping of Africa's rivers. He claimed that "in Barbarous Africa, nothing short of the ocular inquiries of educated men is sufficient to procure the requisite facts."[25] At the same time, the importance of the ears was downplayed: Leake claimed, "the best collectors of oral information…have failed as to arriving at the truth as to the origin, course, and

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[20] Livingstone, *The Geographical Tradition*, 98; Denis Cosgrove, *Geography and Vision: Seeing, Imagining, and Representing the World* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2008).

[21] Classen, "Introduction," 6.

[22] Otter, *The Victorian Eye*, 254.

[23] Classen, "Introduction," 6.

[24] Anne Marie Claire Godlewska, "From Enlightenment Vision to Modern Science? Humbolt's Visual Thinking" in *Geography and Enlightenment*, eds. Charles W.J Withers and David N. Livingstone (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1999), 236.

[25] Marting Leake, "Is the Quorra, Which Has Lately Been Traced from its Discharge into The Sea, the Same River as the Nigir of the Ancients?," *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society* 2 (1832), 3; On this, see: Clive Barnett, "Impure and Worldly Geography: The Africanist Discourse of the Royal Geographical Society, 1831–73," *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 23, no. 2 (1998): 239–51.

termination of the rivers."[26] Seeing something with one's own eyes thus became an increasingly important standard for establishing scientific truth, marking a departure from earlier travellers such as Alexander Von Humboldt who wrote openly about using his body as scientific instrument.[27] Increasingly, new geographical knowledge "was created though the production of reliable images," including sketches and later photographs.[28] But Victorians were also acutely aware that not all images were trustworthy, leading to vigorous debates about the credibility of different claims discussed above. Indeed, exploration raised profound questions about the relationship between "subjective experience and universal law" as well as the relationship between travellers' claims and the theorisations of domestic scientists.[29] To improve the reliability of explorers' observations, growing importance was attached to the use of "precision instruments" and photography.[30] During the nineteenth century, it became

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[26] Leake, "Is the Quorra," 3.

[27] Dettelbach, "The Stimulations of Travel," 43–58.

[28] Felix Driver, "Material Memories of Travel," *Journal of Historical Geography* 69 (2020), 33.

[29] Driver, "Distance and Disturbance," 76; here he draws on Michael Dettelbach, "Global Physics and Aesthetics Empire: Humboldt's Physical Portrait of the Tropics," in *Visions of Empire: Voyages, Botany and Representations of Nature*, ed. David P. Miller and Peter H. Reill (Cambridge Cambridge University Press, 1996), 258–92; Driver, *Geography Militant;* Lambert, *Mastering the Niger;* McCook, "It May Be Truth;" Christopher Lawrence and Steven Shapin, eds. *Science Incarnate: Historical Embodiments of Natural Knowledge* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998).

[30] Ryan, *Photography and Exploration*; Fraser MacDonald and Charles W. J. Withers, eds., *Geography Technology and Instruments of Exploration* (Farnham: Ashgate 2015); Charles W. J. Withers, 'Geography and "Thing Knowledge": Instrument

increasingly important that a traveller could provide "quantitative and physical evidence that could provide independent verification for his or her claims."[31] Cameras seemed to provide a way of recording facts while "eliminating problems caused by unreliable human memory, interpretation, or skill."[32] But the reality was more complex. On their 1860–63 expedition, Speke and Grant used the (then relatively new) tool of photography. Grant brought a camera to Zanzibar and used it to take photographs of the island and its people.[33] Speke, however, had Grant send the camera back shortly after reaching the mainland, reporting that carrying out photographic work in the heat "would very soon have killed him."[34] Cameras and instruments relied on healthy operators to use them effectively, meaning they did not resolve the problems discussed above. Instruments could also prove problematic. For instance, the political situation in nineteenth-century Tibet made it hard for travellers to deploy scientific instruments. In response the Survey of India used the regulated steps of the Pundits as instruments of measurement, as examined by Kapil Raj.[35] He argues that the travels of these Asian men

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Epistemology, Failure, and Narratives of 19th-Century Exploration', *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers* 44, no. 4 (2019): 676–91; Jane A. Wess and Charles W. J. Withers, "Instrument Provision and Geographical Science: The Work of the Royal Geographical Society, 1830–ca 1930," *Notes and Records: The Royal Society Journal of the History of Science* 73, no. 2 (20 June 2019): 223–41.

[31] Kennedy, *The Last Blank*, 28.

[32] Ryan, *Photography and Exploration*, 33. Forsyth, "The More-than-human," 533.

[33] James Augustus Grant, "27 Photographs of Zanzibar," Picture Library X0073/018784–018810, RGS Archive.

[34] Speke, *Journal of the Discovery*, 50.

[35] Raj, *Relocating Modern Science*, 188; Raj, "When Human Travellers Became Instruments," 156–89.

differ from wider European practices of exploration in "quite fundamental ways," particularly in how such travels were comprehended and represented.[36] This may be true, but it would be wrong to view these expeditions as an aberration because they used steps as a form of measurement. On the EAE, Burton and Speke also tried to use a pedometer set at the "usual marching pace of laden porters" to measure distances.[37] But Burton claimed that the instrument proved "worse than useless" because of conditions in the field.[38] As these examples show, instruments and cameras added new dimensions to debates about credibility; however, they also show that technological developments could not override "the most important *and* the most problematic form of knowledge that an explorer had to offer—direct observation."[39] Ideas of gentlemanly conduct and issues of identity therefore shaped how legitimate of geographical claims were thought to be.[40]

The professionalisation of geography meant that confidence was invested "in those explorers whose senses had been disciplined by technical, intellectual and moral training."[41] The senses of white, upper-class men had long been privileged above those of others, but these ideas were given a new scientific grounding due to changing

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[36] Raj, *Relocating Modern Science*, 203.

[37] John Hanning Speke to Norton Shaw, "Explanation to the Book," 2 July 1858, RGS/JHS/1/2 RGS Archives, f. 2.

[38] Burton, *The Lake Regions*, 1: 189.

[39] Kennedy, *The Last Blank spaces*, 40.

[40] Philip Stern, "Exploration and Enlightenment," in *Reinterpreting Exploration: The West in the World*, ed. Dane Kennedy (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 65.

[41] Livingstone, *Putting Science in Its Place*, 152.

understandings of the nervous system in the nineteenth century.[42] Prominent British scientists, writers, and politicians claimed that people of colour and working-class white people were less sensitive to pain and other external stimuli, a theory that undermined their status as reliable observers.[43] The Victorian polymath and author of travel manuals Francis Galton argued that acuteness of the senses was a chief "attribute of a higher race."[44] Related pejorative views shaped scientific understandings of women's bodies. Some male scientists argued that while the "female" nervous system was more sensitive, this sensitivity made women liable to "nervous irritability" rather than accurate observation.[45] Even those who praised the "peculiar powers inherent in ladies' eyes" often did so very gendered terms. The British author Elisabeth Eastlake claimed that women were better at observing "close and lively details."[46] She also argued that women travellers were better placed to comment on the "home life" of the countries they travelled through.[47] Their opinions could be useful but were understood to be qualitatively different and, therefore, unlikely to offer insights on broader political

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[42] Laura Salisbury and Andrew Shail, Introduction to *Neurology and Modernity: A Cultural History of Nervous Systems: 1800–1950*, eds. Laura Salisbury and Andrew Shail (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 21.

[43] Bourke, *The Story of Pain*, 195–96.; Salisbury and Shail, Introduction to *Neurology*, 31.

[44] Francis Galton, *Inquiries into Human Faculty and Its Development* (London: Macmillan, 1883), 25. This quote was brought to my attention by Bourke, *The Story of Pain*, 209.

[45] Bourke, *The Story of Pain*, 209.

[46] Elisabeth Eastlake, "Lady Travellers," *Quarterly Review* 76 (1845), 98–99; I was made aware of this article by Birkett, *Spinsters Abroad*, 191.

[47] Eastlake, "Lady Travellers," 98–99.

matters.[48] Scientific (and now discredited) understandings of the body shaped who was seen as being an accurate observer, privileging the sensory capabilities of upper-class white men.[49]

Reflecting these trends, recent critical scholarship has devoted significant attention to the eyes and vision of white men. Indeed, the "gaze" of the explorer is often treated as an expression of broader imperial power relations.[50] The historian David Arnold argues that the explorer's gaze functioned as an "ordering, even disciplining, mechanism that edited as well as elided information" about the landscapes through which it travelled.[51] In her influential book on nineteenth-century travel writing, *Imperial Eyes* (1992), Mary Louise Pratt talks of the explorer as the "'seeing-man'…whose imperial eyes look out and possess."[52] Much critical scholarship remains focused on vision. Gillian Rose draws on Pratt's conception of as explorers as "seeing-men," suggesting that "their panoramas" were geography's "founding fields."[53] Similarly, Driver and Martins' edited collection emphasises the importance of "views" and "visions" in understandings of the tropics in the eighteenth and nineteenth

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[48] Birket, *Spinsters Abroad*, 191.

[49] Stern, "Exploration and Enlightenment," 65.

[50] Arnold, *The Tropics and the Traveling Gaze*, 29; Said, *Orientalism*, 214; e.g., Simon Ryan, *The Cartographic Eye: How Explorers Saw Australia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); Bernard Smith, *European Vision and the South Pacific* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985).

[51] Arnold, *The Tropics And the Traveling Gaze*, 31.

[52] Pratt, *Imperial Eyes*, 7.

[53] Rose, "On The Need to Ask," 217; Rose, *Feminism and Geography*.

centuries.[54] But does this visual focus obscure the complex ways that travellers used their senses and relied on the senses of others? And does it lead us to ignore the fact that travellers frequently wrote about being unable to see? Indeed, recent scholarship has begun to address the ways explorers' observations were rendered problematic by conditions in the field.[55] Such works have gone side-by-side with a growing recognition that Victorian explorers and armchair geographers depended on oral information collected from non-Europeans.[56] Notably, Charles W. J. Withers and David Lambert have demonstrated that both travel and second-hand testimony played an important role in geographers' efforts to map the Niger River in the early nineteenth century.[57] Likewise, Adrian Wisnicki has shown how that both Burton and Speke relied on similar information in their debates about the Nile's sources—a point I return to below.[58] I use these literatures at several points in this chapter, but I also question whether any rigid distinction can be drawn between oral testimony, visual observation and other sensory experiences. Not only were "travel and 'ocular demonstration'…directed by second-hand testimony," as Withers argues, but travellers often relied on their other senses when looking directly at something.[59] In what follows, I examine how issues of location,

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[54] Felix Driver and Luciana Martins, eds., *Tropical Visions in an Age of Empire.* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005).

[55] Fabian, *Out of Our Minds;* Kennedy, *The Last Blank* Spaces; Lachlan Fleetwood, "'No Former Travellers," 3–34; Deborah R. Coen, *Climate in Motion: Science, Empire, and the Problem of Scale*, Chicago: University of Chiacago Press, 2018), 313; Lamb, *Scurvy.*

[56] Wisnicki, "Cartographical Quandaries," 461.

[57] Withers, "Mapping the Niger, 1798–1832;" Lambert, *Mastering the Niger.*

[58] Wisnicki, "Cartographical Quandaries;" Wisnicki, "Charting the Frontier;" Wisnicki, *Fieldwork of Empire*; Dritsas, "Expeditionary Science."

[59] Withers, "Mapping the Niger, 1798–1832," 187.

environment, and identity shaped the ways these issues played out on different expeditions.

BURTON, SPEKE, AND OBSERVATIONS IN THE LAKE REGIONS OF CENTRAL AFRICA

In *The Lake Regions of Central Africa* (1860) Burton emphasised the importance of direct observation in his geographical claims. He stated that "it is the explorer's unpleasant duty throughout these lands to doubt everything that has not been subjected to his own eyes."[60] In doing so, Burton sought to demonstrate that his topographical claims were based on ocular observation and, therefore, of a higher value that other existing accounts of the region's geography. The importance of vision has been repeated in more recent scholarship on the expedition. Pratt claims that Burton's writings about the "discovery" of Lake Tanganyika represents a paradigmatic "monarch-of-all-I survey" scene in which he looks out with an authoritative and dominating way over the landscape below him.[61] In this section, I examine knowledge production on the EAE to show how practices differed from Burton and Pratt's descriptions. Firstly, the explorers found themselves blind and disorientated for much of the trip. Second, I show that even their apparently direct observations depended on oral testimony to a greater degree than previous scholarship has appreciated.[62] Third, I argue that the men used multiple senses, notably smell, to assess the suitability of East Africa for European settlement.

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[60] Burton, *The Lake Regions*, 2: 154.

[61] Pratt, *Imperial Eyes*, 197–204.

[62] Wisnicki, "Charting the Frontier;" Wisnicki, "Cartographical Quandaries."

Unreliable Senses

On the EAE, Burton and Speke experienced both bodily and sensory breakdown. The pair suffered severe fevers, which often caused blindness, affecting their ability to chart either their location or geographical features accurately. The explorers also experienced partial deafness.[63] Both men described these problems in their published accounts to emphasise the hardships they had experienced in the service of science.[64] Speke described the "almost total blindness" he suffered for periods of the expedition.[65] Meanwhile, in *The Lake Regions*, Burton described the effects of partial blindness and hallucinations.[66] These "horrid visions" included "animals of grisliest form, hag-like women and men with heads protruding from their breasts."[67] In public, though, they avoided directly suggesting that these sufferings undermined the reliability of their own geographical claims. But both used the physical weakness of the other to bolster their comparative credibility (as discussed in Chapter 4, *Heroic Bodies*).

Their private correspondence suggests that neither man was in a good physical state. While the party was travelling towards the lake regions, Speke wrote to the president of the RGS complaining that Burton's eyes "become bad," particularly when

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[63] Burton, *The Lake Regions*, 1: 105.

[64] Speke, *What Led*, 224–26.

[65] Speke, *What Led*, 203, 225, 301–2, 149, in footnote, John Hanning Speke to Norton Shaw, 1 January 1859, RGS/JHS/1/3, RGS Archives.

[66] Burton, *The Lake Regions* 2: 42, 1: 104.

[67] Burton, *The Lake Regions*, 1: 84.

the pair tried to take lunar observations.[68] In doing so, he sought to emphasise how he had performed the lion's share of the scientific fieldwork. But Speke's vision was little better: he reports that he managed to take "only one" lunar observation at Ujiji and noted, "my eyesight was very bad so that I have much doubts concerning it."[69] In his private letters from the expedition Burton also wrote of the "distressing blindness" he experienced and noted that Speke had "suffered from sequela of fever, having lost his sight so as to be unable to read, write or observe for some time."[70] Speke also complained the expedition had become confused by the "zigzags" the party had taken when moving across the country.[71] This disorientation meant that their bearing was calculated "by guess work" rather than by "any true knowledge of the direction we had come in."[72] The explorers had taken a sketchbook and had originally planned to record the scenery and geographical features at regular intervals; the idea being that observations taken on-site were more reliable than those recalled from memory. Speke noted that plant growth was so dense that "sketching was out of the question."[73] Clearly, both men experienced

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[68] John Hanning Speke to Norton Shaw, 2 July 1858, RGS/JHS/1/2, RGS Archive, f. 3.

[69] Speke to Shaw, 2 July 1858, RGS Archive, f. 3.

[70] Richard Burton to Norton Shaw, 24 June 1858, RGS/CB, RGS Archives, f. 2.

[71] John Hanning Speke to Norton Shaw "Explanation to The Book," 2 July 1858, JHS/1/2, RGS Archives, f. 2.

[72] Speke to Shaw "Explanation to The Book," RGS Archives, f. 2.

[73] Speke to Shaw "Explanation to the book," RGS Archives, f. 2; Speke's 1857 sketch maps also emphasize plant growth, describing large areas using terms like "thorn jungle" or as "thorn covered plain." John Hanning Speke 1857, "12 Sketch maps Showing the Route of a Journey by Speke and Burton, to and around Sea Ujiji," RGS, CU18-AFE-TZA-s507, Map Room Collection, ff. 5, 6.

sensory problems and confusion.

Contemporary debates about the source of the Nile picked up on how illness affected the comparative reliability of the men's claims. These issues were particularly acute for Speke, because he made the bold (and fiercely contested) claim to have "discovered" the source of the Nile. In criticising his claims, Burton argued that his blindness and deafness "incapacitated him and prevented him from reading, writing, and observing correctly."[74] Burton also reports that Speke "had a fainting-fit, which strongly resembled a sun-stroke and which seemed to permanently affect his brain."[75] Sunstroke insanity was a major concern of Victorian tropical medicine and, in suggesting his companion had suffered from it, Burton suggested that he was an unreliable source of geographical information.[76] These accusations stuck. Summarising the dispute after Burton's death, *The Edinburgh Review* argued that, while Speke had subsequently been proved right about the source of the river Nile, he had lacked the evidence to prove his claim at the time in part because, "when Speke was at the head of Tanganyika he was purblind."[77] As this quote shows, blindness clearly shaped how Victorian writers valued the explorers' claims about the Nile. It is hardly surprising that Speke was far more circumspect in his discussions of blindness and fever in *Journal of the Discovery of the Source of the Nile* (1863), which describes his second expedition.

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[74] *The Lake Regions*, 2: 169; he includes a similar claim in Burton to Shaw, 24 June 1858, RGS/CB, RGS Archives, f. 2.

[75] Burton, *The Lake Regions*, 1: 84.

[76] Kristen D. Hussey, "Imperial Mobilities: Tropical Bodies and the Spaces of Medical Practice and Research in London, c.1880–1914" (PhD Thesis, Queen Mary: University of London, 2018), 129–71.

[77] Anon., "The Life of Captain Sir Richard F. Burton" *The Edinburgh Review* 178, no. 366 (October 1893), 459.

A close reading on the two men's public and unpublished writings shows how far practices of knowledge production on the EAE differed from the guidance given in advice manuals and from the powerful disciplining gaze analysed by postcolonial critics. The explorers struggled to produce the kinds of knowledge that domestic commentators asked for. Their bodies were ravaged by the effects of fever and their senses often proved unreliable. Even when their eyes and ears worked, they found themselves disorientated and surrounded by dense plant growth. In this situation, the men depended on Arab and African oral testimony to support their claims, as recent scholarship on the expedition has begun to recognise.

"Had My Attention Not Been Drawn to it:" Visual Observation or Oral Testimony?

Recent scholarship has recognised that, because of their own bodily breakdown, Burton and Speke depended on oral information gathered from Arab and African sources.[78] As Adrian Wisnicki has demonstrated, all the maps produced on the EAE mixed "direct observations with substantial data drawn from local informants."[79] In his *Blackwood's* map, which supported his claim to have to discovered the Nile's source, the arrangement of many of the key geographical features depicted on the map depended "on layers of oral testimony."[80] This reliance is not clear from the map itself, and Speke does not distinguish between areas that he visited and other areas that he heard about.[81] As Lowri Jones argues, Speke's "sketch maps," sent to the Royal Geographical Society as the

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[78] Wisnicki, "Cartographical Quandaries," 471–75 discusses the problems at length; Dritsas, "Expeditionary Science," 255–77.

