Operationalizing Historical Questions

Datafying the Library of Congress Vietnam Collections

Cindy A. Nguyen, History University of California, Berkeley

Introduction

cindyanguyen.com @cindyanguyen

Ph.D. Candidate in Vietnamese history

Fields in Colonial Knowledge, History of Science & Classification, Digital Humanities

...interdisciplinary journey of cross-pollination: from source criticism to experimental design, open-access and diversifying the language of the internet

Builders & Users: Constructing the Vietnamese Library (1887-1986)



What is the history of Vietnamese 'public' libraries during the political regime changes of the 20th century?

How do libraries demonstrate the relationship among:

- the state (colonial, post-colonial)
- the public (reading preferences)
- education, language, and literacy
- ideas about modernity, access to knowledge, civil society



Fieldwork: Archives & Research collaborations in Vietnam

University of California, Berkeley

Spring 2016- Information Science 290

Final Project

A Humanist does Data Science: Deconstructing Libraries

Cindy A. Nguyen, History

Jordan Shedlock, School of Information



A HUMANIST DOES DATA SCIENCE: 'DECONSTRUCTING' LIBRARIES PROJECT



Library of Congress Main Reading Room

Spring of 2016 I enrolled in my first ever graduate level data science course at the School of Information at UC Berkeley. The course 'Deconstrucing Data Science' investigated quantitative

ABOUT ME



Hi, I am Cindy Nguyen. I received my M.A. at MSU, and am currently a Ph.D. Candidate in Vietnamese History at UC Berkeley.

My interests include digital humanities, Southeast Asia, history of the book, materiality, and classification. My dissertation examines a cultural history of colonial and postcolonial Vietnamese libraries.

Website

cindyanguyen.com

Github

https://github.com/cindyanguyen/deconstructing-libraries

Blog post

https://cindyanguyen.com/20 16/12/02/a-humanist-does-d ata-science-deconstructing-li braries-project/

2. Tools to clean, read, analyze data

3. Concluding lessons

1. Operationalizing research questions

1. Operationalizing research questions

How to ask questions and how to answer them

- Translating research questions into operationalizable tasks
 - What evidence do I have to support my research claim? How do I argue this?
- Critical inquiry into data: its production and limitations
- What question does this actually answer?

MOTIVATIONS & RESEARCH QUESTION

Relationship between politics and culture through the lens of libraries

Nguyen's dissertation examines the cultural and political history of libraries in Vietnam from 1885 to 1986. How does the library develop as an institution of knowledge in Vietnam? In what ways do Vietnamese libraries transform through political regime changes? How do libraries express colonial and post-colonial state power as well as subvert it?

RESEARCH QUESTION

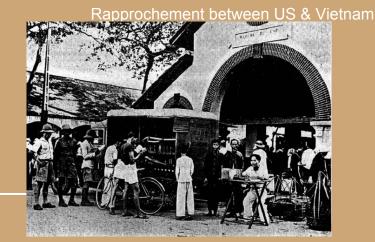
1885-1945 French Colonialism

1946-1954 First Indochina War

1954-1975 Second Indochina War/ Vietnam War

1975-1979 Vietnam-Cambodia War, Sino-Vietnamese Conflict

1986 Renovation Neo-Liberal Reforms &



Mobile library, 1936 Saigon

Iterating between Research Question & Data

- → What type of data gestures at my research topic? (libraries, government, readership, libraries development, collections)
 - Ideal data source?
- → What more refined research question can emerge from my data source? (curation, control, censorship, ideology, language, literacy)
 - Example research question?

Finding Data

Humanistic data: difficult to obtain, uneven, unformatted, not easily machine readable

Not 'data of convenience' - well structured in the English language

→ justifiably 'interesting' and significant

VIETNAMESE HOLDINGS

in the Library of Congress

A Bibliography

Compiled by A. Kohar Rony Southern Asia Section, Asian Division

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS WASHINGTON 1982

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Original from UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN

