Analysing the Geographies of Qualitative Places in Textual Sources

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Significant progress has been made on analysing the geographies in textual sources using techniques such as Geographical Text Analysis. However, these are limited in two key ways: first they are reliant on place-names for which coordinates can be found for their concept of geography, thus any references to places that are not locatable toponyms are not included as 'geographical'. Second, the concept of geography is subsequently based on straight line distance over Euclidean space which, while useful, is not necessarily the way in which writers experience and describe place.

In this paper we will present on a paper in which Qualitative Spatial Representation is implemented and used to resolve both these problems by both including non-toponym references to place, and using relative concepts of space as well as Euclidean distance. The analysis will focus on the different geographies associated with tourists, travellers and inhabitants as represented in a corpus of historical travel writing associated with the English Lake District.