[79] Wisnicki, *Fieldwork of Empire*, 56; Wisnicki, "Charting the Frontier," 121.

[80] Wisnicki, *Fieldwork of Empire*, 58; Wisnicki, "Charting the Frontier," 121.

[81] Wisnicki, *Fieldwork of Empire*, 58.

expedition travelled through East Africa, reveal in far clearer terms than his published maps his use of oral information gathered from local people and African travellers.[82] Burton's maps devoted greater attention to areas where the expedition had visited, but still downplayed his reliance on existing trade routes and verbal testimony.[83] Similar trends emerged on Speke's 1860 expedition. As David Finkelstein has demonstrated, the editing of Speke's *Journal of the Discovery of the Source of the Nile* (1863) removed much of his reliance on African oral testimony, suggesting that he saw phenomena that he had only heard about.[84] Both explorers depended on oral information but did not fully acknowledge this in public.

Even at the time, though, it was clear that they had relied on such testimony to support their claims. Consequently, the ensuing "quarrel" between the two men about the source of the River Nile led to a vigorous debate about the validity of oral reports "as a viable source of Victorian geographical knowledge production."[85] Wisnicki has suggested that the debate marked the "death knell" of such information.[86] However, Jones has successfully demonstrated claims that the criticism focused on the way Speke had gathered and used this information, as many of his critics drew on similar sources.[87] Burton claimed that Speke's recording of oral testimony was unlikely to be accurate because he was "wholly ignorant of Arabic [and] was reduced to depend upon 'Bombay,'

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[82] Jones, "Local Knowledge," 165–78.

[83] Wisnicki, *Fieldwork of Empire*, 63–65; Wisnicki, "Charting the Frontier," 121.

[84] Finkelstein, "Unravelling Speke," 130.

[85] Wisnicki, "Cartographical Quandaries," 469; Lambert, *Mastering the Niger.*

[86] Wisnicki, "Cartographical Quandaries," 469.

[87] Wisnicki, "Cartographical Quandaries," 469; Jones, "Local Knowledge," 141.

who spoke an even more debased dialect than his master."[88] In attacking Speke, Burton draws our attention to the important role that Bombay played as a translator. Likewise, the armchair geographer James MacQueen dismissed many of Speke's claims for being based on "hearsay" but used oral information extensively in his own writing.[89] These disagreements reflected the fact that Speke approached the comparative value of visual and oral information differently from Burton.[90] He was uninterested in practices of translation, as he viewed his own visual observations as the foundation of his geographical claims.[91] In contrast, Burton had greater access to oral evidence concerning the areas through which he was passing as his linguistic skills meant he was able to have direct conversations with Arab traders and intermediaries.[92] Such relationships were clearly an important source of contextual information and explanation. Burton noted that the expedition's headman, Said bin Salim, "had a knowledge box filled with local details, which he imparted without churlishness."[93] It is, of course, impossible to neatly separate out which bits of information came from visual or oral sources. Reading between the lines, it is probable that these "local details" are scattered, without acknowledgement, throughout Burton's published account. Indeed, in focusing on debates over the validity of oral information in general, previous scholarship has also taken for granted the idea that there was a clear-cut distinction

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[88] Burton, *The Lake Regions*, 2: 207, see also 171; and Burton's marginal comments in Speke, *What Led*, HL RFB1680.

[89] McQueen, "Captain Speke's Discovery," 125–26; Lambert, *Mastering the Niger.*

[90] Kennedy, *The Highly Civilized*, 113–14.

[91] Kennedy, *The Highly Civilized*, 113–14.

[92] Burton also includes an entire chapter of oral information but tries to separate it from things he directly saw. Burton *The Lake Regions*, 2: 134–54.

[93] Burton, *Zanzibar*, 1: 482.

between what the explorers heard and what they saw. The reality was more complex, as brief but tantalising comments in the explorers' published accounts show.

Burton and Speke even depended on the senses of others during two of the most important incidents of "discovery" on the EAE. In *The Lake Regions*, Burton describes how his eyes had proved unreliable when he first looked at Lake Tanganyika and that he had to ask Sidi Mubarak Bombay what he was looking at: "I am of the opinion…that is *the* water," Bombay responded.[94] Burton reports that he initially "gazed in dismay; the remains of my blindness, the veil of trees, and a broad ray of sunshine illuminating but one reach of the lake, had shrunk its fair proportions."[95] Only following Bombay's oral explanation and after advancing a few paces did Burton understand what he was looking at. Speke's first experience of this lake was even less reliant on vision. He complained that he could see "nothing but mist and glare" at the time.[96] This incident shows the mediated and multi-sensory nature of expeditionary observation. As Pratt has examined, in *The Lake Regions* Burton then goes on to describe his view of the lake in the "monarch-of-all-I-survey" style demonstrative of his status as a "seeing-man" with the power to evaluate what he is looking at.[97] However, given his poor physical state and limited vision it is likely that these passages were added some time later.[98] Imperialistic rhetoric abounds in Burton's broader description of "discovering" Lake Tanganyika, but a close

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[94] Burton, *The Lake Regions*, 2: 42.

[95] Burton, *The Lake Regions*, 2: 42.

[96] Speke, *What Led*, 203.

[97] Pratt, *Imperial Eyes*, 201.

[98] These comments do not appear in Burton's more scientifically styled report of the expedition for the RGS. Burton, "The Lake Regions," 212; Speke reported that, at the time, Burton the pair were "disabled by sickness—Captain Burton utterly." Speke, "Journal of A Cruise," 343.

reading of his published account demonstrates his dependence on others even during this incident.

Remarkably similar issues emerged when Speke travelled without Burton to Lake Victoria. Once there, Speke's weak eyes proved troublesome: he could only see a comparatively small portion of the large lake and did not have means or time to fully explore it.[99] His view of the lake was partial—not the kind of broad methodological survey that would have established its size, shape, and relationship to the East-African River system. Speke's limited view meant he depended heavily on oral testimony from a local man named Mansur to fill in the gaps. He described Mansur as "the greatest traveller of the place" to emphasise his credibility.[100] But a close reading of Speke's account shows how difficult it is to separate what he heard from what he saw. Speke, for instance, estimates at one point that the southeast edge of the lake lay "at least forty miles distant."[101] He based this estimate upon the view of a group of hills in this distance. Speke claimed that "*had my attention not been drawn to it*, I should probably have overlooked it and thought there was only a sea horizon before me."[102] There were no other Europeans with Speke at this time, so one of his companions directed his sight towards the hills in question, in this case, presumably Mansur. As Speke did not speak a local language, Mansur's conversation with him must have been translated several times.[103] Although Speke emphasised the importance of his own gaze in his examination of the lake, it is clear that multiple pairs of eyes and ears were involved in even these

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[99] Speke, *What Led*, 305–58.

[100] Speke, "Captain Speke's Discovery," 412; Speke, *What Led*, 310.

[101] Speke, *What Led*, 311.

[102] Speke, *What Led*, 311. Emphasis added.

[103] Burton, *The Lake Regions*, 2: 207.

comparatively direct observations.

These incidents demonstrate that the line between direct observation and oral testimony was more blurry than previous scholarship has appreciated. The two explorers approached the question of oral testimony differently: Burton emphasising the importance of translating accurately. Speke, in contrast, suggested that his eyes were the primary source of geographical knowledge.[104] Even so, it is clear that both men had their vision directed by others. Moreover, Burton also drew on oral testimony to collect sundry other details in ways that are impossible to fully trace. The eyes were far from the only sense that explorers relied on. As I now examine, they also used their bodies to try to gather information in other ways.

The Smell of Fever: Multiple Senses

Burton, Speke, and, later, Grant also depended on multiple senses when travelling and observing in East and Central Africa. Their noses proved particularly useful, but their sense of touch was also important. On the EAE, Burton and Speke used their sense of smell when describing the climate and healthiness of an area they were travelling through. The importance attached to smell was a product of miasmic theories of disease prevalent at the time: between the 1850s and 1880s there was widespread support for the idea that "foul smelling emanations" actually caused ill-health.[105] Such theories were a feature of broader campaigns by "scientists and medical men" to shape public opinion

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[104] Kennedy, *The Highly Civilized*, 114.

[105] David S. Barnes, "The Senses in Medicine: Seeing, Hearing, and Smelling Disease," in *A Cultural History of the Senses in The Age of Empire*, vol. 5, ed. Constance Classen (London: Bloomsbury, 2014), 154–55; Peter C. Baldwin, "How Night Air Became Good Air, 1776–1930," *Environmental History* 8, no. 3 (2003): 412–29.

in favour of sanitary reform in British cities.[106] Meanwhile, medics in India (where Burton and Speke had both served) frequently argued that "miasmas or pestilential air" caused diseases, particularly fevers.[107] The nose played a particularly important role within these developments, as it could be used to detect the disease-causing smells.[108] The explorers' writings pick up on these ideas. In one area, Speke reported that "as Miss [Florence] Nightingale would say, you could palpably smell the fever."[109] Burton saw the coastal regions of East Africa as particularly dangerous because of the "miasmic fever" they picked up there, but also complained about similar problem in other areas.[110] When the expedition passed through an area where "the water was bad, and a mortal smell of decay was emitted by the dark, dank ground," Burton complained that the "reeking miasma" led to an attack of fever in Speke.[111] Burton's views about air and smells of the areas he travelled to were not peripheral to the impact of the expedition. As James Newman suggests, Burton viewed the "miasmic" air of the tropics as proof that the area was "inimical to human physical and cultural development," and particularly unsuitable for the European body, which was ill-adapted to life there.[112] How the air smelt and felt was, therefore, important for upstanding the possibility of European

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[106] Barnes, "The Senses in Medicine," 146.

[107] Mark Harrison, *Climates and Constitutions: Health, Race, Environment and British Imperialism in India* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 63.

[108] Barnes, "The Senses in Medicine," 150.

[109] Speke, *What Led*, 184.

[110] Burton to unknown correspondent, March or April 1857 in *The Search for the Source of the Nile*, ed. Donald Young (London: Roxburghe Club, 1999), 79; Burton, *The Lake Regions*, 1: 62, 92, 127, 184, 2: 235, 262.

[111] Burton, *The Lake Regions* 1: 62.

[112] Newman, *Paths Without Glory*, 94.

colonisation of the area.

The air of East Africa was not universally bad, though. In describing more hospitable regions, the explorers commented on how they smelt and felt. During a "forced halt" in a more salubrious area, Burton reported that he found that the "change of air was the most fitting restorative" to his continuing problems with numbness and fever.[113] On his later expedition with Speke, James Grant also found the mountain regions of East Africa particularly pleasant. He noted that after the rains, the air had a "delightful freshness."[114] Similarly, Burton described the mountain air of Usagara as a "sanatorium," because it was as it was free from "the heavy exhalations…emitted by the decayed vegetation," had a pleasant breeze, and "copious dew which renders the nights peculiarly pleasant to a European."[115] The smell and feel of an area were indications of its healthiness. Indeed, Burton suggested that "should Europeans ever settle in Eastern Africa as merchants or missionaries, here they might reside until acclimatized for the interior."[116] While the regions were never used in such a way, the idea that hill stations and mountain regions were more healthy places for Europeans was mainstream within the British Empire at the time, shaping patterns of settlement, migration, and governance.[117] In using multiple senses to show that there were areas of East Africa

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[113] Burton, *The Lake Regions* 2: 236.

[114] Grant, *A Walk Across Africa*, 26.

[115] Burton, *The Lake Regions*, 1: 232.

[116] Burton, *The Lake Regions*, 1: 232.

[117] Newman, *Paths Without Glory*, 97; Kennedy, *The Magic Mountains*; James Beattie, *Empire and Environmental Anxiety: Health, Science, Art and Conservation in South Asia and Australasia, 1800–1920* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 39–71; David Arnold, "Envisioning the Tropics" in *Tropical Visions in an Age of Empire*, eds. Felix Driver and Luciana Martins (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), 148.

with fresh, non-miasmic air, Burton, Speke and Grant were helping to demonstrate the potential for European habitation and hence helped to pave the way for colonisation.

Burton and Speke's writings about East Africa show the limits of understanding explorers through only a focus on their vision. Burton and Speke's own senses were frequently compromised by the effects of fever and other tropical diseases. Not only did they depended extensively on oral testimony, as previous scholarship has demonstrated, but even their allegedly direct observations rely on oral information in ways that are seldom acknowledged. Nor were vision and hearing the only senses the explorers used in their research. While Burton and Speke are often presented as "seeing-men," a close reading of their accounts shows that the reality was vastly different. In the field, exploration depended on multiple senses and numerous bodies. As I now examine, the dependence of explorers on multiple senses was not confined to East Africa or to masculine travellers.

ISABELLA BIRD: SENSING, VISION, AND PHOTOGRAPHY

Like Burton and Speke, Isabella Bird often emphasised the direct visual nature of her observations. In *Unbeaten Tracks in Japan* (1880), Bird claimed, for instance, that she sought "to describe things as she saw them."[118] Bird's "observant eyes" were also presented as one of her distinguishing features by her Edwardian biographer.[119] Clearly, Bird and her supporters often drew on rhetorical strategies similar to masculine travellers. That said, her approach was also shaped by the fact she was a woman. I suggest that because of the prevalence of pejorative ideas about women's sensory capabilities, Bird adopted a variety of strategies to safeguard the credibility of her

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[118] Bird, *Unbeaten Tracks* 1: vii.

[119] Stoddart, *The Life of Isabella Bird*, 279.

observations, including the epistolary form of her early books and the use of photography in her latter ones. However, as I examine, like male travellers, the reality was more complex. She too depended on multiple bodies and multiple senses in her geographical observations, even if the ways she wrote about such experiences were shaped by her gender.

Letters, Details, and Credibility

Bird's writings were influenced by nineteenth-century understandings of women's senses, discussed above. She was acutely aware that her identity as a woman had an impact on how contemporary readers viewed her travel narratives and the observations they contained. After the publication of *Unbeaten Tracks in Japan*, Bird expressed her relief that "[h]itherto not one notice has attached less weight to my opinions on the grounds of them being those of a woman."[120] If Bird was, on this occasion, able to avoid sexist criticisms of her writing, it was in large part because she adopted several strategies to ensure that her observations were viewed as reliable. Most of her early works took the form of a series of letters originally written to her sister, Henrietta, and, after Henrietta's death, circular letters written to her close friends. This epistolary form gave her books the appearance of being a simple collections of Bird's direct sensory observations recorded on the spot.[121] This approach had the advantage of diminishing any concerns about the accuracy of her memory, but it also allowed her to foreground the personal, subjective, and therefore more stereotypically feminine nature of her experiences.[122]

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[120] Isabella Bird to John Murray, 17 Nov 1880, Ms.2025, NLS, f. 59.

[121] See, for example, *Journeys in Persia*, 1: vii.

[122] Birkett, *Spinsters Abroad*, 99–103.

Bird also focused on forms of scientific observations that were seen as more feminine, such as botany and anthropology.[123] Jihang Park argues that in her East Asian travel writings, Bird devotes attention to the bodies and domestic affairs of those she encounters.[124] In contrast, comparable male travellers spent more time discussing military, economic, and political matters.[125] During her time in Japan, she made a series of observations of the Ainu people that played an important role in establishing her reputation within anthropological circles.[126] The Ainu are the indigenous population of Hokkaido, displaced and colonised since the Middle Ages by the Japanese. By the Victorian era, the Ainu were severely repressed by the Japanese government. When travelling in Japan in 1878, Bird wrote to her publisher, John Murray III, claiming that "[i]f I ever do publish a book of Japanese travel the most valuable part of it will be my account of these aboriginals."[127] Alongside being more "feminine" anthropology was also a subject that required less specialist training, which meant there were fewer institutional barriers to women's involvement. For example, Edward Burnett Tylor, the founder of cultural anthropology, advised travellers that "the characters of men's bodies and minds being matters of common observation, Europeans not specially trained in anthropology, who had happened to be thrown among little-known tribes, often bring

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[123] Birkett, *Spinsters Abroad*, 99–103.

[124] Jihang Park, "Land of the Morning Calm, Land of the Rising Sun: The East Asian Travel Writings of Isabella Bird and George Curzon," *Modern Asian Studies* 36, no. 3 (2002), 523–24.

[125] Park, "Land of the Morning Calm," 523, 525.

[126] For instance, Bird the findings at a meeting of the Anthropological Institute as late as 1892. Anon., "Anthropological Institute," *The Athenaeum*, May 28, 1892, 700.

[127] Isabella Bird to John Murray, 10 December 1878, Ms. 42024, NLS, f. 107.

home valuable anthropological information."[128] Conseuqently, as Daniela Kato argues, Bird's ethnographic observations formed a particularly important part of her writings because they allowed her to both "establish her credibility as a scientific observer" while at the same time providing a "safeguard of the more feminine characteristics of her subjective observation."[129]

The content of Bird's books was also linked to a broader understanding of what women should observe. She wrote to her publisher John Murray emphasising the importance of intricate details and personal experience, in response to suggestions she remove them: "In a woman's book of travels simply, not on a country, but of travel in it, the details seem to me essential, for the placing the reader [*sic*] in the position of the traveller."[130] If she struck out such details, as Murray had presumably suggested, she feared "little would be left of general interest."[131] The minor details that she defended included descriptions of the new and different smells she encountered.[132] In Japan, Bird used her nose to describe Ainu villages and homes, claiming that they have "an ancient and fish-like smell."[133] This strategy of using her nose as a tool of ethnographic research

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[128] Edward Burnett Tylor, "Anthropology," in *Hints to Travellers: Scientific and General* 5th ed. Henry Godwin Austen, John Knox Laughton, and Douglas Freshfield (London: Royal Geographical Society, 1883), 222.

[129] Daniela Kato, "'I Write The Truth as I See It:' Unsettling the Boundaries of Gender, Travel Writing and Ethnography in Isabella Bird's *Unbeaten Tracks in Japan*," in *Women in Transit in Through Literary Liminal Spaces*, ed. Teresa Gómez Reus and Terry Gifford (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 88.

[130] Isabella Bird to John Murray, 5 August 1891, Ms. 42027, NLS, f. 38.

[131] Isabella Bird to John Murray, 5 August 1891, Ms. 42027, NLS, f. 38.

[132] Eg., Bishop, *Journeys in Persia*, 2: 92, 394.

[133] Bird, *Unbeaten Tracks*, 2: 120, 148.

was also one she drew on in her later writings about China. Here, Bird claimed that "It would require some very old-fashioned Anglo-Saxon words to describe the smell of the New Year viands."[134] As George Orwell notes, odour, and the physical revulsion at the smell of certain bodies, plays a key role in maintaining class and racial division within Western societies.[135] These comments reflect Bird's visceral reaction to the different (and, to her, unpleasant) character of Chinese and Ainu bodies. Although Bird continued to use her nose when she travelled to China, the way she wrote about this journey, conducted as a more established observer, differed from her earlier works in important ways.