MONOGRAPHS

An Khé. Bông lúa sa-mo; truyện dài. [Saigon] Miễn Anh Đức. Một truyền chép ở bệnh viện; truyền. In Nam. 1968. lần thủ 2. [Há-nội] Văn Học, 1963. PL4378.9.A45B6 PL4378.9 A5M6 1963 An Khê. Chân trới nào cho em; tiểu thuyết tính cảm xã hội. [Saigon] Đồng Nai, 1971. Anh Đức. Tháng My. Bia và minh họa của Văn Đa. PL4378.9.A45C5 Hà-nội, Kim Đông, 1966. PL4378.9.A5T48 31 p. illus. "Trich trong Bức thu Cả mâu." An Khê. Môi tinh đầu; tiểu-thuyết tính-cam xã-hồi. [Saigon] Mién Nam [1965] PL4378.9.A45M6 Anh Tho. Mùa xuân, màu xanh: thơ 1967-1973. Hà-nội, Văn Học, 1974. PL4378.9.A55M8 109 p. Anh Đảo. Việt Nga hội thoại. [Há-nội] Sông Lô, PG2121.A54 Anh Tho. Theo cánh chim cáu; tho, 1945-1960. IHá-Errata slip inserted. nội] Văn Học, 1960. PL4378.9.A55T5 Anh Đức. Bức thư Cá-mau; truyền ngắn, bút kỳ. [In lần thủ 21 Hà-nội, Văn Học, 1966. PL4378.9.A5B8 1966 Anh-Tuần Nguyễn Tuần Phát: see Nguyễn Tuần Phát "Giai thương chính thức vấn học Nguyễn Đinh Anh Việt Thu. Những bài hát môi viết trên tốc me. Anh Đức. Đứa con của đất: tiểu thuyết. [s.1.] Văn Saigon [Phù Sa Nhac Tuyên], 1967. Học Giải Phóng, 1975. M1824.V5A5 PL4378.9.A5D8 42 p. illus. 487 p. Unacc. melodies.

D

12 Bà Đũng. Năng sông Lam: truyện kỳ. [Há-nội] Phụ Nb; 1974. PL4378.9.B2N3 PL4578.9.B2N3 PL4578.9.B2N6 PL4578.9.B24V6 PL4578.9

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- Author
- Title
- Publication City
- Publisher
- Publishing date
- Number of pages
- Library of Congress classification number

Why is this data source significant? What story could I tell?

2
An Khê. Chân trởi nào cho em; tiếu thuyết tính câm xã hội. [Saigon] Đồng Nai, 1971.

PL4378.9.A45C5
276 p.

3
An Khê. Mỗi tính đầu; tiểu-thuyết tính-cam xã-hỗi. [Saigon] Miến Nam [1965]

PL4378.9.A45M6 479 p.

Anh Đảo. Việt Nga hội thoại. [Há-nội] Sông Lô. 1956. PG2121.A54

118 p. Errata slip inserted.

Anh Đức. Bức thư Cả-mau; truyện ngắn, bút kỳ. [In lần thủ 2] Hã-nội, Văn Học, 1966. PL4378.9.A5B8 1966 135 p.

"Giai thương chính thức văn học Nguyễn Đinh Chiều."

6 Anh Đức. Đứa con của dặt: tiếu thuyết. [s.1.] Văn Học Giải Phóng, 1973. PL4378.9.ASD8

487 p.

Anh Đức, Tháng My, Bia vi Há-nội, Kim Đông, 1966.

31 p. illus. "Trich trong Bárc thu C:

9 Anh Tho. Mùa xuân, màu Hà-nôi, Văn Hoc, 1974.

109 p.

10 Anh Tho. Theo cành chim ci nội] Văn Học, 1960.

105 p.

Anh-Tuần Nguyễn Tuần Phá sve Nguyễn Tuần Phát

11 Anh Việt Thu. Những bài h Saigon [Phù Sa Nhạc Tuyi

> 42 p. illus. Unacc. melodies.

- Author
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- Publishing date
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- Library curation
- History of publishing in Vietnam
- Circulation of knowledge on Vietnam

An Khé. Chân trới nào cho em; tiểu thuyết tính cảm xă hội, [Saigon] Đồng Nai, 1971. PL4378.9.A45C5 276 p.

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"Giai thương chính thức vấn học Nguyễn Đinh Chieu."

Anh Đức, Đứa con của đất: tiếu thuyết, [s.l.] Văn Hoc Giải Phóng, 1975. PL4378.9.A5D8

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> 42 p. illus. Unacc. melodies.

