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## Archived Geography

**Humanity** has always interacted with the environment, giving rise to habitats that have constantly evolved due to physical transformations of the landscape caused by natural phenomena or human activities, changes in demographics and population distribution, changes in politics or social structures, and many other factors. This constant dynamic has influenced how people interact with their environment and how they perceive and understand the world around them. Therefore, knowledge of these places and an understanding of these changes and their effects are crucial. The interest in understanding how the world is organized and our place in it has been a constant throughout history. Since ancient times, civilizations have sought to understand the geography of their territories, to explore and map their surroundings to better understand how to relate to them. Furthermore, it is important to note that the ways of documenting, transmitting,

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and exploiting geographic information have also undergone constant evolution. From hand-drawn maps to modern digital geographic information systems, the way we record and use information about spaces has evolved significantly.

The rapid pace of physical, political, and human transformations requires studies that enable a better understanding of the geographic perspective. Additionally, at this moment, changes are occurring at an unprecedented rate due to a series of factors ranging from climate change and urbanization to migratory movements and technological advances. A transversal and multidisciplinary geographic understanding is necessary. In this context, the way we document and retrieve geographic information becomes strategic, as it allows us to capture and analyze data reflecting these dynamic changes. However, we must admit that the nature and solidity of the narratives we use to describe geographic events and processes may be questioned due to the fact that geographic representations can also be subjective and biased. Geographic observation and analysis will allow us to question the representations used to describe them.

For centuries, cartography has been the main means of graphically representing geographic information, allowing for the systematization and visualization of land data. However, alongside technological advances, the geographic information science (GISci) has emerged, going beyond mere graphical representation. Not only is GISci key to geography but also has applications in a wide variety of disciplines, processes, and services. It provides methods and tools for collecting, analyzing, and visualizing geospatial data, allowing for a better understanding and management of the environment. Furthermore, it serves as a substrate upon which data can be represented and analyzed in order to address a variety of issues such as urban planning, natural resources management, disaster response, and other contemporary challenges related to geographic information.

Archives, as witnesses and custodians of geographic information over time, have played a key role and they still do. The archival collections held in archives are an essential primary source for understanding land-use planning and its evolution, as well as for analyzing the distribution and organization of the population in different historical periods. In addition, archives provide crucial data for the study of geographic representation methods and toponymy, allowing us to understand how space has been conceptualized and named over time.

The expansion of geographic information systems (GIS) and the integration of geospatial references in different business contexts highlight the importance of managing and preserving these geospatial records properly. This implies not only preservation but also the implementation of records management strategies that allow for efficient access, retrieval, and use. Furthermore, the integration of geospatial data into archival processes opens up new opportunities to enrich the understanding of the historical and spatial context of records.

In a context where government and business strategies emphasize interoperability and reuse of geographic data, the proper preservation and management of geospatial records in archives become even more crucial. Archives play a key

role in ensuring the availability and accessibility of this geographic data for use in various contexts, contributing to a better understanding of the past and an informed decision-making in the present.

Initially, it was planned to address a wide range of geographic approaches, from traditional ones related to the analysis of archival sources or the treatment of special records such as maps and plans, to new perspectives on the use of archival evidence in land recovery processes and the existing biases, manipulation, and geographic disinformation in these records, the application of geographic information science (GIS-ci) in the archival processes and production, geographic data governance, and its management in organizations. The issue now presented with the title “The Power of the Place: The Archival Records of Spaces and Territories” is a compilation that offers a comprehensive look at the importance and impact of geographic documentation in archives. This publication presents a variety of articles that explore various facets of this matter, from the analysis of the uses of geospatial data and the application of new technologies to the management and organization of geographic documentation in archives. Readers will also find detailed studies on documentary sources and geographic information stored in archives, as well as a comprehensive analysis of toponymy and its relevance in landscape understanding. The contributions of the authors offer a distinct and updated view on the archival records of spaces and territories.

In the first section, we address geospatial data, which constitute one of the most valuable resources for exploring the past. The application of new technologies, such as geoinformatics and Geographic Information Systems (GIS), is radically transforming our understanding of this type of records. These tools allow for the visualization and analysis of historical data in a spatial context, revealing connections and patterns that would otherwise likely go unnoticed. The convergence between geospatial data and emerging technologies is redefining the field of geographic research and providing new uses for maps and plans from our collective past, such as the creation of interactive historical maps or the location of wreck. The articles in this section introduce us to the fascinating world of geospatial interpretation and uncover how these innovative technologies enable new insights.

Gregor Završnik begins by highlighting the key role of geospatial data in our understanding of the past and present, emphasizing the importance of the accessibility and discoverability of these data. Završnik also demonstrates how we can use technologies to analyze and visualize geospatial data, addressing challenges and proposing solutions based on international standards. His approach on interoperability and transparency assures innovation and the creation of new business models, supported by the eArchiving initiative and the DILCIS board.