Illustration, Sketches, Photography

In Bird's later works, she abandoned the epistolary form and wrote in a style more like that of masculine explorers, reflecting her growing status within scientific circles.[136] This shift in style went together with the use of both photography as a tool to establish the credibility of her sensory observations. She also trained in surveying but did not write about her use of this technique in public. Thus, even in her later years, gendered expectations about women's observations continued to shape how she wrote about her travels.

Bird had long been aware of the potential of sketches and photographs to bolster the credibility of a travellers' account. Her early works were well-illustrated, mostly

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[134] Bird, *The Yangtze Valley*, 83, 155–56.

[135] George Orwell, *The Road to Wigan Pier* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, and Company, 1958), 160–63; John Sutherland, *Orwell's Nose: A Pathological Biography* (London: Reaktion, 2016).

[136] Barr, *A Curious Life*, 186.

with conventional portrait and landscape sketches and paintings, but sometimes with lithographs of photographs taken by others.[137] In her later, works, Bird used photography more directly to demonstrate the validity of her observation. In 1892 and 1893, before travelling to Korea and China, Bird undertook extensive photographic training, including at the RGS.[138] Through her acquisition and extensive use this new skill, Bird, used photography to highlight the reliability of her own observations and to "bolster her status as a professional travel writer and explorer."[139] She took and developed more than 1,200 pictures when travelling through East Asia in the 1890s and made use of them in her books on the journey.[140] Bird drew on photographs and lantern slides as a source of credibility in her 1897 RGS lecture, reflecting the growing acceptance of these technologies within the organisation.[141] Photography was an increasingly important tool for nineteenth-century travellers in general, as it appeared to provide independent verification of their observations; however, it was particularly

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[137] Ireland, *Isabella Bird*, 22; Christina M. Spiker, "'Civilized' Men and 'Superstitious' Women: Visualizing the Hokkaido Ainu in Isabella Bird's *Unbeaten Tracks*, 1880," in *Gender, Continuity, and the Shaping of Modernity in the Arts of East Asia, 16th–20th Centuries*, ed. Kirsten L. Chiem and Laura Blanchard (Leiden: Brill, 2017), 287–316. As Spikes shows, Bird did not always draw such illustrations herself.

[138] Ireland, *Isabella Bird*, 18; Isabella L. Bishop to John Scott Keltie, 10 March 1897, RGS/CB, RGS Archives, f. 6; Gartlan, "A Complete Craze," 16.

[139] Gartlan, "A Complete Craze," 26.

[140] Bird to Keltie, 10 March 1897, RGS Archives, f. 6; Bird, *The Yangtze Valley*, 156; Ireland, *Isabella Bird*, 18–19; Ireland, *Isabella Bird*, 23.

[141] Gartlan, "A Complete Craze," 26; Emily Hayes, "Geographical Light: The Magic Lantern, the Reform of the Royal Geographical Society and the Professionalization of Geography c.1885–1894," *Journal of Historical Geography* 62 (2018): 24–36.

useful for Bird because of then-pejorative understandings of women's sensory capabilities. In some senses, the camera acted as an extension of Bird's body, providing a seemingly incontestable record of her experiences.[142]

In a letter to Murray, written as she travelled through Korea in the 1890s, Bird suggested that her photographs were scientific in nature and helped validate her observations. She emphasised that she was able to produce photographs "which are faithful though not artistic records of what I see."[143] However, we should not take her claims about the lack of artistry in her photographs at face value. As James Ryan has demonstrated, expeditionary photography was neither purely artistic nor scientific but combined features of both.[144] Similarly the idea that Bird's photographs are an unmediated record of what she saw is also erroneous. Many were staged and conformed to broader stereotypes about the regions through which she travelled.[145] This was not uncommon: travellers' photographs also helped explorers to sell books and the images used often conformed to pre-existing visual conventions.[146] Indeed, Stoddart's biography includes a "snapshot" of Bird taken in China in 1895 that illustrates the composed nature of her photographs (figure 15). The picture shows Bird with her camera in front a group of people posing for one of her ethnographic studies.[147] The image shows her "as both orchestrator and part of the event," throwing into question

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[142] Forsyth, "The More-than-human," 533.

[143] Isabella Bird to John Murray, 1897, 23 January, Ms. 2028, NLS, f. 29.

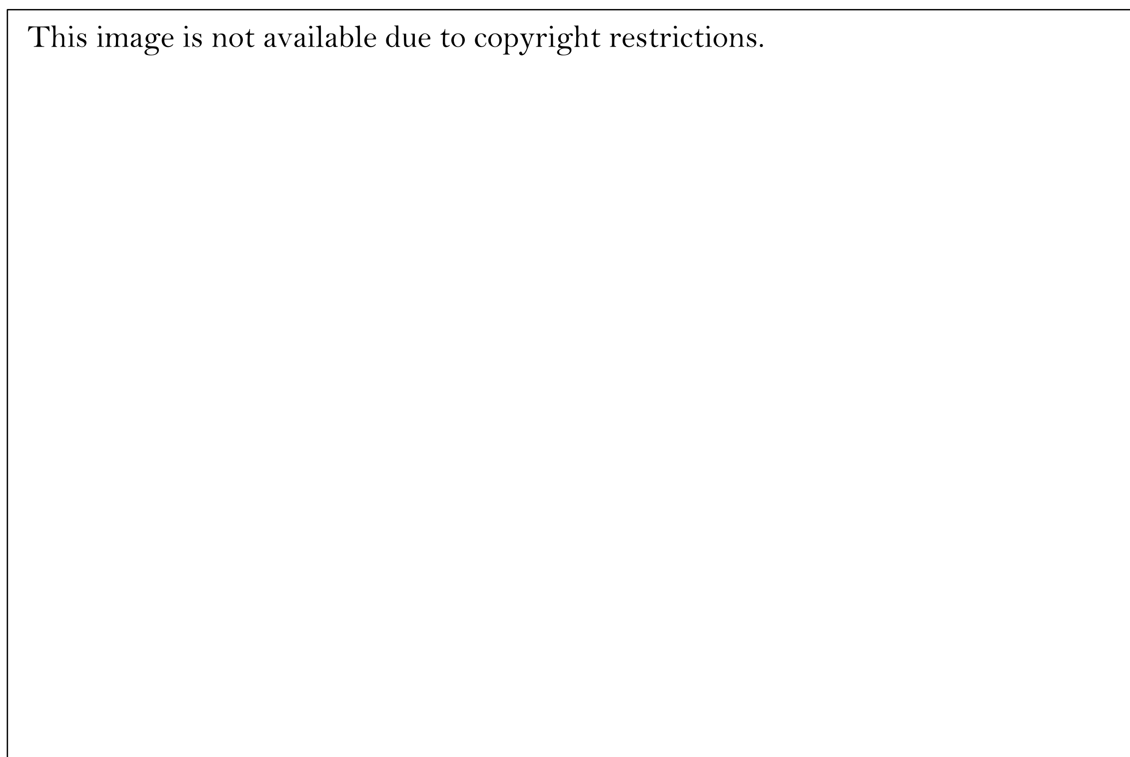
[144] Ryan, *Photography and Exploration.*

[145] Gartlan, "A Complete Craze," 16–17.

[146] Ryan, *Photography and Exploration*, 78.

[147] Stoddart, *The Life of Isabella Bird*, 298; Ryan, *Photography and Exploration*, 119–21.

the idea that her photographs were neutral documents; and it also shows her reliance on the acquiescence of local people.[148]



This image is not available due to copyright restrictions.

Figure 16. "Snapshot Taken of Mrs. Bishop at Swatow by Mr Mackenzie." Stoddart, *The Life of Isabella Bird*, facing 298.

Examining the ways Bird actually used her camera also draws attention to the contributions of Chinese chair-bearers to her expedition. For much of her journey through China, Bird's camera was stored under the seat of her chair and was carried on the shoulders of Chinese men.[149] The chair-bearers also shaped the composition and content of her pictures. Bird also reports that they showed "a growing interest in

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[148] Leonard Bell, "Eyeing Samoa: People, Places and Spaces in Photographs of the Late Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries," in *Tropical Visions in an Age of Empire*, eds. Felix Driver and Luciana Martins (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005), 163.

[149] Bishop, *The Yangtze Valley*, 195.

photography, reaching the extent of pointing out objects at times 'to make pictures of!'"[150] But Bird does not describe their influences in detail, contributing to their broader erasure in her account, discussed above.[151] Though one tantalising incident suggests that she may have heeded their advice. When trying to photograph a temple in Paoning Fu (now Langzhong) in Sichuan, Bird found that "it was not possible to get any point of view on the level, for a photograph."[152] Her chair-bearers stepped in and "suggested my taking one from the stage of an open temple theatre opposite, and brought a ladder to help me up with."[153] Bird's photographic work thus relied on the bodies and senses of numerous other individuals.

While Bird's use of photography is comparatively well-known, her skills as a surveyor have received less attention. At an unrecorded date, Bird received training in the use of the surveying and navigation instrument, the prismatic compass, from John Coles, map curator of the RGS.[154] When travelling through Persia and Kurdistan with a military geographical expedition, Bird found that blindness of a male surveyor provided her with opportunities to conduct astronomical observations normally conducted by men. Indeed, her private circular letters include descriptions of her surveying work.[155] She reported that she took numerous observations, staying up all night on some occasions. She noted the "terribly hard" labour involved but still found it

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[150] Bishop, *The Yangtze Valley*, 207.

[151] Chang, *Britain's Chinese Eyes*, 169.

[152] Bishop, *The Yangtze Valley*, 285.

[153] Bishop, *The Yangtze Valley*, 285.

[154] John Coles, note confirming Isabella Bird's completion of training, no date, RGS/CB, RGS, f. 26.

[155] Isabella Bird, "Diary-letters, or 'Circulars,' Circular Begun on 4th of May 1890 [as stated on f. 20], Written by Isabella Bird" 24 Dec 1889–15 Jul 1890, Ms. 2023, f. 25.

was "more interesting to have responsible work."[156] This incident did not, however, appear in Bird's book, possibly because it was censored by the Indian government before publication, but perhaps also because the incident saw her engage in kinds of scientific observation considered inappropriate for women travellers.[157] As discussed elsewhere, Bird's involvement in astronomical observations is important within more recent debates about her status as either a traveller or an explorer.[158] Viewed in the broader context of her writings, the incident also reveals that, unlike other travellers who sought to emphasise all the scientific work they had undertaken in order to bolster their credibility, Bird sometimes did the opposite, excluding certain details from her published accounts. Both the form and the content of her public writings were shaped by social and scientific understandings of women's sensory capabilities. She used the epistolary form to emphasise the directness of her observation and bolstered the credibility of her later narratives through the use photography. Gendered ideas also shaped the kinds of subjects that she wrote about and the sorts of details she included about them. Even so, her photographs depended on the bodies and senses of others. Close attention to the work of translation draws further attention to her dependence on others.

Multiple Bodies

As I now show, the line between Bird's direct observations and information she received through oral explanation was far from clear. Meanwhile, her correspondence with her publisher shows how editing travel accounts also involved multiple pairs of eyes and

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[156] Isabella Bird, "Diary-letters, or 'Circulars,' 24 Dec 1889–15 Jul 1890, Ms. 2023, f. 27.

[157] Isabella Bird to John Murray, 30 September 1891, Ms. 42027, NLS, ff. 67–68.

[158] Notably, it undermines Stoddart's argument in "Do We Need."

ears. Bird's accounts (even when written in the form of letters) need to be studied as collaborative projects involving the sensory labour of multiple people. These issues are particularly apparent in her writings about Japan. As noted above, she depended heavily on her guide Ito Tsurukichi, for translation and oral explanation of the phenomena she was observing. A few remarks of Bird's also expose the degree to which she relied on the senses of others. At one point, she attended a Japanese wedding to which Tsurukichi was not invited. Describing the incident, she notes the disorientation this caused her, reporting that "his absence was like the loss of one of my senses, as I could not get any explanations till [*sic*] afterwards."[159] These comments suggest that much of what Bird reports about Japan came from combining visual observations with Tsurukichi's oral explanations. They also demonstrate that while he was with her, Bird had become so accustomed to his explanations and direction of her vision that his absence left her confused and disorientated. Her comments show that her gaze was directed, shaped, and contextualised by information from guides and intermediaries. Tsurukichi's eyes and ears played a central—but not otherwise obvious—role in Bird's other observations throughout the rest of the book.

Indeed, in many of Bird's works a few brief passages bring to the surface relationships of sensory dependence that took place over the entire course of an expedition. As noted in Chapter 5 *Dependent Bodies*, when travelling through Persia, Bird relied on the services of her educated guide and translator, Mirza Yusuf. Often his presence and role as a translator goes unmentioned in her account. At one point, however, Bird reminds the reader of his presence: "It must be understood that Mirza Yusuf goes with me everywhere as attendant and interpreter."[160] However, throughout the rest of the book, the line between information received through (or explained by)

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[159] Bird, *Unbeaten Tracks*, 1: 318.

[160] Bishop, *Journeys in Persia*, 1: 322.

Yusuf, and that which Bird observed or obtained directly, is not made clear. In other instances, as in *The Yangtze Valley*, Bird further blurs the line between things she saw and information she heard. In a passage describing the Chinese New Year celebrations she notes that

> Be-dien told me that in the city, where there are many *literati* and rich men, there were houses with all their wood-work covered with gold-sprinkled red paper, and on the lintels five slips expressing the desire of the owner for the 'five blessings': riches, health, love of virtue, longevity, and a natural death. Over some shops was a decorated slip, 'May Rich customers enter this door,' and in many stately vestibules, in which handsome presentation coffins were reared on end, there were costly scrolls inscribed with aphorisms and other sentences.

In the passage, the line between what Bird is told and what she sees directly is unclear. Bird suggests that she saw many of the signs in question. However, as she elsewhere concedes that she cannot read Chinese characters, it is likely that all the information about the content of the various signs came from Be-dien.[161] Much of what initially appears as direct observation in her account is mediated through the eyes of Be-dien or possibly through subsequent reading.

Attention to the labour of publishing Bird's books also foregrounds how her observations were mediated at home as well as abroad. Despite their on-the-spot style, like most travel narratives, Bird's works were heavily edited before publication. Personal information was removed and additional background information and explanation added. During the production of *Unbeaten Tracks*, Bird and her publisher Murray corresponded for more than a year on the subject, debating how to recast her experiences in credible and entertaining language, and to provide the reader with sufficient contextual information. The work of revising the text required significant use of Bird's

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[161] Bishop, *The Yangtze Valley*, x.

eyes, requiring a close reading of her own notes and manuscripts and other relevant works. Bird, for instance, notes that her concluding chapter cost her "a good deal of hard work and was re-written three times."[162] A focus on this editing process also illustrates the multiple pairs of eyes involved in the production of explorers' travel narratives. Murray personally read many of her manuscripts and suggested the removal of some potentially problematic passages.[163] Bird's works were also read by other editors and by her friends, who both praised her works and suggested "ruthless excisions."[164] Her sister Henrietta played an influential role in the editing of her travel narratives providing supplementary information on the countries she had travelled through based on her own reading and research.[165] When Bird came to write *Journeys in Persia and Kurdistan* after the death of her sister, she reported, "I painfully want of the careful and intelligent criticism and accurate eye of my sister, who helped me with the revision and arrangement of all my former books."[166] Attention to the sensory work involved in writing and editing a book, shows that turning visual observations into authoritative knowledge was a process that involved numerous pairs of eyes and different modes of reading. It also brings attention to sensory labour in the study as well as the field.

Bird's writings about her senses were influenced by pejorative understandings of women's sensory capabilities. These ideas shaped what she observed and how she wrote about it. They also led her to adopt technologies that would help render her narratives credible. In some situations, the techniques she employed were simply an extension of those used by Burton and Speke, emphasising the direct and primarily

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[162] Isabella Bird to John Murray, 27 Nov 1880, Ms. 42025, NLS, f. 61.

[163] Isabella Bird to John Murray, 15 January 1880, Ms. 42025, NLS, f. 4.

[164] Isabella Bird to John Murray, 1 March 1880, Ms. 42025, NLS, f. 28.

[165] Chubbuck, Introduction to *Letters to Henrietta*, 9–13.

[166] Isabella Bird to John Murray, 5 August 1891, Ms. 42027, NLS, f. 38.

visual nature of her observations. However, like masculine travellers, a close reading of her accounts demonstrates that much of the information she recorded was relayed through the eyes and ears of others. In the field, Bird grew used to having phenomena explained, so much so that the presence of translators often goes unmentioned. Multiple pairs of eyes also shaped her writings about her journeys: editors, friends, and relatives poured over her accounts, helping her to write clearly about her experiences. Bird's travels thus show the multiple bodies, and the various kinds of sensory work, on which exploration depended. Like Burton and Speke, they also reveal the important roles that guides and intermediaries played in helping explorers to make sense of what they saw. But what happened when there were no indigenous people to perform this role?

SENSING ANTARCTICA: CONFUSION AND COOPERATION

Without guides and intermediaries, broader histories of exploration present Antarctica as a space where white explorers were able to "test their physical and mental mettle against an unforgiving environment without indigenous mediation or interference."[167] In contrast, I argue that the continent presented particular challenges for European explorers for exactly this reason. The lack of oral information and the unreliability of the explorers' senses rendered Antarctica a confusing region to explore. Consequently, they had to cooperate extensively and to uses multiple senses to understand the world around them. The relatively homogeneous makeup of these expeditions meant that Scott and other writers were prepared to describe the collaborative work of travelling in ways that African and Asian travellers avoided. However, the importance attached to cooperation in their accounts also reflects the changing standards of scientific proof within Edwardian geography. By 1906, *Hints to Travellers* advised that "[t]he days of

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[167] Kennedy, *The Last Blank*, 266.

rough route-mapping are practically past. A man who only makes a hurried journey through some imperfectly known district without proper instruments or previous training…will, at the present time, find that he has not rendered any great service to geography."[168] Scott was aware of this change in expectations, commenting before the departure of the *Tera Nova* expedition that it was "a plain duty for the explorer to bring back something more than a bare account of his movements." [169] Instead, he argued that an expedition should bring back as much scientific knowledge as possible, acknowledging that this "cannot be achieved by a single individual."[170]

Sensory Confusion in Antarctica

When Scott first arrived in Antarctica on the BNAE he found his senses bamboozled. His eyes proved unable to establish distance and perspective in a land filled with snow and ice. On travelling past one area of coast on the expedition's ship, *Discovery*, Scott reported that

> The land as we approached it looked illusively near; the sky was overcast, and the higher land was hidden in cloud, but beneath this sheet of grey and black rocks stood out with such distinctness that one was wholly deceived as to their distance. So strong was this deception that the engines were eased when we were nearly two miles from the cliffs, under the impression that

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[168] Edward A. Reeves, "Surveying and Astronomical Observations" in *Hints to Travellers: Scientific and General.* 9th ed., ed. Edward A. Reeves (London: Royal Geographical Society, 1906), 1: 1–2.

[169] Robert Falcon Scott, "Plans of the British Antarctic Expedition," RGS/JMS 16/24, RGS Archives, f. 3.

[170] Scott, "Plans of the British Antarctic Expedition," f. 3.