What it is and what it could be:

Data includes information on:

- The 1982 bibliography includes Vietnamese language materials the LOC collected up to June 1979.
- The 1987 bibliography includes Vietnamese language materials collected by the LOC from 1979 to 1985.
- Both retrospective works and new items published in post-war Socialist Republic of Vietnam
- Author
- Title
- Publication City
- Publisher
- Publishing Date
- Number of Pages
- Library of Congress Classification
- Language
- Monograph or Serial

Data could shed light on:

- A part of publishing history
 - North and South Vietnam (during the War)
 - o Post-war Socialist Republic of Vietnam
 - Diasporic Vietnamese populations
- Topics and types of works published
- Library curation logic of collection
- Knowledge access to Americans on the subject of 'Vietnam'

Assumptions - History of the book

'TITLE'

 What information does a work's title contain? 'PUBLICATION CITY'

What does the publication city suggest?

Testable Hypotheses

- 1. Different publication locations will have different distribution of topics. What are the topics/words most characteristic of a city?
 - a. H1: Hanoi will have more topics on Communism, war, revolution, army than Saigon.
 - b. H2: Saigon will have more topics on US ideas (modernity, democracy, anti-Communism)
 - c. H3: LOC collection will prefer Saigon (ally) materials over Hanoi.

2. Operationalized through

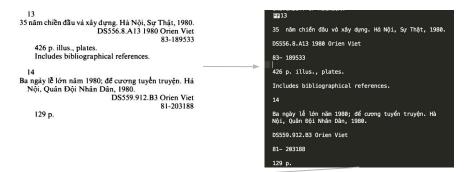
- a. Distribution of collected works by Library of Congress Classification
- b. Probability of words in a title by city
- c. Topic Models

2. Tools to clean, read, analyze data

Data Cleaning

- Data cleaning and preparation:
 - Optical Character Recognition (Abbyy Finereader): from PDF to text file
 - Regex: extract author, title, year, publisher, location
 - Google Refine: clean up data fields, resolve OCR errors and misspellings
 - vnTokenizer: tokenize Vietnamese words cách mạng = cách-mạng [revolution]

DATA

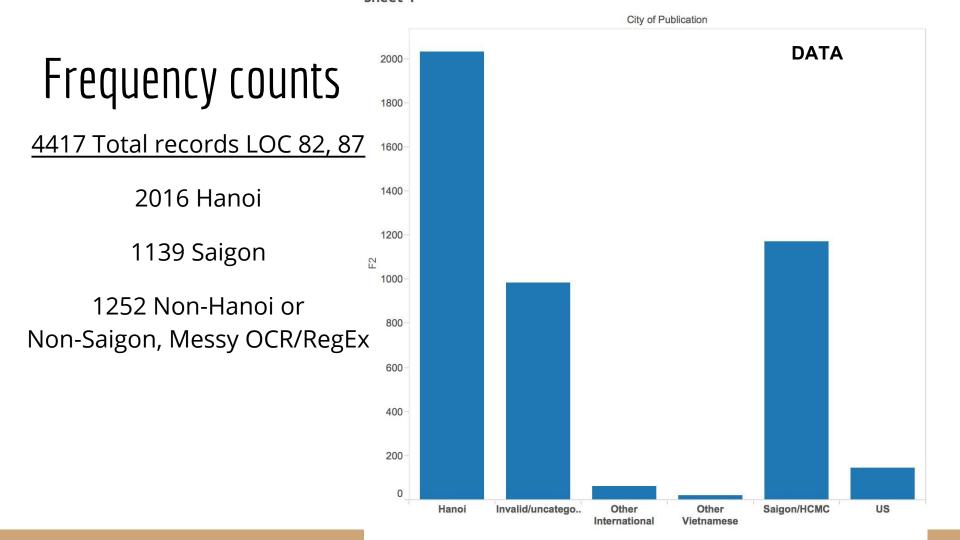




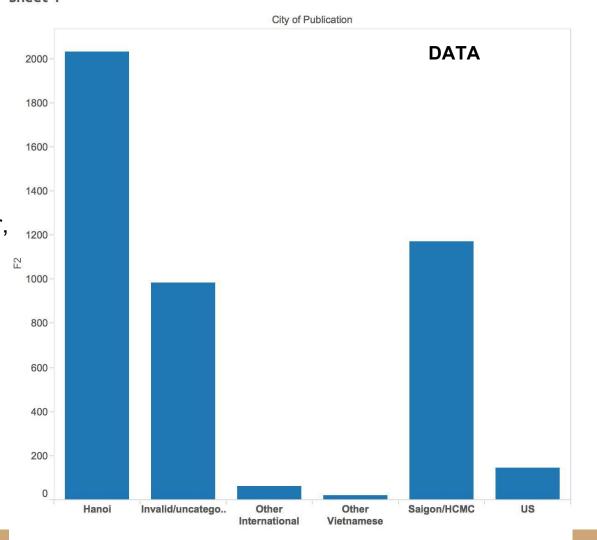
35 years of war and building

3 major holidays in 1980; an outline of the stories of beloved uncle Hồ

35 năm chiến đâu vả xây dựng ba ngày lễ lớn năm 1980 ; để cương tuyển truyện bác hổ kính yêu