Álvaro Ruiz’s article highlights the applications of Geographic Information Systems (GIS) in improving access to archival and library information, using the example of the historical GIS of Madrid. It explores the potential of GIS as an analytical tool, managing and overcoming traditional search limitations. Additionally, it examines the utility of GIS in the dissemination of materials, presenting

cartographic viewers integrated with building permits from the Archive of the city of Madrid and publications from the Age of Enlightenment in Spain and America.

Eva Guerrero's research addresses the use of advanced technologies and historical documentation from a different perspective: the location of national wreck between 1450 and 1850. Her perspective combines the study of records, databases, and the QGIS platform in order to map over fifteen hundred shipwrecks. This innovative approach demonstrates how archival science and geospatial technologies can revitalize historical heritage and illustrates how new tools enhance our understanding of historical events.

The management and organization of geographic documentation in archives is essential. However, this type of documentation has received less attention than deserved compared to other documentary types. Proper management ensures the accessibility and preservation of maps, plans, and other geographic records, expanding the possibilities for their use. Javier Fernández's article examines the experience of the Spanish national archive *Archivo General de Palacio* in using the RAD template to describe maps and architectural drawings using AtoM. A methodology that enables the organization and access to these records, improving archival management. His practical approach offers valuable insight into the effective implementation of description standards in digital environments, being of benefit to both archivists and users interested in architectural heritage.

On the other hand, from a classification perspective, Carlos Parra offers a valuable insight into the historical and archival importance of forest districts in Spain and highlights their relevance in order to understand forest management throughout the 19th and 20th centuries, as well as their role in the evolution of Spanish forests. His proposed classification framework will facilitate the development of future archival work. In turn, Carlos Flores Varela provides a detailed analysis of the former cadastral layout in Spain, from its historical context to the organizational structure in a classification framework. He highlights the importance of this process as a milestone in Spanish taxation and its relevance for historical and geographic research. The proposed records classification also constitutes a valuable tool for future work and studies in this field.

The dissemination of information about archival fonds, including their content, organization, and availability, provides access to records by allowing researchers to access and develop their research effectively. The two following essays highlight the existence of these geographic sources stored in the Archive of the Kingdom of Valencia and the Documentation Center of Historical Memory, both in Spain. Francesc Torres emphasizes the wealth of geographic information in the collections of the Archive of the Kingdom of Valencia, ranging from institutional documents of the Old Regime to contemporary ones of the Peripheral Administration of the State. This study emphasizes the importance of the archive for understanding the historical and contemporary geography of Valencia. The significant geographic and cartographic information held by the Documentation Center of

Historical Memory is reviewed in the following article, providing us with a multi-disciplinary view of the 20th century. From military and technical perspectives to propagandistic and repressive analyses, the documentation and holdings reveal the historical and geographic complexity of the time. Additionally, it introduces us to renowned geographers such as Gonzalo de Reparaz.

Finally, Xulio Concepción Suárez addresses the discrepancy between oral and written documentation on toponyms in the region of Asturias in Spain. His approach seeks to collect, appraise, and contrast various sources and opinions to leave open the possibility of parallel researches. This study challenges the status quo, offering a reflective perspective on the complexity of toponymic language and the need for rigorous analysis to fully understand the landscape of the area.

In the “Varia” section, we include two texts from the technical conference “Open Data: Best Practices for Disposal and Exploitation,” organized by the Association of Archivists of Castilla y León on November 25th. The objective of the event was to analyze the exponential growth of open data provided by administrations in recent years, emphasizing the key role played by archives as producers and owners of information. The importance of effectively offering and collecting these data to make them available to users was highlighted. Additionally, the need to develop good practices by archives regarding the collection and provision of information, as well as user exploitation, was addressed, which requires special attention to the organization and accessibility of data to ensure its usefulness and most effective use by the user community.

Julian Collado’s article reflects on the importance of data openness, focusing on the experience of the Aragón Open Data portal. It highlights the processes that enable data openness, the channels used, and the relevance of data descriptions. Additionally, it emphasizes the value of open data for administrations and how these portals can guide data governance policies. The text by Santiago Tejero, José Mario Fernández, and Javier I. Igal explores the application of tools used in Wikimedia Foundation projects to the archival context. Through examples, it analyzes how these tools used in the GLAM project (Galleries, Libraries, Archives, and Museums) can be adapted and utilized in the field of archival science.

With “The Power of the Place: The Archival Records of Spaces and Territories,” we have attempted to provide a comprehensive and updated perspective on the importance and impact of geographic documentation in archives. This monographic issue of *Tábula* provides a comprehensive look at fundamental topics such as the use of geospatial data and the application of new technologies, the management and organization of geographic documentation in archives, the documentary sources and geographic information stored in archives, and the relevance of toponymy in landscape understanding. By reading these articles professionals, academics, or simply those interested in geography will be able to immerse themselves in a fascinating journey through the records of spaces and territories and to gain greater knowledge and understanding of our environment, its evolution over time, and how all of this has been documented.