> they were only a few hundred yards away; we only discovered the mistake when we saw a colony of penguins, and found that even with my glasses it was impossible to distinguish individuals.[171]

This phenomenon has been examined by others and is a product of the fact that spaces with few recognisable features confuse the human eye, rendering perceptions of depth and scale inaccurate.[172] Such visual confusion was no minor matter and caused Scott to report geographical features incorrectly: "I noted in my diary that there was on our right 'a curious indentation like the crater of a volcano', and this was really the strait between the island and mainland some ten miles across."[173] Antarctica rendered Scott's eyes an unreliable instrument for establishing the size, shape, and nature of geographical features.[174] In the Arctic, Inuit people with experience of such phenomena helped American and British explorers to navigate in such conditions, but Scott did not draw on such experience.[175] His frequent use of the word "we" above is also revealing, in that it suggests that the men overcame their own individual confusion through oral communication between each other. Such collaboration reflects the expedition's naval background. As Felix Driver has noted, naval observations were "collective and

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[171] Scott, *The Voyage*, 1: 144.

[172] William L. Fox, "Walking in Circles: Cognition and Science in High Places," in *High Places: Cultural Geographies of Mountains, Ice, and Science*, ed. Veronica della Dora and Denis Cosgrove (London: I.B. Tauris: 2009), 20.

[173] Scott, *The Voyage*, 1: 144.

[174] Wylie, "Becoming Icy," 255.

[175] Fox, "Walking in Circles," 25; Leopold McClintock, "Arctic Sledge Travelling," in *The Antarctic Manual: For the Use of The Expedition of 1901*, ed. George Murray (London: Royal Geographical Society, 1901), 293–304.

disciplined projects of work, involving the coordination of many hands and eyes."[176] But Scott clearly viewed Antarctica as particularly confusing space, suggesting the level of collaboration required in this context was unusual. The explorers also experienced problems with polar mirages, which, as analysed by Kathryn Yusoff, had been a long standing problem for nineteenth-century British and North American polar explorers, leading them to falsely report land where none existed.[177] In Antarctica such mirages are caused by a temperature inversion that serves to bends rays of light and cause objects beyond the horizon to appear much closer than they really are.[178] Overall, Scott concluded that in the polar regions "one cannot afford always to trust the evidence of one's own eyes."[179]

The extremes of light and darkness in Antarctica could also render eyes unreliable. In the summer, the reflective nature of snow and the extended periods of sunshine meant that the men frequently experienced snow blindness, where the eyes become, in effect, sunburned. The explorers wore goggles to help protect their eyes and on Scott's final expedition, they even made similar fittings to protect the eyes of the expedition's animals.[180] But Scott reports that on the BNAE, he grew "inexpressibly sick

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[176] Driver, "Material Memories of Travel," 3.

[177] Kathryn Yusoff, "Climates of Sight: Mistaken Visibilities, Mirages, and 'Seeing Beyond' in Antarctica," in *High Places: Cultural Geographies of Mountains, Ice, and Science*, ed. Denis Cosgrove and Veronica della Dora (London: I.B. Tauris, 2009), 48–63.

[178] W. G. Rees, "Polar Mirages," *Polar* Record 14, no. 150 (1988), 193; Yusoff, "Climates of Sight," 51–53.

[179] Scott, *The Voyage*, 1: 144.

[180] Scott, *Journals*, 119, 266; Cherry Garrard, *The Worst Journey*, 2: 477.

of these safeguards," which were uncomfortable and made it harder to navigate.[181] Snow blindness remained a painful and widespread problem on Edwardian era Antarctic expeditions. Despite years of polar experience, Wilson reported that one day he had a "[b]ad attack of snow glare" on the return from the South Pole in 1912 meaning he "could hardly keep a chink of eye open in goggles to see the course."[182] One of the ways the explorers navigated this problem was by taking it in turns to be the "leader" who was responsible for navigating the sledge. Stoker William Lashly demonstrates the collaborative and multi-sensory nature of such work in one discussion of how he navigated down Beardmore Glacier with Captain Edward Evans and Petty Officer Thomas Crean:

> Crean has become snow-blind to-day through being leader, so I shall have the job to-morrow, as Mr Evans seems to get blind rather quickly, so if I lead and he directs me from behind we ought to get along pretty well. I hope my eyes keep alright.[183]

Lashly's description demonstrates how sledging involved multisensory relations of dependence that changed according to the condition of individual explorers' eyes. At some point or another, most explorers travelled forward blind, reliant on those around them to direct their movements. Even the leader of a party, who was required to have stronger vision, could not navigate alone, relying on oral directions shouted from behind to stay on course in the confusing Antarctic environment.

Instruments and photography could not fully overcome such challenges. Scott commented that "[i]nstruments provided no answer" to many of their navigational

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[181] Scott, *The Voyage*, 1: 504.

[182] Edward Wilson, "Diary of the Terra Nova Expedition," 24 February 1912, Ms.1043, Edward Wilson Collection, SPRI Archive.

[183] William Lashly quoted in Cherry Garrard, *The Worst Journey*, 2: 385.

problems, "we could but guess."[184] The Antarctic landscape also presented challenges for the camera as a tool to record landscape. While photography could be effective around the coast, it was less helpful in the interior: there was, as Kathryn Yusoff has argued, "too much indistinguishable white space that lacked contrast and too much light that caused photographic plates to be overexposed."[185] As a result, the explorers' bodies were often included in photographs, as their presence "anchored and gave meaning to the vast expanse of non-human space."[186] Paradoxically, the advent of this new technology meant that the body became central to measuring the Antarctic landscape.[187] The problems of photography in Antarctica are also reflected in the importance of Edward Wilson's sketches and paintings in the visual record of Scott's expeditions. Wilson emphasised the importance of drawing from direct observation rather than "preconceived notion" and his artworks capture a range of visual effects that the explorers found it impossible to photograph.[188]

Scott presents himself as largely able to overcome the sensory confusion of Antarctica by critically interrogating what he saw. Indeed, he reports several inaccuracies in the maps and observations of previous explorers to the area, which he suggests are the result of the confusing visual effects described above.[189] He claimed that an explorer might overcome such confusion by being "exceedingly cautious in believing even what appears to be the evidence of one's own eyes" and through a close study of

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[184] Scott, *The Voyage*, 1: 179.

[185] Yusoff, "Configuring the Field," 72.

[186] Yusoff, "Configuring the Field," 72–73.

[187] Yusoff, "Configuring the Field," 75.

[188] Scott, *Journals*, 208.

[189] Scott, *The Voyage*, 1: 144, 170–72, 177; Scott, *Journals*, 208, 467.

previous accounts.[190] Scott gives some clues as to the means by which he interrogated such phenomena in the diary of his *Terra Nova* expedition, reflecting on a winter-evening talk by the by the expedition's chief dog handler, Cecil Meares, in which he described a journey to Tibet. Scott commented that Meares had many good qualities, "but a lack of scientific training causes the acceptance of exaggerated appearances, which so often present themselves to travellers when unfamiliar objects are *first seen*." [191] For Scott, the initial appearance of an object is deceptive, and it is only through sustained and deliberate interrogation that an object's true dimension can be measured.[192] For Scott, then, distrust of vision was one of the defining features that separated a geographical explorer from a more adventurous traveller. Scott does not view vision as a definitive and authoritative sense, but one that requires caution and critical interrogation.

Although explorers developed experience at testing the credibility of their visual observations, similar challenges continued to emerge even as the BNAE left Antarctica after two years in the ice. As he departed from the continent, Scott investigated a group of islands previously seen by the polar explorer John Ross and the sealing captain John Balleny in the nineteenth century; Ross had reported three islands, Balleny only one. When the BNAE reached the location of the island(s), the expedition's men became "puzzled when we found that by no means could we reconcile the accounts of the two explorers…and, at first, the clouded condition of the land added much to this difficulty."[193] After Scott had "read the accounts many times," he came up with a theory

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[190] Scott, *The Voyage*, 1: 144.

[191] Scott, *Journals*, 279. Emphasis added.

[192] Scott, *Journals*, 279. Emphasis added.

[193] Scott, *Voyage*, 2: 389.

that reconciled both.[194] "Balleny had seen it from the north, in which direction it presents a comparatively narrow front…At a later date, Ross must have seen the same island, and, as we saw was quite possible, from a great distance he must have imagined it to be divided into three and hence made the mistake of naming it as a separate group."[195] The ability of the expedition to fix the islands accurately was also helped by the fact that the cloud cover lifted at the right moment. On the one hand, Scott's solution to this geographical dilemma shows that the party's prolonged stay in Antarctica had enabled it to interrogate the accuracy of what it saw. On the other hand, Scott's ability to solve the problem still demonstrates that the reliability of his eyes depended on collaboration, weather, perspective, and a close and imaginative reading of previous observations. Cooperation became a way to cope with the bewildering sensory experiences of polar travel.

Antarctica presented unique sensory challenges for explorers. Not only did the environment trigger confusing optical effects, but it also had no indigenous populations who could help the explorers make sense of these phenomena. They dealt with these challenges by relying on the multiple eyes within an expeditionary party, but also drawing on the observations of previous explorers who had travelled to the same areas. Far from representing the triumph of the unmediated vision of the explorer, these challenges left Scott deeply sceptical about the reliability of an explorer's eyes alone as a source of geographical knowledge. As I now examine, the challenges of polar travel also forced the explorers to rely on other senses.

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[194] Scott, *The Voyage*, 2: 389.

[195] Scott, *The Voyage*, 2: 389.

Multiple Senses

Given the problems they experienced with their vision, it is unsurprising that Antarctic explorers write about their other senses in detail. The senses of hearing and touch were important tools for navigation in the dark polar winter. We find insightful descriptions in writings about a march to Cape Crozier to collect emperor penguin eggs conducted by Apsley Cherry Garrard, Edward Wilson, and Henry "Birdie" Bowers in the Antarctic winter of 1912. The party travelled in near-total darkness. Cherry Garrard later wrote, [w]e began to realize now that our eyes were more or less out of action, how much we could do with our feet and ears."[196] Wilson reported similar experience, noting that "eventually we travelled by ear" using the sound and feel of the snow to tell them if they were on safe ground.[197] He also noted how "the feel of the snow under our feet" played an important role in helping them tell if they were on a crevasse.[198] Cherry Garrard describes the effect of touch particularly evocatively: "[t]he effect of walking in finnesko is much the same as walking in gloves, and you get a sense of touch which nothing else except bare feet could give you. Thus we could feel every small variation in the surface, every crust through which our feet broke, every hardened patch below the soft snow."[199] As Kathryn Yusoff argues, these incidents foreground the "feeling body" of the explorer and are a far cry from conventional and heroic understanding of polar travel, which

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[196] Cherry Garrard, *The Worst Journey*, 1: 253.

[197] Edward Wilson, "The Winter Journey to Cape Crozier" in *Scott's Last Expedition*, ed. Leonard Huxley (London: Smith and Elder, 1913), 2: 58.

[198] Wilson, "The Winter Journey to Cape Crozier," 58.

[199] Cherry Garrard, *The Worst Journey* 1: 253.

generally emphasise visual representations.[200] The reliance on senses beyond vision was partly a result of polar darkness, but it also brought to the fore the often latent reliance of the explorers on these senses in other contexts. Only deprived of their sense of vision, did the explorers realise how useful touch and hearing were.

A focus on navigation by smell further demonstrates the dependence of Antarctic explorers on multiple senses and shows the importance animals in navigation. Scott reported that the dogs worked much better when they could see something ahead of them, showing how important their powers of navigation were.[201] Their noses were also useful navigational tools. When dogs were following in the steps of other explorers, the animals used their noses to find the correct route. As John Wylie notes, on such trips "[t]here is sometimes no need to navigate, for the dogs can smell the food ahead, the excreta of previous camps which they can digest for nourishment. The 'hit and miss' of the dead reckoning method becomes the 'shit and piss' method. The strict geometry of navigation is augmented by a more manifold sensory vector."[202] Scott does not mention this directly (probably in part because of Edwardian ideas of decency), but it is clear he at least indirectly drew on this method. On the *Terra Nova* expedition, Scott adopted a "naval armada" approach to navigation, in which the dogs often waited behind the ponies, following in their tracks.[203] This set up had the advantage that the dogs could follow the scent tracks left by those they followed, but it also slowed the progress of the

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[200] Kathryn Yusoff, "Antarctic Exposure: Archives of the Feeling Body," *cultural geographies* 14, no. 2 (2007): 211–33.

[201] Scott, *Journals*, 117.

[202] Wylie, "Becoming Icy," 260.

[203] Alp, "Dogs of the British Antarctic Expedition."

expedition.[204] Polar exploration thus relied on the senses of animals as well as humans, even in such techniques were not always the most effective.

Far from representing a triumph of the seeing-man, Antarctica presented a unique challenge for early explorers. Not only did the continent trigger a baffling array of optical illusions, but it also had no intermediaries to help the explorers make sense of what they heard and saw. The extremes of light and darkness also meant they spent periods unable to see at all. In response, explorers worked together, used multiple senses, and drew on the writings of earlier travellers to the area. Of course, such work must have required extensive oral communication, again implying that even apparently direct and unmediated visual observations were collaborative. Scott suggested that an explorer could train his or her own senses to be somewhat more accurate, but only by carefully interrogating their sense of vision. As noted, the unreliability of isolated and fragmented observations from single pairs of eyes could be used to highlight how individual observations were an increasingly obsolete method of collecting accurate geographical information by the early twentieth century. As such, the expedition might be considered representative of a broader shift from adventurous exploration towards a more systematic and sustained form of geographical fieldwork. Yet it is important not to overstate the change from earlier expeditions to other regions. As I have shown above, other explorers also depended on multiple bodies and multiple senses, even if they were reluctant to publicly acknowledge such contributions. Scott's direct description of his reliance on and collaboration with others was possible because he depended on white men of either scientific or naval backgrounds.

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[204] Alp, "Dogs of the British Antarctic Expedition," 310.

CONCLUSION

Victorian writers and more recent critics of exploration have often referred to explorers as "seeing men," emphasising the importance of their visual observations and the symbolic power of their gaze. This chapter has challenged this idea in several ways. First, it has shown that explorers often struggled to see clearly. For significant periods of their journey through East Africa, Burton and Speke could not see at all because of fever and other tropical diseases, meaning many of their observations must have been gleaned from oral information and the eye-witness testimony of others. Antarctica, meanwhile, presented distinctive problems, as explorers struggled to see despite the effects, of snow-blindness, darkness, and a confusing array of optical effects. The specific causes and duration of these visual impairments varied, shaped by the personal health of different explorers and the specific challenges presented by each environment. Even so, it is clear that describing explorers as "seeing men" ignores that fact that, in the field, they were often blind. Of course, they did often write about their gaze as powerful and drew on colonial tropes in their writings as Pratt and others have analysed. However, as I have argued, many of these comments sit at odds with what we know about their physical state while they were travelling, suggesting they were often later additions aimed at domestic audiences. The motif of the seeing man and the masculine colonial gaze is problematic in other ways when it comes to Bird. Contemporary writers often suggested that women's eyes were inferior to men's eyes, except perhaps when it came to understanding minor details and domestic affairs. Accordingly, Bird used a variety of techniques to render her observations credible. In her early works, she used both the epistolary form and photography to make her written accounts both entertaining and credible. In her later works, photography helped to verify her sensory observation. Despite such efforts, she still feared that commentators might not see her gaze as reliable as that of a male traveller. That said, she still has more in common with masculine

travellers than is often acknowledged. Like them, she depended on a broad range of guides and intermediaries who are only partially visible in her public and private writings.[205]

Recent critical literature on exploration has begun to address the dependence of European on such oral information but offers only a partial picture. In some senses, this approach seeks to replace the explorer as a "seeing man" by emphasising their role as a collector and compiler of oral testimony. These approaches have produced some valuable insights; however, they have been limited in drawing too clear a line between oral information, direct observation, and other sensory impressions. In reality, surviving, navigating, and producing knowledge on an expedition depended on multiple bodies and multiple senses. Importantly, it is often hard to draw clear distinctions between these various sources of knowledge. Bird, Burton, Speke, and Grant all relied heavily on oral information from guides and intermediaries even when making apparently "direct" observations. In both East Africa and Asia, explorers often did not know what they were looking at until someone explained it to them. Occasional comments by explorers demonstrate that the work of translation and mediation was a central part of expeditionary knowledge production. Analysis of Bird's relationship with John Murray also shows that explorers' sensory impression were meditated at home, too. Unpopulated Antarctica emerges as an exception. However, this only made collaboration more important. The extreme environment produced a strange array of visual and auditory effects, and the explorers frequently found themselves confused by what they heard and saw. Neither photography nor instruments could fully overcome these problems. They responded to this situation by depending on multiple senses, by working together, and by comparing what they saw with previous accounts. In this sense, far from demonstrating the triumph of the unmediated European gaze, Antarctic

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[205] Driver, "Hidden Histories."

exploration shows their interdependence and their reliance on senses beyond vision, sometimes including the senses of animals. On the one hand, the greater emphasis on collaboration can be understood as part of a broader shift in scientific practices towards more systematic fieldwork. On the other hand, Scott's ability to address the importance of collaboration and cooperation directly shows how questions of identity remained an important consideration in how contributions were valued within published accounts.

The key message of this chapter is, therefore, around the difficulties of drawing clear boundaries around individual senses or individual bodies. Knowledge production on expeditions was a collaborative process. This insight has broader implications in terms of how we think about exploration, demonstrating its collective nature and the difficulties of separating the production of knowledge from other activities such as translation and transportation. The chapter therefore critiques the idea that geographical knowledge was produced only by expedition leaders and makes it possible to understand the multiple individuals involved. As I now examine, the idea explorers they were the only ones producing knowledge can be further challenged by investigating incidents where they were the objects of examination.

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EXAMINED BODIES

Another powerful myth about explorers is that they were the only ones producing knowledge. Such an approach can lead us to ignore numerous incidents, often included in published accounts, which show that travellers frequently found their bodies examined. Recent scholarship has begun to address this issue. Most notably, Dane Kennedy has discussed the ways that Africans "scrutinised explorers with a frank and relentless determination that stands in challenging contradistinction to the 'imperial gaze' that so many scholars in recent years have attributed to explorers themselves."[1] Kennedy is correct to suggest that in the field explorers often found themselves the objects of curiosity. However, I argue that the reliance on visual metaphors can draw attention away from the other senses. Travellers were not just the objects of a counter gaze, but also found their bodies pinched, poked, stroked, and measured in visceral ways. In doing so, this chapter investigates this subject from a distinct perspective, asking "what does exploration look like if we focus on instances where the bodies of white explorers were scrutinised?" And "what happens if we look at all the senses involved in such examinations?" Concentrating on these incidents, as this chapter does, allows us to see exploration as a multisensory and two-way process of bodily encounter in which explorers were not the only ones producing knowledge. Moreover, as I show below, this approach also allows us to use their expeditions to draw attention to political and social changes taking place in the regions through which they travelled.