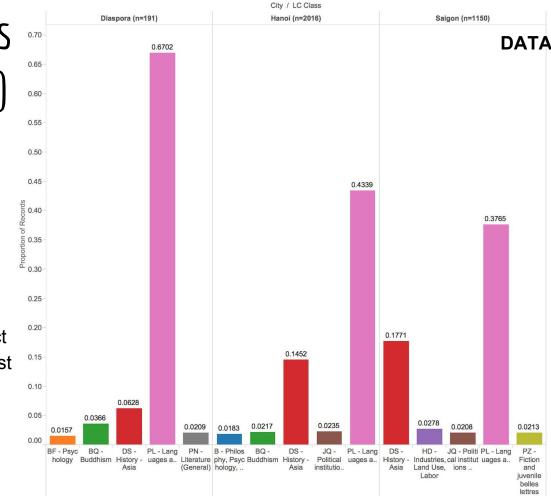
- LOC collected more books from Hanoi than Saigon.
- Even after the Vietnam War, LOC collecting regime interested in Hanoi politics and Communist ideology. "Understanding American studies of Marx-Lenin" 1979, "Beloved Uncle Ho" 1970



Library of Congress Classification (LCC) Breakdown by City

- Topics consistent across cities:
- PL: Languages and Literature
- **DS**: Asian History

This suggests that the data reflect the LOC's collection policies first and foremost; ideological distinctions/content are not captured



What are the words most characteristic of a city?

Exploratory

- a. Naive Bayes (Probability of word in title conditioned on city)
- b. Topic models (learn patterns that suggest types of books from a city)

2. Prediction

a. Naive Bayes (Can we predict an unknown city based on the words in a title?)

Naive Bayes Probability of word in title conditioned on city; bigrams only, no stopwords

Red text: words that co-occur in top 21 results of Hanoi and Saigon

cách_mạng	0.002979032196463354	revolution
truyện_ngắn	0.0019860214643089027	short story
nhân_dân	0.001871443302906466	people
minh_hoa	0.0017950578619715081	illustrate
dân_tộc	0.001527708818699156	nation
truyện_ký	0.0014131306572967193	memoir
xây_dựng	0.0014131306572967193	build
anh_hùng	0.0012985524958942826	hero
công_tác	0.0012603597754268037	activity
nghiên_cứu	0.0011839743344918459	research
giới_thiệu	0.001145781614024367	introduction
nhiệm_vụ	0.0010693961730894091	duty
biên_soạn	0.0009930107321544513	compile
khoa_hoc	0.0009930107321544513	science
văn_học	0.0009930107321544513	literature
xã_hội	0.0009166252912194935	society
nông_nghiệp	0.0008784325707520146	agriculture
lịch_sử	0.0008020471298170569	history
nghệ_thuật	0.0008020471298170569	art
chú_thích	0.0008020471298170569	note
bổ_sung	0.0007256616888820991	supplement

Φ, Y=Saigon 0.0048038917604135 truyện dài long story truyên ngắn 0.0007297050775311645 short story education giáo dục 0.0006688963210702341 cách mang 0.0005472788081483734 revolution công dân 0.000486470051687443 citizen văn hóa 0.000486470051687443 culture văn học 0.000486470051687443 literature chú thích 0.000486470051687443 note chúng ta 0.0004256612952265126 we 0.0004256612952265126 Buddhism phật giáo giới thiệu 0.00036485253876558226 introduction 0.00036485253876558226 cộng hòa republic xã hội 0.00036485253876558226 society translate phiên dịch 0.00036485253876558226 0.00036485253876558226 homeland que hương con người 0.0003040437823046519 person hiện đại 0.0003040437823046519 modern giáo sư 0.0003040437823046519 professor khuôn mặt 0.0003040437823046519 face cuộc đời 0.0003040437823046519 lifetime lich sử 0.0003040437823046519 history

chú thích

bổ sung

Naive Bayes Probability of word in title conditioned on city; bigrams only, no stopwords