This chapter respond to and extends nascent scholarship on this subject. In recent years, there has been a growing recognition that bodily examination was a two-

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[1] Kennedy, *The Last Blank*, 216.

way process. Mary Louise Pratt argues that passages describing travellers' examination by African people are exemplary of "anti-conquest" tropes within such narratives.[2] Explorers, she claims, used these incidents to foreground their own vulnerability and humiliation in the field and to emphasise their benevolent motivations.[3] However, this approach draws attention away from African agency and the history and cultures of the people in the areas through which they travelled. In contrast, Daniel Clayton has examined how intercultural encounters were two way processes in which indigenous people examined European voyagers.[4] As Johannes Fabian notes, many explorers objected to African curiosity, hypocritically viewing it as "as an invasion of their privacy" at the same time as they examined the bodies of others.[5] Kennedy has demonstrated that "Africans' intrusive curiosity became a common refrain among explorers." [6] He focuses on this "intrusive gaze" to draw attention to their vulnerability and dependence.[7] Daniella Kato suggests that when travelling in Japan, Bird "often ends up in the uncomfortable, passive position of the observed."[8] Meanwhile, Susan Schoenbauer Thurin argues that Bird's Chinese travels show the "reciprocity of the 'gaze.'"[9] Clearly, there is growing recognition of the two-directional nature of curiosity, but much previous scholarship relies on visual metaphors to explain such encounters. Later in this chapter, I also discuss literature on medicine and polar exploration, demonstrating their

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[2] Pratt, *Imperial Eyes*, 75–85.

[3] Pratt, *Imperial Eyes*, 75–85.

[4] Clayton, *Islands of Truth*, 22–27.

[5] Fabian, *Out of Our Minds*, 186.

[6] Kennedy, *The Last Blank*, 214; see also Kennedy, *The Highly Civilized*, 115.

[7] Kennedy, *The Last Blank*, 214.

[8] Kato, "'I Write The Truth as I See It,'" 85.

[9] Schoenbauer Thurin, *Victorian Travelers*, 148–49.

similarities to anthropological examinations. In doing so, I respond to recent debates on the role of explorers within medical developments.[10]

A focus on these issues also sheds light on the relationship between exploration, writing, and power. As I demonstrate, explorers frequently wrote in disparaging and racist terms when their own bodies were examined by local people, reflecting their frustration at being the observed rather than the observer. Their disparaging writings can, in some cases at least, be read as an attempt to counteract the powerlessness and dependence they felt while travelling.[11] What Edward Said terms, "the power to narrate" was instrumental in reasserting control.[12] In re-examining these instances with a critical eye, I refocus attention on the perspectives of local leaders and non-European populations. I also discuss the different ways this agency was expressed, including though curiosity and resistance. Finally, I show how such relationships shaped explorers' journeys and the knowledge they were able to produce. As much as travellers complained about the examination of their bodies, they frequently depended on local interest in them. Unpopulated Antarctica stands as an important counterpoint: there, explorers willingly allowed their bodies to be examined by medics and scientists, and found themselves scrutinised by animals. As such, their writings show both similarities and differences from the ways inspections were discussed in other contexts. How explorers reacted to different forms of examination exposes their relationship to broader questions of power, knowledge, and identity. As I now show these issues are visible in Burton, Speke, and Grant's writings about East Africa.

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[10] Heggie, *Higher and Colder*; Heggie, "Why Isn't Exploration a Science;" Vanessa Heggie, "Blood, Race and Indigenous Peoples in Twentieth Century Extreme Physiology," *History and Philosophy of the Life Sciences* 41, no. 2 (2019), 26.

[11] Kennedy, *The Highly Civilized*, 115–16.

[12] Said, *Culture and Imperialism*, xiii.

BURTON AND SPEKE IN AFRICA: THE EXPLORERS ARE EXAMINED

Recent scholarship of African exploration notes that Burton and Speke were the objects of examination as they travelled in East Africa and has begun to analyse their reaction to such incidents. Dane Kennedy argues that, as an anthropologist, Burton vigorously objected to this reversal of positions.[13] As Kennedy notes, Burton offered his interpretations of the different stares to which he was subject, sometimes ascribing sinister "cannibal" or "pugnacious" motivations behind them.[14] This experience shaped Burton's understandings of racial difference, partially contributing to his emergence as "one of the most fierce and vocal advocates of the view that black Africans constitute a distinct and inferior species of humankind" in the 1860s.[15] In contrast, Kennedy contends that Speke had little "ethnographic curiosity" and found African curiosity more amusing.[16] Indeed, as I argue below, Speke's willingness to play to local audiences was a crucial aspect of his 1860–63 expedition. Previous scholarship has focused on the response of Burton and Speke to African interest in their bodies or has grouped such incidents together as part of a general counter-gaze.[17] In contrast, I focus on these instances in order to understand these bodily encounters at a more granular and

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[13] Kennedy, *The Highly Civilized*, 115–16; Edward Armston-Sheret, "Leaky Bodies: Syphilitic Incontinence on the Jackson-Harmsworth Expedition," *Victorian Review* 45, no. 1 (2019): 10–14.

[14] Burton, *The Lake Regions* 2: 128–29; Kennedy, *The Highly Civilized*, 115.

[15] Kennedy, *The Highly Civilized*, 115–16, 131.

[16] Kennedy, *The Highly Civilized*, 115.

[17] Kennedy, *The Last Blank*, 214–16.

multisensory level.

Some of the African interest in the bodies of Burton, Speke, and Grant was a product of the fact that they formed part of a caravan. As Stephen J. Rockel has demonstrated, the entrance of a caravan into a town or village could be an important event, particularly at the end or beginning of a journey. Nyamwezi porters thus ensured they dressed in their best clothes on these occasions.[18] It is therefore unsurprising that the explorers' bodies were also subject to particular interest when they entered and left towns.[19] Burton describes one instance where he and Speke's party entered a populated area and were soon the subject of attention. Burton reports that the expedition's porters had grouped together "in order that it might make its first appearance with dignity."[20] As the caravan entered the town, villagers began to look and to greet the newcomers. Burton reports the incident with distrust and frustration claiming that "it was a spectacle to make an anchorite of a man—it was at once ludicrous and disgusting."[21] He does, however, report the reaction of the expedition's Nyamwezi porters to the situation, which suggests the interactions were far from ludicrous: "the kirangozi fluttered his red flag in the wind, and the drums, horns, and larynxes of his followers began the fearful uproar which introduces a caravan to the admiring 'natives'" before leading the expedition without ceremony into the nearest large village.[22] Burton reports that he later learned these displays were the "immemorial custom" of the area.[23] Some of the

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[18] Rockel, *Carriers of Culture*, 115–16.

[19] Rockel, *Carriers of Culture*, 116.

[20] Burton, *The Lake Regions*, 1: 292.

[21] Burton, *The Lake Regions*, 1: 292.

[22] Burton, *The Lake Regions*, 1: 292.

[23] Burton, *The Lake Regions*, 1: 292.

curiosity that the explorers reported was a normal part of the East African caravan system rather than because they were European.

There are, however, suggestions that the explorers were the subject of particular attention because of their strange bodies and dress. One of the common themes in the explorers' writings is that they were a source of amusement and even humour to Africans. In *The Lake Regions of Central Africa* (1860) Burton complained that local people often assembled "to stare, laugh, and wonder at the white man."[24] Elsewhere, he reports that African interest in the explorers was "accompanied with peals of merriment."[25] On the EAE, Speke's dress attracted particular attention. He reported that his "French spectacles so excited the crowds of sable gentry who followed the caravan, and they were so boisterously rude, stooping, and peering underneath my wide-awake [hat] to gain a better sight of my double eyes,[sunglasses] as they chose to term them, that it became impossible for me to wear them."[26] Similarly, James Augustus Grant reports that when he travelled through East Africa with Speke, the men's bodies were the objects of similar curiosity: "The villagers *en route* turned out to see the white men…of an afternoon, we considered it an extraordinary occurrence if our camp was not thronged by people, curious, well-conducted, some bringing their produce to barter. Women would sit at our tent-doors suckling their infants while cracking jokes at our expense."[27] As noted by Kennedy, what is remarkable about such incidents is the "confident, assertive" way that Africans satisfied this curiosity.[28]

The examination of the explorers' bodies went well beyond visual inspection.

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[24] Burton, *The Lake Regions*, 1: 63.

[25] Burton, *The Lake Regions*, 1: 63.

[26] Speke, *What Led*, 301–2.

[27] Grant, *A Walk Across Africa*, 39.

[28] Kennedy, *The Last Blank*, 216.

Africans also touched their bodies and clothes. When describing his first trip towards the Victoria Nyanza, Speke explains one particularly remarkable incident. A local ruler named Ungugu invited him for dinner and then began to inspect him:

> Squatting by my side, the sultana at once shook hands. Her nimble fingers first manipulated my shoes (the first point of notice in these barefooted climes), then my overalls, then my waistcoat, more particularly the buttons, and then my coat—this latter article being so much admired, that she wished I would present it to her, to wear upon her own fair person. Next my hands and fingers were mumbled, and declared to be as soft as a child's, and my hair was likened to a lion's mane.[29]

What is notable about this episode is the importance of touch in the encounter. Ungugu is interested not just in how Speke's body looks but in how his skin, hair, and clothes feel. Speke's cooperation with her curiosity is also remarkable. The woman's royal status perhaps made such a close examination more acceptable to Speke than it would have been in other contexts.[30] But his compliance, was also a reflection of power relations: Speke complied because he needed the ruler's permission to proceed, a fact that he emphasised in his published account.[31] In doing so, he tries to present himself as motivated by geographical curiosity. Of course, we should treat this explanation with a pinch of salt, as it conveniently glosses over the potentially flirtatious nature of such an encounter and may well have been written with domestic audiences in mind. Either way, drawing attention to the other senses involved in examinations of explorers' bodies,

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[29] Speke, *What Led*, 277. The use of "mumbled" in the passage is strange and is, perhaps, a misprint; it may also reflect Speke's odd writing style. However, the word can be used to describe lightly chewing something, raising the possibility that Speke's fingers were placed in her mouth.

[30] Kennedy, *The Last Blank*, 223.

[31] Speke, *What Led*, 276–78.

demonstrates that a focus on gaze and vision can obscure the multisensory nature of cultural encounters. In this instance, touch allows us to see forms of examination that relied on a much closer proximity between bodies and is also illustrative of the power relations at play in such incidents.

Speke did not always cooperate with such close examinations of his body. In *What Led to the Discovery of the Source of the Nile* (1864), Speke describes an incident at Ugogo "on the highway between the coast and Ujiji."[32] He reports how the road "was literally thronged with a legion of black humanity so exasperatingly bold that nothing short of a stick could keep them from jostling me."[33] He continued: "Poor creatures! They said they had come a long way to see, and now must have a good long stare; for when was there ever a Mzungu [white man] here before?"[34] Speke's comments are both patronising and revealing: they suggest that he had little objection to being stared at but was prepared to defend himself with force when such bodily examinations took the form of "jostling" rather than a distanced stare. The different way that he reported these incidents demonstrates how location, identity, and distance shaped how explorers experienced and wrote about bodily examinations. The quote is also informative because it suggests that East Africans anticipated the arrival of the British men and travelled to examine them, blurring any clear distinction between explorer and local.

A closer look at practices of examination brings attention to several important features. Questions of location, power, and identity shaped how explorers responded to African curiosity in their bodies, but the senses involved were also important. Speke objected to being touched far more than being stared at. However, on occasion, he still allowed himself to be inspected in more intimate ways. Finally, these incidents perhaps

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[32] Speke, *What Led*, 284.

[33] Speke, *What Led*, 284.

[34] Speke, *What Led*, 284–85; Kennedy, *The Highly Civilized*, 115.

even allow us to see African men and women as amateur anthropologists, eager to examine the explorers' strange bodies, travelling some distance to do so. Similar dynamics are apparent in Speke's 1860–63 expedition. At some points, Speke seems to have actively participated in the examination and display of his body, using it to gain access to both African bodies and rulers.

Encouraging Examination: John Hanning Speke

On his 1860–63 journey, Speke seems to have actively used the interest in his body to facilitate both his travels and anthropological observations. In *The Journal of the Discovery of the Source of the Nile* (1863), he describes an incident where he examines a woman's body in the Kingdom of Karagwe. Speke describes how the woman was "unable to stand except on all fours" as she was very overweight; for, according to Speke, "fattening is the first duty of a fashionable female life" in this area.[35] Speke reports that he was "desirous to get a good view of her, and actually to measure her, and induced her to give me facilities for doing so, by offering in return to show her a bit of my naked legs and arms."[36] In a passage in an unpublished draft of the book he reports the reaction to this display: "Of course my arms and legs had called forth immense raptures of delight and exclamations of beauty, for no one would believe before that the whole of my body was white."[37] As such comments show, Speke cultivated curiosity in his body, using at as a tool to encourage reciprocal examination. However, his editors thought some of his descriptions too troubling to include in his published account. Even so, James MacQueen

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[35] Speke, *Journal of the Discovery*, 231.

[36] Speke, *Journal of the Discovery*, 231.

[37] Speke, "First Corrected Proofs of 'Journal of the Discovery of the Source of the Nile,' NLS, f. 145.

still complained that Speke "seems to delight and excel in such exhibitions" and used the incident to attack his wider credibility.[38] The negative response to the sanitised version shows that explorers had to be cautious when writing about such incidents in their public accounts.

Even so, Speke and Grant's writings contain numerous passages that suggest they actively encouraged local curiosity while travelling. Most notably, during their stay at the court of Mutesa, the *Kabaka* of Buganda, where Speke seems to have encouraged the king's interest in his body. These incidents have particular significance when viewed in the context of the broader changes happening in East Africa in this period. Recent scholarship on the history of Buganda has devoted attention to the country's engagement with external forces in the second half of the nineteenth century. By the time Mutesa took the throne in 1857 or 1858, Buganda had achieved "unprecedented size and influence" within the Lake Regions.[39] At the same time, though, Muslim traders from Zanzibar were starting to travel to the country in growing numbers, bringing with them guns and cloth.[40] These traders were therefore "a new and potentially destabilising element in local and regional politics," threatening Bugandan supremacy.[41] Throughout his reign, Mutesa sought to use contact with both Swahili traders and European missionaries and travellers (of whom Speke was the first) to secure

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[38] MacQueen, "Captain Speke's Discovery," 98.

[39] Jean Brierley and Thomas Spear, "Mutesa, The Missionaries, and Christian Conversion in Buganda," *The International Journal of African Historical Studies* 21, no. 4 (1988), 601; Robinson, *The Lost White*, 96–97.

[40] Brierly and Spear, "Mutesa, the Missionaries, and Christian Conversion," 601.

[41] Brierly and Spear, "Mutesa, the Missionaries, and Christian Conversion," 601.

his position domestically and advance the power of the Ganda state in the region.[42] Specifically, he often used such encounters to try and obtain arms, ammunition and other militarily useful technology.[43] Viewed in this context, Mutesa's interest in Speke's body and dress are representative of a broader process of unequal encounter with the outside world and his attempts to use their encounter to his own advantage.[44]

We find several references to the political dimensions of Speke's visit. During their time together, Mutesa asked Speke for items of European clothing so "that he may appear like Bana [as he called Speke]."[45] Speke had some trousers made for Mutesa and gave him clothes, including a waistcoat and trousers.[46] On several occasions, Speke and Grant encountered Mutesa wearing these outfits.[47] Speke did not think such dress suited the king, but Mutesa thought these clothes were "very becoming" and showed them off to his brothers.[48] These incidents are particularly significant because of the Kabaka saw himself as a "corporeal reflection of the country's body politic."[49] It is also worth

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[42] Richard Reid, "The Ganda on Lake Victoria: A Nineteenth-Century East African Imperialism," *The Journal of African History* 39, no.3 (1998): 349–63.

[43] Richard Reid, "Images of an African Ruler: Kabaka Mutesa of Buganda, ca. 1857–1884," *History in Africa* 26 (1999), 283. For another explorer's engagement with Mutesa, see Henry Morton Stanley, *Through the Dark Continent; The Source of the Nile Around the Great Lakes of Equatorial Africa and Down the Livingstone River to the Atlantic Ocean*, 2 vols. (London: Sampson Low, Marston, Searle, and Rivington, 1878).

[44] Robinson, *The Lost White*, 97.

[45] Speke, *Journal of the Discovery*, 357.

[46] Speke, *Journal of the Discovery*, 363, 357, 372–73.

[47] Speke, *Journal of the Discovery*, 357, 408.

[48] Speke, *Journal of the Discovery*, 357, 408; Grant, *A Walk Across Africa*, 223.

[49] Brierley and Spear, "Mutesa, The Missionaries, and Christian Conversion," 278.

remembering that Speke (dishonestly) represented himself as a member of the British Royal family, and, based on this misinformation, Mutesa may have thought his clothes were items of royal dress and, therefore, appropriate for his status. Importantly, Mutesa was interested in showing his newly acquired European clothing to his relatives and subjects and seemed less interested in Speke's approval. Mutesa's curiosity had specific motivations that reflected broader political dynamics in the region.

The political importance of the *Kabaka's* body also helps to explain a bizarre incident in which Speke was called on to examine Mutesa's "water works."[50] Speke reports that he had to counsel a concerned king about both the size of his penis, his sexual performance and to advise him on improving the chances of conception.[51] Speke later wrote that Mutesa wanted to "become a great family man," probably in order to secure a royal succession.[52] These passages foreground the intimate forms of bodily examination that could characterise intercultural encounters. Unsurprisingly, these passages were struck out of Speke's published book by his editor, but they again demonstrate that Mutesa sought to gain politically and medically useful knowledge during their meetings. Similar forces were at play in quite different ways during Mutesa's first examinations of Grant's body. His hands attracted the king's attention because he had lost the thumb and index finger on his right hand while serving in India.[53] Mutesa asked about how Grant had received the injury, a curiosity that Grant suspected was a product of the fact that amputation was a common punishment for

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[50] Speke, "First Corrected Proofs," 233–34.

[51] Speke, "First Corrected Proofs," 233–34.

[52] Speke, "First corrected Proofs," 234.

[53] James A. Casada, "James A. Grant and the Royal Geographical Society," *The Geographical Journal* 140, no. 2 (1974), 246.

criminals in Buganda.[54] Mutesa's concern shows travellers' bodies were implicated in debates over trustworthiness and credibility in the field. It also demonstrates that Mutesa was far from naïve in his interactions with the foreigners. Like British commentators, Mutesa examined the explorers' bodies to assess if he could trust what they said.

Despite the wider context of the explorers' visit, some examinations of Speke's body suggest that Mutesa also saw his entertainment value as important. These incidents foreground Speke's total dependence on the hospitality of his hosts and his willingness to allow examinations of his body to maintain good relations. Mutesa, was particularly interested in Speke's hair, clothes, and skin. Speke reports that at one of their meetings he gave Mutesa "a tortoise-shell comb to comb his hair straight with, as he invariably remarked on the beautiful manner in which I dressed my hair, making me uncap to show it to his women."[55] At another meeting, Speke reported how "[m]y hair must now be shown and admired, then my shoes taken off and inspected, and my trousers tucked up to show that I am white all over."[56] In his unpublished account, Speke hints that such displays of his body were a regular occurrence: "The brothers' wives then wish to see me and come before us, when [*sic*] I have to take off my hat and shoes as usual, my ready compliance induced the princes to say, "we like Bana, very much: he is so pretty, gentle and, good-natured."[57] When Grant joined Speke at the court, he had to display his body in similar ways: "He [Mutesa] signalled that I was to show my head uncovered to the ladies; a titter followed, and all of us laughed heartedly. Another signal,

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[54] Grant, *A Walk Across Africa*, 222.

[55] Speke, *Journal of the Discovery*, 352.

[56] Speke, *Journal of the Discovery*, 355.

[57] Speke, "First Corrected Proofs," 262.

and I was told to place my hat on."[58] Displaying their bodies was clearly something the explorers were expected to do in return for the hospitality they received at the court. Their ready compliance with such requests is suggestive of their relative lack of power.

Focusing on the examination of Speke's and Grant's bodies at the Ganda court, demonstrates their bodies were the objects of examination by African rulers, who both saw explorers as a source of an entertainment and as an opportunity to acquire knowledge and resources. In some cases, displaying his own body was the price Speke had to pay for access to local leaders. Thus, these incidents draw attention to African agency and how European exploration was shaped by economic and political changes taking place in nineteenth-century East Africa. Of course, the examination of Speke's body in the field should not blind us to powerful and negative effects of Burton and Speke's published writings about Africans, but they do highlight how, the power of such observations was in their circulation within the British Empire. In the field, bodily examination was a two-way process, which involved multiple senses. Similar trends also emerged in Isabella Bird's Asian travels. Here too, bodily examinations were shaped by the political and cultural changes taking place in the regions through which she travelled.

ISABELLA BIRD: EXAMINATION AND SUSPICION IN EAST ASIA

Like Burton and Speke, Isabella Bird found her body examined, but this took different forms in the various countries through which she travelled. In this section, I analyse Bird's journey through Japan in the 1878 and through China in 1894–97. These two contexts saw Bird's body inspected differently: in Japan, bodily examinations were the product of the broader Japanese interest in Europe following the Meji Restoration; while

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[58] Grant, *A Walk Across Africa*, 222.

in China, anti-colonial sentiments and the development of nationalism shaped how she was treated. Either way, the examination of her body often involved senses beyond vision.

Japanese Curiosity

As she travelled though Japan, Bird often found herself examined by large crowds, sometimes up to 1,000 strong.[59] Park argues that the curiosity shown towards Bird was in part a product of the wider interest in European, and particularly English, models of development at the time.[60] After the Meiji restoration of 1868, Japan went through a period of dramatic economic, political, and social upheaval. These changes involved the modernisation and westernisation of the Japanese economy, education system, and government and saw growing numbers of Europeans travel to Japan.[61] Thus, Japanese interest in Bird's was not only motivated by the fact that she looked, dressed, and spoke differently, but was also a product of the fact that she was a representative of a society of growing interest to Japanese people at the time.[62] In private, she portrayed such incidents in fairly neutral terms. In a letter to John Murray written while travelling, Bird suggested that the "only annoyance" of Japan was "the continuous mobbing by

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[59] Bird, *Unbeaten Tracks*, 1: 178.

[60] Park, "Land of the Morning Calm," 529, 534.

[61] Richard Sims, *Japanese Political History Since the Meiji Renovation, 1868–2000* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2001).

[62] Park, "Land of the Morning Calm," 529, 534.

polite crowds."[63] In general, she claims that they were "quiet and gentle."[64] Even so, she reports occasional problems with more aggressive mobbing that left her unable to breathe.[65] These incidents also featured in her book.[66] The examinations reverse many of the power dynamics at play in the rest of Bird's work. She finds herself with "no privacy" stared at and observed by large crowds of people who are as interested in her as she in in them.[67] In public, Bird drew on racial stereotypes when writing about these incidents, describing crowds as "filthy and squalid."[68] In this way, she portrays Japanese people an unpleasant and de-individualised mass rather than as autonomous human subjects. As with Burton and Speke, such language can be read as an effort to reassert control and counter the loss of power she experienced in the field.

Bird generally shows little interest in the motivations behind the looks she received. But her account does include one curious incident that suggests Japanese people viewed her body as strange (and possibly non-human) when she travelled in more remote areas. She reports encountering a group of Japanese boys who "said they thought Ito [her guide] was a monkey-player, i.e. the keeper of a monkey theatre, I a big ape, and the poles of my bed the scaffolding of the stage!"[69] Bird included these comments to demonstrate the unreasonable and unscientific nature of Japanese curiosity, presenting the boy's ideas as an amusing quirk borne of ignorance. However, read more critically, the comments do suggest that many Japanese people looked at Bird's body in ways that

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[63] Isabella Bird to John Murray, 11 August 1878, Ms. 42024, NLS, f. 104.

[64] Bird, *Unbeaten Tracks*, 1: 178.

[65] Bird, *Unbeaten Tracks*, 1: 290.

[66] Bird, *Unbeaten Tracks*, 1: 164–65, 177–78, 182, 258, 270, 300.

[67] Bird, *Unbeaten Tracks*, 1: 256.

[68] Bird, *Unbeaten Tracks*, 1: 168, 165.

[69] Bird, *Unbeaten Tracks*, 1: 338.

threw into question Victorian assumptions about racial hierarchy. The comments also suggests that even these children were aware of her dependence on her guide. The potential for alterative and troubling readings is perhaps the reason the children's comments were removed from the revised, single volume, popular edition of her book, which condensed her account in ways that made it more fully conform to tropes of travel writing.[70]

The examinations of Bird's body involved senses well beyond distanced stares. Her descriptions of the curiosity of her guide, interpreter, and companion Ito Tsurukichi allow us to see much more nuanced forms of encounter and the importance of sound as well as vision in such incidents. Bird reports that he used the trip with her as a learning opportunity, keeping an extensive diary in both Japanese and English, recording observations about the areas through which he travelled.[71] He also used his time with Bird to develop his English vocabulary, avoiding any expressions that she considered either "common" or "slangy."[72] Tsurukichi's actions could read as a form of mimicry examined by Homi Bhabha.[73] Yet while he was keen to improve his English vocabulary, he was not in awe of white bodies or British habits. Bird reports that "[o]ur manners, eyes, and modes of eating appear simply odious to him. He delights in retailing stories of the bad manners of Englishmen."[74] Such comments suggest that while he was keen to improve his English vocabulary and translation skills, he had little interest in mimicking other aspects of British culture. As Elliot argues, his response might be better

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[70] Kanasaka, *Isabella Bird*, 3–7; Elliot, "'It's Japan,'" 1–20.

[71] Bird, *Unbeaten Tracks*, 1: 311.

[72] Bird, *Unbeaten Tracks*, 1: 312.

[73] Elliot, "Ito and Isabella;" Homi Bhabha, "Of Mimicry and Man: The Ambivalence of Colonial Discourse," *October* 28 (1984): 125–33; Kennedy, *The Last Blank Spaces*, 208.

[74] Bird, *Unbeaten Tracks*, 1: 156.

understood as mockery.[75] Tsurukichi seems to have put this knowledge to use after Bird left. Kiyonori Kanasaka has demonstrated that, after Bird's departure, Ito became a prominent interpreter and guide in Japan working for other European visitors. When he died in 1913 at the age of 57, he was the subject of numerous obituaries in Japanese papers, which referred to him as "the pioneer of guiding in Japan and Japan's leading interpreter" and noted that he had "struck up familiarity with many gentlemen of repute."[76] Kanasaka notes that some prominent Western travel company executives were "so taken with his abilities and intelligence that they allowed him the privilege of travelling free on their trains and ships."[77] Tsurukichi clearly used his time with Bird and other European travellers to his advantage, developing unrivalled skills as guide and translator. His interest in Bird's speech and language demonstrates the limits of focusing on vision at the expense of hearing in intercultural encounters.

In Japan, Bird's body was examined in a variety of ways, including large crowds who stared at her, curious children, and, more closely, by her guide. Stares and gazes were a major feature of such encounters but hearing and listening could also be important. More broadly, and as with Speke, in Buganda, the curiosity shown towards Bird was a product of broader social and political changes taking place in Japan at the time. For Tsurukichi, studying Bird offered allowed him to develop his abilities as a translator and guide—useful skills given the growing European involvement in Japan in the period. Broader political trends also shaped how Bird's body was examined when she travelled to China in the 1890s. This time, though, Bird was inspected in much more aggressive ways.

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[75] Elliot, "Ito and Isabella."

[76] Kanasaka, *Isabella Bird*, 182.

[77] Kanasaka, *Isabella Bird*, 182.

Bird was the subject of more hostile attention while travelling in China the mid 1890s, including shouts, violence and other invasions of her privacy. In China, as in Japan, local people often saw Bird as a representative of both Britain and the west, more broadly. Here, though, being a foreigner and a Christian had much more negative connotations and Bird often encountered hostility rather than curiosity. Bird's writings show her varied reaction to different forms of bodily examination and how the interest shown in her body was a product of broader political changes taking place at the time.

Bird's journey was shaped by the growing resistance to foreign influence in the second half of the nineteenth century. Partly, this opposition was a product of the growing influence of Christian missions, which were a "direct challenge" to Chinese religion and ethics, divided communities, and challenged the powers of local elites.[78] More broadly, it was a product of "the economic hardship and political humiliation" that imperialist powers inflicted on China in the nineteenth century, which fragmented the Chinese state and triggered famines.[79] These developments led to growing anti-foreign sentiments and the emergence of Chinese nationalism, which culminated in the Boxer Uprising (1899–1901), which sought to free the country from foreign encroachment.[80] These pressures meant that Bird's non-Chinese body was the target of both more

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[78] Schoenbauer Thurin, *Victorian Travelers*, 153.

[79] Schoenbauer Thurin, *Victorian Travelers*, 153; Daniel H. Bays, *A New History of Christianity In China* (Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2012), 75–77; Immanuel C.Y. Hsü, *The Rise of Modern China*, 6th ed. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2000), 387–90.

[80] Diana Preston, *The Boxer Rebellion: The Dramatic Story of China's War on Foreigners that Shook the World in the Summer of 1900* (New York: Walker, 2000).

aggressive examination and violence.

Bird directly reports the anti-colonial and anti-foreign resistance she encountered in her book on the trip. She reported that "the literary class" were often "brutal and insulting, and generally tended to excite hostility against the foreigner."[81] She also describes being abused in ways that reflect the growing anti-Western sentiment in China at the time. She was pelted with stones and called a "foreign devil," a "foreign dog," and a "child eater" and when attacked in Liang-shan claimed she would "have been beaten to death had it not been for the time appearance of a mandarin with soldiers."[82] Bird's identity and the way she travelled meant that she encountered particular attention. Mary Chan argues that travelling in an open chair (as Bird did) was very unusual for women in China, meaning that Bird's "audacious appearance combines social and political insult, as it …suggests China is weak enough to be presided over or conquered by a woman."[83] Meanwhile, her attempts to use dress to blend in were not altogether successful. She was not prepared to fully adopt Chinese dress (such as wearing trousers) and combined items of Manchu clothing with a "English tan shoes" and "a Japanese *kurumaya's* hat" and "English gloves."[84] This strange combination inevitably attracted attention: many Chinese people viewed her costume as "a confusion of foreign inferiority."[85] Even Bird's hagiographic biographer Stoddart conceded that

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[81] Bird, *The Yangtze Valley*, 210.

[82] Isabella Bird to John Murray, 6 July 1896, Ms. 42028, NLS, f. 24.

[83] May Caroline Chan, "Isabella Bird's Journey Through the Yangtze Valley: Victorian Travel Narrative as A Historical Record of British Imperial Desires in China," in *Clio's Daughters: British Women Making History, 1790–1899*, ed. Lynette Felber (Newark: University of Delaware Press, 2007), 224.

[84] Bird, *The Yangtze Valley*, 210, 242.

[85] Bird, *The Yangtze Valley*, 210.

Bird's choice of chair and hat "was perhaps rather indiscreet, as her appearance roused a certain suspicion."[86] Bird's identity as a British woman, the way she travelled, and the political context, meant that local people often greeted her with sticks, stones, shouts, and insults. Rather than a counter-gaze, she met anti-colonial violence.

Chinese resistance shaped where Bird travelled, limiting her ability to see certain areas. She often avoided cities, as they were particular hotbeds of anti-foreign sentiment.[87] Even in larger towns she reported that "a woman-traveller must shut herself up rigidly in her room from arrival until departure unless she desire to provoke a row."[88] When she arrived, she often found that crowds of people assembled "shouting, ofttimes hooting, and fighting each other for a look at the foreigner."[89] Men and women occasionally tried to enter her rooms, but she reports that a more common problem was "the slow scraping of holes in the plaster partition" between rooms, "accompanied by the application of a succession of eyes to the hole, more whispering, and some giggling."[90] In her published account, Bird sought to reassert some control over the situation by complaining that Chinese "curiosity appeared singularly unintelligent."[91] In the field, though, it is clear that she became wearied and frustrated by such encounters. At one point, she met a mandarin who invited her to stay at his home. She turns down the invitation, claiming "grave doubts what my reception might really be in the women's quarters, and I dreaded the stifling curiosity succeeded by the stagnation of dullness."[92]

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[86] Stoddart, *The Life of Isabella Bird*, 314.

[87] Bird, *The Yangtze Valley*, 261.

[88] Bird, *The Yangtze Valley*, 261.

[89] Bird, *The Yangtze Valley*, 209.

[90] Bird, *The Yangtze Valley*, 209.

[91] Bird, *The Yangtze Valley*, 210.

[92] Bird, *The Yangtze Valley*, 231.

As Susan Schoenbauer Thurin notes, this incident shows how the "uninhibited expression of curiosity extended to Bird is so irritating that she forfeits an unparalleled opportunity to view Chinese home life."[93] Responses to Bird's body thus shaped where and how she travelled.

Despite these measures, Bird still found her body examined in ways that she found uncomfortable. Bird reports that at one inn in Szechuan, the landlord's wife, and "often a bevy of women," would "come and pick over my things."[94] They initially asked Bird questions about her life and motivations for travel, "[b]ut they soon tired of trouble of interrogating me and talked to Be-dien."[95] Bird reports that their conversations with him often focused on her "'ugly eyes" "big feet" and the fact that they thought her hair was "like wool." [96] At another inn, Bird reported that she had to "gratify the curiosity" of nearly thirty women who had come to see and examine her. "My hair, 'big feet,' shoes and gloves were all a great amusement to them," she reports.[97] Bird found her equipment and body the source of specific curiosity. The women's comments about the texture of her hair suggest that the women may well have touched her, as happened elsewhere. In *Korea and Her Neighbours* (1898), she described similar examinations in more detail, reporting that, there, women and children also invaded her room. Once inside, they "examined my clothing, took out my hairpins, and pulled down my hair, took off my slippers, drew my sleeves up to the elbow and pinched my arms to see if they were of the same flesh and blood as their own; they investigated my few possessions minutely,

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[93] Schoenbauer Thurin, *Victorian Travelers*, 148.

[94] Bird, *The Yangtze Valley*, 210.

[95] Bird, *The Yangtze Valley*, 210.

[96] Bird, *The Yangtze Valley*, 210.

[97] Bird, *The Yangtze Valley*, 269.

trying on my hat and gloves."[98] What Bird found challenging about such forms of examination was not that just that she was being observed, but that these observations saw her privacy and personal space invaded in ways she found "aggressive and intolerable."[99] Being gazed at was one thing, but having your possessions poked, your hair touched, and your room entered was quite another.

When travelling in China, Bird's body was examined, heckled at, and attacked. These shaped both how and where she travelled. As on Burton and Speke's journeys, the line between observer and observed was far from clear-cut. Previous scholarship has demonstrated that Bird struggled in China, because she encountered a reciprocal Chinese gaze that got in the way of her "desire to observe freely."[100] In contrast to such works, I suggest that using the metaphor of the gaze in this context obscures the actual ways Chinese opposition to her travels was expressed. In Japan, Bird had been stared at. In China, she was pelted with stones, shouted at, and her possessions (and possibly her body) poked and prodded. Bird experienced Chinese resistance through touch, pain, and noise, not just through vision. In writing about her experiences, Bird retrospectively asserted her authority, disparaging the motivations behind Chinese curiosity. She also used by the hostility she experienced to demonstrate her own vulnerability and bravery in ways reminiscent of the "anti-conquest" trope discussed by Pratt.[101] Describing incidents of violence allowed Bird to draw attention away from broader imperialist involvement in China, portraying Europeans as victims rather than colonizers. Yet a close reading of the diverse ways Bird's body was examined offers insights into how

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[98] Bishop, *Korea and Her*, 1: 144, see also, 98.

[99] Bishop, *Korea and Her*, 1: 144.

[100] Schoenbauer Thurin, *Victorian Travelers*, 148–49.

[101] Pratt, *Imperial Eyes*, 75–85.

many Chinese people viewed her body—not as a heroic explorer, but as a strange and barbaric embodiment of European imperialism. Bird's experiences in China demonstrate how explorers could come unstuck when they encountered directly anti-colonial and anti-foreign sentiments. Antarctica, in contrast, seemed to provide a place where travellers could continue without having to worry about either local resistance or unwanted bodily inspections. But even there, the situation was more complex than it first appears.

SCOTT'S EXPEDITION'S IN ANTARCTICA: SCIENTIFIC AND ANIMAL EXAMINATIONS

Bodily examinations were a common feature of polar expeditions. Since the eighteenth century at least, naval medics and commanders had used long sea voyages to investigate the causes of scurvy, experimenting with different diets.[102] Similarly, in the nineteenth century, the experiences of polar explorers were used as a means to study the effects of diet upon the body.[103] Regular examinations were also an important way of checking on the health of a ship's crew. On both of Scott's expeditions to Antarctica, medics examined the men's bodies in the hope that the observations would shed light on the physiological impact of the polar climate. Studying these examinations alongside the above case studies, allows me to offer further reflections on the relationship between bodily

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[102] Kenneth Carpenter, *A History of Vitamin C and Scurvy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), chapter 3.

[103] Edward Armston-Sheret, "'A Good Advertisement,'" 257–85.

examinations, identity, and power. On the one hand, explorers were far more willing to submit to scrutiny by white scientists than they were by Asian or African people. On the other hand, such practices were not one-directional: many working-class sailors seem to have viewed the inspection of their bodies as a source of amusement. Previous academic discussions of bodily examinations on polar expeditions have generally been by scholars interested in the history of medicine and extreme environment physiology.[104] However, as I examine in this section, travellers' bodies were investigated in ways that blurred distinctions between anthropology and physiology. Moreover, the explorers also found themselves scrutinised by polar animals in ways that they sometimes found uncomfortable. Consequently, studying Antarctic exploration shows multisensory bodily examinations could also be a feature of comparatively homogenous expeditions.

Practices of scientific examination are particularly visible on the British National Antarctic Expedition (1901–04). During the Antarctic winters, the expedition's surgeon, Reginald Koettlitz, carried out routine examinations of the explorers' bodies, assisted by the expedition's junior surgeon, Edward Wilson. These inspections, they thought, might give some broader insights into how human bodies performed in Antarctica and the impacts of the environment.[105] As Scott describes, the examinations were comprehensive:

> Our weight is taken, and then measurements of chest, filled and empty, waist, calf, forearm and upper arm; then, by means of a small spring instrument, our power of with right and left hand is recorded, and finally the capacity of our lungs is measured as we discharge one long breath into the

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[104] Heggie, "Why Isn't Exploration a Science?;" Heggie, *Higher and Colder.*

[105] Scott, *The Voyage*, 1: 307–8.

spirometer.[106]

The surgeon also took blood samples from both the officers and crew, using a pin to prick the men's little fingers.[107] He then examined these samples, counting the number of red and white cells.[108] Later, Koettlitz and Wilson were called on to examine the explorers' bodies for signs of scurvy, inspecting their bodies visually but also touching them. In October 1902, Koettltiz reported that one of the cooks might have the disease because had a bruise on his leg which had "a decidedly suggestive feel."[109] During their time in Antarctica, the explorers' bodies were scrutinised using a variety of scientific and sensory techniques that sought to chart their physical fitness and response to the polar environment.

Although the composition of Antarctic expeditions was comparatively homogenous, such examinations were still shaped by broader power relations. The examination of officers and men took place at different times and in different spaces—highlighting how class, as well as race, could be a dividing line. The officers and scientific staff were examined in the wardroom. Meanwhile, the crew were examined the following evening on the ship's mess deck.[110] These separate examinations were a product of naval disciplinary norms.[111] Officers' accounts suggest that they witnessed the examination and measurement of the crew's bodies, meaning that they could

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[106] Scott, *The Voyage*, 1: 308.

[107] Armitage, *Two Years in the Antarctic*, 120.

[108] Scott, *The Voyage*, 1: 308–9.

[109] Reginald Koettlitz to Robert Falcon Scott, 3 October 1902, MS/366/14/23 SPRI Archives.

[110] Scott, *The Voyage*, 1: 308.

[111] Scott, *The Voyage*, 1: 308.

scrutinise the sailors' bodies in a non-reciprocal way.[112] It is possible to see the lack of reciprocity as symptomatic of a broader medical gaze that sought to monitor and control the bodies of the sailors.[113] However, it is also important not to lose sight of the material dimensions of these examinations which saw different bodies brought into close

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[112] Scott, *The Voyage*, 1: 308.308; Armitage, *Two Years*, 120–21.

[113] Foucault, *The Birth of the Clinic.*

proximity (see figure 17).

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Figure 17. "Anthropological Measurements," *South Polar Times* (June 1903), 46.

The biography of the BNAE's surgeon also throws into question the idea that we should understand these examinations as medical in nature. Before joining the BNAE, Koettlitz was the "doctor, geologist, anthropologist and field manager" on Herbert Weld Blundell's expedition to East Africa (1898–99), which travelled through

Somaliland, Abyssinia, and Sudan.[114] On the expedition, Koettlitz took anthropological observations of the Galla people. He measured various aspects of their bodies, recording their average chest, arm, and head measurements as well as their height. Koettlitz presented his anthropological findings upon his return and published these findings in the *Journal of the Anthropological Institute* and the *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society*.[115] The similarities between Koettlitz's measurement of bodies on this expedition and in Antarctica were not lost on members of the BNAE. A cartoon (figure 17) and satirical article appeared in the expedition's newspaper, *The Polar Times*, in which the monthly inspections are referred to as "anthropological measurements."[116] In the cartoon, the difference between the surgeon's thin, gangly body and the muscular and masculine sailor is emphasised. In doing so, the cartoon highlights the degree to which the surgeon's interest in the crew's bodies was considered strange. Moreover, in satirising Koettlitz's tall, thin body, the cartoon turns him into an object of amusement and suggests that his examination of other bodies was linked to the physical inadequacy of his own. Likewise, Albert Armitage claimed that the examinations "always created a

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[114] Jones, *Scott's Forgotten Surgeon*, 91.

[115] Jones, *Scott's Forgotten Surgeon*, 104–5; Reginald Koettlitz, "Notes on the Galla of Walega and the Bertat," *The Journal of the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland* 30 (1900): 50–55; Herbert Weld Blundell and Reginald Koettlitz, "A Journey Through Abyssinia to the Nile (Continued): Notes on Geology and Anthropology," *The Geographical Journal* 15, no. 3 (1900): 264–72 includes the same information. His presentation at the Anthropological Institute is noted in Anon., "3. Proceedings: Ordinary Meeting, February 13th, 1900," *The Journal of the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland* 30 (1900), 3.

[116] Anon., "Illustrated Interviews: Dr Reginald Koettlitz," *South Polar Times*, June 1903, 46–48.

lot of merriment" and joked that Koettlitz "had an unquenchable desire for our blood."[117] Koettlitz's work in this area therefore led to his body and methods becoming the object of humour, much to his frustration.[118] The crew's response to these examinations shows that, as elsewhere, examinations were not a one-way process, but were met with both a reciprocal gaze and oral forms of resistance.

The results these measurements proved inconclusive, showing "no sign of any change in general condition."[119] The failure of the expedition to produce any definitive findings did not end of efforts to use Antarctic exploration as a way to study the body. Before Scott returned to Antarctica in 1910, all members of the expedition had their skin, hair, and eye colour recorded, in order to establish if "men of special colouring were more adventurous than their fellows."[120] The measurements were taken on a tintometer, a colour measuring instrument developed by Joseph William Lovibond to systematically measure colours. The instrument has a history of its own within anthropology and was used by a University of Cambridge expedition to the Torres Straits Islands (1898) in order to establish if colour perception was universal.[121] The idea that an individual's external colouring could have an impact on their performance in a cold climate is illustrative of the role of racial difference within medical knowledge in this period; it is

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[117] Armitage, *Two Years*, 121; Mossakowski, "The Sailors Dearly Love to Make Up," 200–2.

[118] Jones, *Scott's Forgotten Surgeon*, 144–45.

[119] Scott, *The Voyage*, 1: 309; Wilson, "The Medical Aspect," 79; Jones, *Scott's Forgotten Surgeon*, 145. The results were never published in the UK,

[120] James William Lovibond, Notebook belonging to J.W. Lovibond on Eye and Hair Color for BAE 1910–13, RGS/RFS/5, RGS Archive.

[121] Emily Martin, "The Tintometer, Anthropology and the Science of Color," *Anthropology Now* 8, no.2 (2016), 14–24.

also suggestive of a crossover in methods between anthropology and medicine. However, Scott's thinking on this issue may also have been shaped by his readings about Ernest Shackleton's ponies. On his *Nimrod* Expedition (1907–09), Shackleton had ponies of various colours with him, several of which died before the southern journey. Shackleton reported the "rather curious fact that the survivors were the white or light-coloured animals, while disaster had befallen all the dark animals."[122] Drawing on these ideas Scott took only light-coloured ponies on his expedition, a fact that may have contributed to the inferior quality of the animals purchased.[123] As Shackleton's comments suggests, external colouring played a significant role within Edwardian explorers' thinking about extreme environment survival, reflecting the importance of ideas around race in medical ideas in this period.

Once in Antarctica, the expedition conducted experiments in diet that represented an important shift away from such practices of examination towards something more recognisable as medical, rather than anthropological, research. These experiments took place during the polar winter of 1911. As noted above, three men—Wilson, Bowers, and Cherry Garrard—completed an overland journey from the expedition's winter quarters to Cape Crozier to collect samples of Emperor Penguin eggs. During the journey, the men started "an extended self-experiment on diet and metabolism."[124] Each of the men adopted a diet high in either fat, carbohydrate, or protein and then carried out "intensive insurance exercise over several weeks."[125] As

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[122] Ernest H. Shackleton, *Heart of the Antarctic: The Farthest South Expedition* (London: Willliam Heineman, 1909), 1: 162.

[123] Frank Debenham quoted in May and Lewis, "'They Are Not the Ponies," 657. Scott's views in relation to this question are contested.

[124] Heggie, *Higher and Colder*, 87.

[125] Heggie, "Why Isn't Exploration," 322.

they travelled they "gradually altered the proportions of the three food groups according to what they intuitively sensed they needed and according to their physical performance compared to their colleagues."[126] All the men came to "almost exactly the same ratio of three parts (by weight) of protein to four of carbohydrate and one fat."[127] The experiment appeared successful and, despite the very cold temperatures and extreme exercise the men had undergone, they lost relatively small amounts of weight. Scott saw this as a way to scientifically test his food supplies and as evidence that the planned food ration would be adequate for the conditions on the journey to the pole.[128] As Vanessa Heggie has argued, these practices show the importance of polar exploration within the history of science, shaping understanding of human physiology well into the twentieth century.[129] In this case, we see that scientific explorers did not always object to being the objects of scientific research, but viewed self-experimentation in more positive terms.

In the nineteenth century, scientists and medics saw travel to the polar regions as a means to better understand the effects of the environment on their (exclusively white, male) bodies. This was not a new development, but drew on a longer history in which exploration was used as source of knowledge about the body.[130] Because of the very different context, the explorers' reaction to these examinations differed from the response of Burton, Speke and Bird to inspection in Africa and Asia. In Antarctica, the explorers willingly submitted to examination by white scientists. Even so, examinations

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[126] Heggie, "Why Isn't Exploration," 322.

[127] Heggie, "Why Isn't Exploration,322.

[128] Solomon, *The Coldest March*, 150; Heggie, "Why Isn't Exploration," 324.

[129] Heggie, "Why Isn't Exploration," 324–25; Driver, *Geography Militant*, chapter 3; Heggie, *Higher and Colder*, 90.

[130] Armston Sheret, "Tainted Bodies;" Armston-Sheret, "'A Good Advertisement."

were not one-directional: explorers noticed the similarities between these practices and anthropological examinations, exemplified, most notably, by Koettlitz's movement between the two practices. They satirised these practices, suggesting they were somehow strange and improper. Again, these instances could be interpreted as medical gaze, meeting the counter gaze of the sailors. But to interpret in these terms can obscure the multisensory ways bodies were examined and the importance of laughter and humour in the sailors' response. On Scott's second expedition, the explorers were more comfortable conducting nutritional experiments on their own bodies. Being examined was not a problem in and of itself, but as elsewhere, explorers objected to bodily examinations that demonstrated the power of the examiner over them.

Animal Examinations

In Antarctica, the explorers also found their bodies (and the bodies of their dogs) examined by polar animals. I examine these incidents to show that, even in an environment with no human population, travellers were not free from reciprocal curiosity. Indeed, there are a remarkable number of incidents that show the two-directional nature of bodily encounters in Antarctica. In his diary of the *Terra Nova* expedition Scott reports that, as they unloaded supplies after arriving in the continent, penguins kept approaching the expedition's dogs with both "devouring curiosity and a pig-headed disregard for their own safety."[131] Scott speculated as to the motivations for the penguin's curiosity, suggesting that they approached the dogs as if asking "what do all you ridiculous things want?"[132] The explorers tried to keep the penguins away from the huskies, but Scott reported that these efforts were often unsuccessful. If the penguins

[131] Scott, *Journals*, 72.

[132] Scott, *Journals*, 72.

came within reach of the canines, Scott reports that "[t]here is a spring, a squawk, a horrid red patch on the snow, and the incident is closed. Nothing can stop these silly birds."[133] Scott's ventriloquizing assumptions about the motivations behind the penguin's behaviors probably tell us more about his own views of animals than about the thoughts of the birds. Yet the behavior of both groups of animals in such interactions shows that the expeditions arrival in Antarctica triggered a series of interspecies encounters that the explorers could neither control nor fully understand. Animals as well as humans could be curious.

The explorers' bodies were also the objects of non-human examination in ways reminiscent of the work of both Jacques Derrida and Donna Haraway on this subject.[134] Scott includes an account of one "extraordinary scene" in his in which a group of six or seven orcas attacked the expedition's photographer Hebert Ponting. Ponting was taking photographs on a slab of sea ice (with two dogs standing nearby) when the whales attacked. The orcas dived and swam underneath, striking in a coordinated way:

> The next moment the whole floe under him and the dogs heaved up and split into fragments. One could hear the 'booming' noise as the whales rose under the ice and struck it with their backs. Whale after whale rose under the ice, setting it rocking fiercely; luckily Ponting kept his feet and was able to fly to security. By an extraordinary chance also, the splits had been made around and between the dogs, so that neither of them fell into the water.[135]

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[133] Scott, *Journals*, 72.

[134] Haraway, *When Species Meet*, 19–27; Jacques Derrida, *The Animal That Therefore I Am*, trans. David Wills (New York: Fordham University Press, 2008), 119–40.

[135] Scott, *Journals*, 73–74. Ponting's own account of the incident can be found in Ponting, *The Great White South*, 64–65. This incident is a rare one as there have been very few deliberate Orca attacks on humans.

What is remarkable about the incident is not just Ponting's escape, but the reaction of the Orcas to his survival. Scott reports that "it was clear that the whales shared our astonishment, for one after another their huge hideous heads shot vertically into the air through the cracks which they had made… There cannot be a doubt that they looked up to see what had happened to Ponting and the dogs.[136]

The incident is illuminating in that while the explorers were afraid of being eaten by the Orcas, they found the curiosity and intelligence of them disturbing in a quite different way. Scott was amazed by the "deliberate cunning," of the Orcas and the fact that "they could act in unison." [137] "It is clear that they are endowed with singular intelligence," he continued, "and in future we shall treat that intelligence with every respect."[138] Ponting, in contrast, describes the orcas as "the devils of the sea" and the whale that showed a particular interest in him as a "brute."[139] In his writings and in the accompanying illustration (figure 18), Pointing suggests that the orcas' curiosity is a manifestation of their inhuman (and almost monstrous) aggression. Scott responded in a different way. In the aftermath, Scott wrote a passage in his diary titled "notes on the killer or grampus (*Orca Gladiator)*" outlining his scientific knowledge about orcas (possibly researched from books in the expedition's library). The passage describes the orcas' bodies in scientific terms, noting their average size, number of teeth, and habits.[140] In doing so, Scott seeks to emphasize his position as observer rather than observed. As with the Burton, Speke, and Bird, writing becomes a means by which the explorer-hero could reassert control when their own bodies were subject to unwanted attention.

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[136] Scott, *Journals*, 73–74.

[137] Scott, *Journals*, 74.

[138] Scott, *Journals*, 74.

[139] Ponting, *The Great White South*, 65–66.

[140] Scott, *Journals*, 74–75.

Figure 18. "Attacked by Killer Whales," by Ernest Lunzen. Pointing, *The Great White South*, facing page 64.

Despite having no indigenous human population, Antarctic exploration still saw the expeditions' bodies become the objects of curiosity. These examinations took various forms, involving both humans and animals. Such inspections could both reinforce and disrupt presumed hierarchies. Some animal curiosity was presented as an amusing quirk of strange polar animals, but other incidents were more worrying. Orca attempts to hunt Ponting made the explorers aware that Antarctica was the home to intelligent animals that could act in coordinated ways that called into questions their sense of superiority. Taken together with the medical examinations discussed above, these incidents show that Antarctic expeditions involved forms of bodily encounter more complex than their comparatively homogenous composition would suggest.

CONCLUSION

Recent literature on exploration has argued that when they travelled overseas, European explorers were often met with a countervailing reciprocal gaze. This chapter has challenged and developed these arguments. First, I have demonstrated that they involved whole bodies and multiple senses. In a variety of contexts, travellers found their bodies, poked, prodded, and touched by people they encountered. This chapter demonstrates the limitations of analysing all forms of examination using broad metaphors like "the gaze." In many instances, explorers could cope with being looked at by others, but struggled to maintain their patience when they found their bodies examined more closely. In East Africa, for instance, Speke found stares amusing but objected much more vigorously when he found his own body jostled by groups. Similarly, in Japan, Bird sometimes grew frustrated in by the large crowds she encountered but found that they did not disrupt her journey. In China, however, she was the object of curiosity, violence, and heckling, which severely limited her ability to both travel and observe. Meanwhile, orca curiosity and aggression seemed to disrupt the presumed superiority of the human expedition members. In analysing such incidents together, I highlight the need for more nuanced discussions about the different forms of bodily encounter on expeditions, but also for an investigation of cross-cutting themes.

Second, in focusing on these practices of examination in more detail, I draw attention to the agency of African and Asian people. Due to the limited and partial nature of the expeditionary archive, explorers' accounts of these examinations require a close and critical reading. But it is clear that explorers' ability to travel was shaped by historical, social, and cultural understandings of their bodies in the areas they travelled through and by broader political developments. While a reading of such incidents must necessarily be suggestive rather than definitive, it nevertheless demonstrates that

explorers were not the only ones producing knowledge—a fact that serves to blur the lines separating the explorer and the explored. Third, I have examined how the response of explorers to these practices of examination varied considerably, depending on the relations of power at play in each incident. Speke complied with and even encouraged curiosity in their bodies, which foregrounds his dependence on local rulers while travelling. But his frank discussions of such incidents did cause problems for his domestic reputation. In Antarctica, the explorers were more willing to submit to examination by white scientists. Even so, the officers would not allow their bodies to be examined in front of the men, and Koetlitz's practices of examination were satirised. Allowing your body to be examined put explorers in the uncomfortable position of the observed, and even in the comparatively homogenous setting of Antarctica this was something that seemed strange and amusing. Explorers were, however, more ready to carry out research on their own bodies. Focusing on such incidents offers insights on the relationship between examination, power, and writing. In their published works, explorers frequently complained about and disparaged the motivations behind the African and Asian interest in their bodies. Writing became a way for them to reassert control over what had happened. Indeed, it often seems that the more vulnerable they felt in the field, the more they tried to emphasise their authority by drawing on offensive or objectifying language about those who examined them. In many ways, this chapter brings attention back to many of the issues discussed in the first empirical chapter of this thesis, *"Heroic" Bodies.* Both at home and in the field, explorers found their bodies examined in multiple and unpredictable ways. They could try and keep these two spaces separate, writing about their experiences in ways acceptable to domestic audiences, but the realities of travel still left indelible marks on both their bodies and their narratives.

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CONCLUSION

This thesis posed the question "what does exploration look like if we take the bodies of those involved as our central focus?" In answering, I have shown that devoting attention to the body allows us to see exploration in ways that are distinctive, challenge overly hagiographical and biographical accounts, and extend existing critical scholarship on the subject. In particular, I have demonstrated this approach can bring the multiple individuals and forms of work into view; it also sheds new light on the interdependence of humans and animals on expeditions. Through this study, I have advanced scholarship that has sought to understand exploration as part of broader social, cultural, and political processes. I have also shown how the limited attention to bodies on expeditions is at odds with broader developments in the humanities and social sciences, where such issues have become a productive area of academic inquiry. Thus, in taking the multiple bodies of an expedition as my central subject, I have extended scholarship in several principal areas.

Heroism and Exploration

The idea of the explorer's body as singular, solitary, and heroic is central to much of the mythology surrounding exploration. Travellers often portrayed themselves as lone figures who overcame adversity, pain, and bodily breakdown to bring back novel findings and adventurous tales. Similarly, recent critical scholarship has also emphasised the role of heroic individuals in imperial propaganda. In contrast, I have demonstrated in Chapter 4, *"Heroic" Bodies*, that contemporary understandings of explorers were more complex than previous studies have appreciated. There were frequent disagreements about who qualified as an explorer and what modes of mobility and kinds of activity they

should undertake. Such debates often centred on the body. Burton and Speke embodied quite different forms of expeditionary heroism, both of which resulted in domestic criticism. Meanwhile the experiences of Isabella Bird show that exploration as a category was heavily gendered and that women had to use and represent their bodies in specific ways; it shows, too, how illness and disability provided a culturally acceptable justification for travel. Scott embodied several different visions of exploration shaped by ideas of manliness, nationalism, and scientific research in the early decades of the twentieth century. He was also criticised following an outbreak of scurvy on the BNAE. Demonstrating the importance of the body in ideas of heroic or unheroic behaviour, feeds into broader debates about the way we commemorate such individuals within contemporary culture, as I discuss below. The multiple understandings of explorers' bodies also shape the approach I adopt in the rest of the thesis. For it is precisely such diversity of perspectives and the different ways that they wrote about their bodies at home and in the field that makes a reinterpretation of their accounts possible. If the writings of explorers and commentators always conformed to domestic expectations about conduct and behaviour, then it would be impossible to use them to tell different stories. Fortunately, for this project, travellers' writings are often shaped by conflicting and contradictory pressures that make it possible to use them to bring subaltern experiences and contributions to the surface.

Dependence and Discipline

In Chapter 5, *Dependent Bodies*, I moved my analysis away from the bodies of expedition leaders onto the multiple others involved. In doing so, I demonstrated leaders' dependence on the muscular labour of people and animals to move and on the caring labour of subaltern expedition members to remain healthy and well fed. Often we know little of the biographies of many of these individuals (and sometimes not even their

names). However, something of their contribution can be recovered through a focus on their "body work," such as nourishing, and caring for bodies and the muscular labour of movement.[1] This analysis has extended the nascent literature on the "hidden histories" of exploration, moving attention away from prominent guides and intermediaries—whose names we tend to know—and onto a far broader array of people and animals. In so doing, I have shown this work involved the collaboration and frequently the co-dependence of various expedition members, including cross-species relations of care. An important aspect of this approach has been viewing logistical labour, such as transport, care, and cooking, as a central part of geographical fieldwork and refusing to take at face value claims that such work was simple or menial. As others have noted, conducting research depended on an array of bodily observations conducted in the field. Getting a geographer into the right location was much of the actual work of an expeditions, as was keeping them nourished and physically fit (or at least alive) on the journey.

As I examined in Chapter 6, *Disciplined Bodies*, one of the challenges in engaging with explorers' accounts is that they frequently sought to devalue or disparage the contributions of others. I have shown that one of the main ways they did so was writing about discipline. In public, they often presented subalterns as either docile instruments under the command of the leader, or as disobedient and disorderly bodies that were a barrier to the progress of the expedition. Previous literature has struggled to overcome this challenge, sometimes reiterating suggestions that discipline was solely dependent on the ability of the leader to control the bodies they commanded. In contrast, I have demonstrated that a close and careful reading of published and private sources can allow us to see expeditions in different terms. Such analysis has involved contextualising journeys within wider historical processes, identifying common tropes present in explorers' published writings, and drawing attention to their physical and psychological

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[1] McDowell, *Working Bodies.*

health. Doing so has required examining issues of identity, as this often shaped how travellers wrote about such matters. These strategies have enabled me to show that expeditions often depended on subaltern self-control and on individuals who had disciplined their own bodies through many years of training. Leaders also depended on intermediaries to do much of the day-to-day work of directing a party and also managed upwards, shaping the behaviours of Europeans. Indeed, I have found several instances where European travellers had to change the way they approached questions of command and their own behaviours to comply with local norms. This insight destabilises many of the hierarchies within explorers' accounts, throwing into question the idea that they were always in control.

These two chapters offer insights on the importance of non-humans in Victorian and Edward geographical fieldwork, developing nascent literatures in this area. I have further demonstrated that these ventures were "hybrid" undertakings, involving the cooperation and interdependence of multiple species.[2] Animals played various roles, often providing transport, but also companionship and a source of food. Their bodies were often specially adapted for these extreme environments, as shown by the use of yaks, huskies and Siberian ponies in cold or high-altitude environments. In such situations using animals enabled explorers to go to areas where the human body struggled. Equine labour proved less useful in East Africa due to diseases endemic in the area, but this did not stop Burton and Speke from using these creatures when they were available. Much writing about expeditionary animals only discusses their usefulness (and relationship to) humans—a limit that it is difficult to overcome given the evidence available. But people also formed caring relationships with animals. We occasionally get glimpses of animal agency and resistance, most clearly illustrated in

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[2] Whatmore, *Hybrid Geographies;* Burnett, "It is Impossible to Take a Step."

Scott's writings about his dependence on the disciplinary structures of the huskie pack. Indeed, explorers were often sensitive to the ethical implications of using animals and wrote about some individual animals in more detail than they did about some human members of the expeditionary party. For example, I found more information on Bird's ponies and horses—who are named in her accounts and their personalities described—than on many of the people who cooked and cared for her and carried her bags. As a result, my research demonstrates the importance of examining the relationship between animals and racism in the history of exploration. Previous scholarship on the more-than-human in geographical fieldwork has not devoted enough attention to the ways understandings of human-animal difference in this period were in constant dialogue with understandings of racial difference.[3] In their writings, explorers often anthropomorphised certain animals, while describing people of colour using animalistic language. Historians working on the more-than-human in this context need to be cautious that their work does not further entrench the racist erasure of people of colour from the history of the discipline.

Gazes, Examinations, and Power

Chapter 7, *Sensing Bodies*, investigates the production of knowledge on expeditions. In doing so, it critiques and develops previous literature. Postcolonial writers frequently present explorers as having a powerful and authoritative gaze, symbolic of broader imperial relations of power. In opposition to such approaches, I demonstrate how navigation and observation depended on multiple senses and numerous bodies. Leaders and scientists often found their own vision rendered unreliable by the effects of illness

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[3] Sivasundaram, "Imperial Transgressions."

or, in Antarctica, by confusing optical illusions. In such situations, expedition members often had to collaborate to both navigate and observe, meaning that they relied on vision, speech, and hearing. They also relied on other senses, such as touch and smell. Burton and Speke, for instances, discussed the habitability of East Africa through the smells they encountered, while Bird used her nose as an anthropological instrument. Polar darkness meant touch and hearing were particularly important senses on Antarctic expeditions. More fundamentally, I have demonstrated the difficulty of separating out discrete sensory experiences. Even observations that appear direct, visual, and unmediated often relied on the hearing and sight of others. Guides and intermediaries explained what explorers were looking at and directed their attention towards objects of significance. Accounts were also mediated at home. Often multiple pairs of eyes pored over manuscripts before their publications. In bringing these insights together, I have shown how travel depended on numerous bodies, various senses, and multiple kinds of work. In examining these processes, I demonstrate that African, Asian, and working-class people contributed to the production of geographical knowledge on expeditions to a far greater degree than previous scholarship has appreciated.

In Chapter 8 *Examined Bodies*, I further critique literature on vision and gaze in this context. As recent historical scholarship has shown, explorers were often met with a reciprocal gaze when they travelled. I develop previous literature on this subject, arguing that such examinations involved senses beyond vision. Travellers had their bodies examined in multisensory (and sometimes invasive) ways. Even in Antarctica, scientists, officers, and sailors were examined by both medics and animals in ways they found either bizarre, amusing, or scary. They reacted quite differently to such scrutiny, depending on their own personality, the context in which the examination took place, and the degree to which it was invasive. Speke and Bird did not mind being looked at from a distance, but objected to having their bodies poked, measured, and prodded. In China, Bird often found that these inspections spilled over into violence, which created

problems for her ability to travel and observe the country. In other instances, though, explorers complied with (and even encouraged) such study, as it was central to the hospitality they depended on. As with their discussions of discipline, writing could provide a means to reassert control through disparaging the motivations that lay behind the curiosity they encountered. Indeed, their writings often strike an authoritative tone, but it is important not to take their analysis at face value. Read more critically, such incidents demonstrate the possibility of seeing their bodies in ways different from the heroic or hagiographic depictions that I began this thesis by discussing. Overall, I show that, during intercultural encounters, Africans and Asians were also producing knowledge in ways that blur distinctions between explorers and the explored. In short, focusing on these instances allows us to go further and to view expeditions as part of broader historical processes in which Europeans are not the only (or even the main) actors.

Engaging with the Archives

The second major question this thesis addressed was "what does a focus on the body reveal about the contributions and experiences of people and animals otherwise under-represented in mainstream histories of exploration?" Here, the answer is more complicated. As I have shown, recovering something of the stories of such individuals is possible but is not straightforward. The composition of the different archives—shaped by the broader workings of power—affected the degree to which it was possible to hear the voices and contributions of different people. It was, for instance, much easier to find writings by working-class sailors on Antarctic expeditions than it was to recover information about many of the men and women of Burton and Speke's East African expeditions. Everything we know about African and Asian expedition is mediated through the writings of European explorers. But even the voices of sailors were not fully

recoverable, as both power relations and issues of literacy sometimes limited the subjects on which they wrote. As noted above, studying historical animals raises related challenges, as all the sources available are written by people. In this sense, the project brings attention to the different ways and different degrees to which, certain voices are silenced by or absent from the archives of exploration. Explorers' writings often fail to record the identities of numerous people on whom they depended. As a consequence, focusing on the body provides a means to recover the work such individuals did, even if we do not know a great deal about their biographies.

But finding information about subaltern people and expeditionary animals was only part of the challenge. The much bigger task was correctly interpreting the available sources. Explorers' writings are often laced with both direct prejudice and more subtle rhetorical strategies that allow them to acknowledge their dependence on others, while devaluing their contributions. This has required me to adopt several techniques to try and mitigate such distortions, for instance, comparing the different ways the same work was valued in different contexts. One strategy has been to focus on the contributions of subaltern to expeditions (in the form of embodied or sensory labour) rather than trying to recover their biographies.[4] Another method for unpicking some explorers' more problematic claims has been to place their writings in their various social, political, and cultural contexts, an approach outlined by Adrian Wisnicki.[5] This task has required an understanding of historical developments in the regions through which explorers travelled, drawing on insights from African and Asian history and from both published and private sources. Such work has enabled me to piece together a full picture of the way

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[4] Spivak, "Can the Subaltern Speak?," 271–316; Anon., "A Brief Introduction to One More Voice, Fieldwork of Empire, and Livingstone Online," *Historical Geography Research Group Newsletter*, Autumn 2020, 6.

[5] Wisnicki, *Fieldwork of Empire*, 1–18.

explorers' writings changed over time and space. Indeed, I have shown that some of their public claims about the contributions of others were distortions or misrepresentations. My work allows us to think about the relationship between travel, movement, and writing. Throughout my thesis I have brought attention to how explorers used what Edward Said terms "the power to narrate, or to block other narratives from forming and emerging" to reframe their dependence or vulnerability.[6] But such blocking was never total. As a result, I suggest that, when read more critically, it is possible to learn a great deal about the contributions (and sometimes the experiences) of subaltern groups to geographical journeys in the Victorian and Edwardian era. Of course, the results are often cautious and speculative rather than definitive, but they do allow us to see exploration in very different terms. Consequently, my methodology provides a way of reading the geographical archive "against the grain."[7] This approach could be provided to other contexts, as many of the challenges of studying this subject are symptomatic of broader problems with colonial and metropolitan archives.

This project also exposes the limits of geographical archives for examining issues of embodiment. Their structure makes it far easier to focus on individuals and contributes to the fact that biography remains the dominant mode of writing about explorers. Such records are not catalogued by body parts, but often by the name of the individual who wrote, drew, or photographed the incident or object in question. Researching the body requires sifting through and drawing on a wide range of sources and calling on the knowledge and experience of archivists. Using these resources in this way forces us to think about how the acts of cataloguing shaped the questions it is possible (or at least straightforward) to research. Here, the digitalisation of archival

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[6] Said, *Culture and Imperialism*, xiii.

[7] Stoler, *Along the Archival Grain*, 47.

materials and books provides new opportunities for studies driven by concepts and themes rather than through a focus on individual people or expeditions. While I encountered some problems with online search functions, these resources do aid efforts to use archives differently. There is, as Caroline Bressey has argued, the potential to use such resources to "surface" subaltern bodies on a scale that would be impossible using physical archives—although the results of these searches still require human sifting and critical interpretation.[8] There are also possibilities for more public-facing applications for this approach. During my PhD research, I was fortunate enough to be awarded a British Society for the History of Science Fellowship at the Polar Museum, at the University of Cambridge. As part of this fellowship, I worked on a new museum exhibit on the history of climate science in the polar regions. A focus on embodied labour in an extreme environment, I found, provided an engaging and accessible way to include the contributions and experiences of a far broader range of people into the history of polar research. This task made me reflect on the possibilities for using my methodological approach to communicate a different history of exploration to broader audiences, helping to displace more biographical approaches.

Implications

Studying the body allows us view exploration in quite different terms from biographic and hagiographic accounts. In doing so, I have drawn attention to the vulnerability of explorers in the field and their dependence on numerous other people and animals. This approach also enables us to move past many of the unhelpful binaries prevalent in explorers' writings: distinctions between feminine "travel" and more masculine

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[8] Bressey, "Surfacing Black and Brown Bodies," 3.

"exploration" seem increasingly hard to maintain, as do rigid distinctions between explorers and their so-called "guides" or "intermediaries." Expeditions depended on the bodies of numerous (sometimes hundreds) of people and animals to travel and observe. Moreover, the boundaries of different bodies and types of work often became blurry. The way these different contributions were valued reflected the identity of the people in question and their ability to write about their experiences in books and articles rather than their contribution to the work of the expedition.

The very term explorer is used in ways that obscure the multiplicity of bodies involved in an expedition. Critical scholars need to be careful about how they use such terms. As I have shown, there was seldom a rigid separation between the kinds of work done by explorers in one context and designated as the menial or logistical work of servants and valets in another. This point is particularly visible through the comparison of homogenous Antarctic expeditions and those in Africa and Asia. Explorers described cooking as an essential (and perhaps even heroic) labour when it was carried out by white men sledging in Antarctica. When similar tasks were conducted out by Asian men, both Burton and Bird emphasised that those who did it were servants rather than equal expedition members. Where such work was carried out and who did it was central to how it was valued. Critical scholarship must, therefore, devote greater attention to how question of identity, location, and authorship shaped the ways different bodies and activities were appreciated. We must stop accepting without question the idea that logistical labour was less skilled and is, consequently, less worthy of study.

Valuing such labour as a central part of geographical fieldwork forces us to think more broadly about which activities and individuals we incorporate within the history of geography. This has modern implications. Images and statues of prominent travellers continue to cover the walls of geographical institutions (such as the headquarters of the RGS-IBG). Their presence raises questions about the degree to which geography has moved away from venerating their bodies. The fact that such institutions continue to

honour such people, contributes to the whiteness of the discipline, creating spaces where white academics experience "privilege and comfort" and contributing to the exclusion of people of colour from the discipline.[9] As Mark Griffiths and Kate Baker suggest, decolonising geography must also involve devoting attention to the decoration of its institutional spaces.[10] My research offers some strategies for doing so. For instance, this would involve new interpretations of such artworks aimed at explaining the diverse reactions to travellers in the Victorian and Edwardian era. Such contextualisation allows more critical narratives to rise to the surface, while avoiding suggestions that we are seeking to judge historical figure by modern standards. However, there is also a risk of devoting further attention to the same individual, obscuring the numerous people involved in geographical fieldwork. My research demonstrates the importance of holding up different—and, most importantly, multiple—bodies for celebration and veneration.

This project also has implications for how we understand the continuing importance of fieldwork within geography. The discipline has relied on embodied observations made "in the field" more than many other subjects. As I have shown, the importance of such practices has made it a science which has long grappled with the reliability and credibility of bodies and senses. These imperatives have not disappeared. Today, fieldwork remains an important part of both geographical teaching and research

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[9] Azeezat Johnson, "An Academic Witness: White Supremacy Within and Beyond Academia," in *The Fire Now: Anti-Racist Scholarship in Times of Explicit Racial Violence,* eds. Azeezat Johnson, Remi Joseph-Salisbury, and Beth Kamunge (London: Zed, 2018), 23.

[10] Griffiths and Baker, "Decolonising the Spaces of Geographical Knowledge Production."

and is viewed as a necessary "rite of passage" in the geosciences.[11] Such practices contribute to systemic injustices in several ways, disadvantaging women and working-class geographers as well as researchers with disabilities and mental health issues, who may find such sites less accessible.[12] Moreover, as Anadu *et al.* note, many fieldwork sites are less safe for students of colour.[13] If such practices are to remain a central part of geographical training and research, then institutions need to do more to ensure that the field is a space that is accessible to people of all backgrounds. Yet, my research also forces us to consider a broader range of individuals. Both in the field and within archives and universities, knowledge production relies on forms of "body work" that are rarely fully acknowledged, including the work of guides, cooks, drivers, and translators.

Meanwhile, geographical work in universities depends on the embodied labour of numerous workers—cleaners, cooks, and administrators—who are seldom referred to as geographers or academics and who are frequently paid much less than those engaged in more cerebral pursuits.[14] Today, as before, the production of knowledge is a collaborative process, relying on multiple bodies and various forms of labour. Despite this, the myth of the lone researcher is perpetuated by academic performance measures, tenure requirements, and promotion criteria that value monographs and single-author

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[11] Joshua Anadu, Hendratta Ali, and Christopher Jackson, "Ten Steps to Protect BIPOC Scholars in the Field," *Eos*, https://eos.org/opinions/ten-steps-to-protect-bipoc-scholars-in-the-field.

[12] Faith Tucker and John Horton, "'The Show Must Go on!' Fieldwork, Mental Health and Wellbeing in Geography, Earth and Environmental Sciences," *Area* 51, no. 1 (2019): 84–93.

[13] Joshua Anadu *et al.*, "Ten Steps."

[14] Shapin, "The Invisible Technician," 562–63.

publications. In this sense, many of the tools I have developed in this thesis could also be applied to contemporary institutions, which continue to undervalue certain bodies and certain kinds of work. The strategy developed in this thesis is applicable to a variety of contexts. In short, taking the body as our central focus allows us to see exploration very differently; it also provides a set of tools that can be used to interrogate metropolitan and colonial archives in ways that centre subaltern voices and contributions. More broadly, my approach forces us to reconsider how we commemorate exploration and value labour within contemporary geographical institutions.

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Reginald Koettlitz Collection.

South Polar Times Collection, GB 15 South Polar Times.

William Lashly Collection.

ONLINE SOURCES

Adam Matthew digital archive, particularly:

The Age of Exploration Collection.

Joseph John Kinsey Collections, Alexander Turnball Library: National Library of New Zealand.

The Nineteenth-Century Literary Society Collection.

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