Highlighted blue: words of interest for comparison of results between Hanoi and Saigon

Φ. Y=Hanoi 0.002979032196463354 revolution cách mang truyện ngắn 0.0019860214643089027 short story nhân dân 0.001871443302906466 people 0.0017950578619715081 minh hoa illustrate dân tộc 0.001527708818699156 nation 0.0014131306572967193 truyện ký memoir xây dựng 0.0014131306572967193 build anh hùng 0.0012985524958942826 hero công tác 0.0012603597754268037 activity nghiên cứu 0.0011839743344918459 research giới thiệu 0.001145781614024367 introduction nhiêm vu 0.0010693961730894091 duty biên soan 0.0009930107321544513 compile 0.0009930107321544513 science khoa hoc văn học 0.0009930107321544513 literature xã hội 0.0009166252912194935 society nông nghiệp 0.0008784325707520146 agriculture lich sử 0.0008020471298170569 history nghệ thuật 0.0008020471298170569

0.0008020471298170569

0.0007256616888820991

art

note

supplement

truyện_dài	0.0048038917604135	long story
truyện_ngắn	0.0007297050775311645	short story
giáo_dục	0.0006688963210702341	education
cách_mạng	0.0005472788081483734	revolution
công dân	0.000486470051687443	citizen
văn_hóa	0.000486470051687443	culture
văn_học	0.000486470051687443	literature
chú_thích	0.000486470051687443	note
chúng ta	0.0004256612952265126	we
phật_giáo	0.0004256612952265126	Buddhism
giới_thiệu	0.00036485253876558226	introduction
cộng_hòa	0.00036485253876558226	republic
xã_hội	0.00036485253876558226	society
phiên_dịch	0.00036485253876558226	translate
que_huong	0.00036485253876558226	homeland
con_người	0.0003040437823046519	person
hiện_đại	0.0003040437823046519	modern
giáo_su	0.0003040437823046519	professor
khuôn_mặt	0.0003040437823046519	face
cuộc_đời	0.0003040437823046519	lifetime
lich_sử	0.0003040437823046519	history

Naive Bayes to Predict Unknown City

P(X = "Anh hùng lưc lượng vũ trang nhân dân" | Y=Hanoi) = 1.5648340863728223

P(X="Anh hùng lưc lượng vũ trang nhân dân" | Y=Saigon) = 0.0002585442251010566

True value =

5 Anh hùng lưc lượng vũ trang nhân dân. v. [1] + Hà Nội, Quân Đội Nhân Dân, 1978 + U54.V53A56 Orien Viet 80-984099

The Hero of the People's Armed Forces. V. 1, (Hanoi: The People's Army, 1978)

Library of Congress Subject Heading : U [Military Science]

Topics 1982 and 1987

		•	
#	Weight	Topic tokens	General Topic
20	0.06321	truyện tập ngấn ngày người vui dái bạn biển cơn gọi nơi sâu ngán thơ_ca chân_trời cứa thư non càmau Story, volume, short, poem, song, horizon	Textual format, story, genre
5	0.06214	tập thơ nước truyện_ký sáng trong hoa đất truyện_ngắn núi lửa đầt rửng lứa giữa nhiều tác_giả thơ_văn đất mặt Volume, poem, country, memoir, short story, mountain, jungle, author, verse	Poetry, nature, memoir, author
96	0.06051	trong của mới một những cách_mạng năm văn_hóa đèn nội văn_nghệ giai_đoạn dân_tộc nhiệm_vụ hoạch vần đầu liên đền dòng_sông Revolution, literature, performance, stage, nation, action, function, channel	Revolution, action
22	0.05975	bán thứ lần lần truyện_dài tái cúa xuất lãn bản đời xuất xuât khanh xuầt hoang lấn tựa phụ hậu Number, times, long story, published	Textual format, republished, genre
78	0.05733	nam việt miễn tại cộng_sản phong_trào bắc phụ_nữ công_đoàn câu nứa tiềng chương hiện_đại khoa_học_xã_hội tra chù thám lâp tiêng South, Viet, region, Communism, movement, north, women, union, modern, social sciences	Communism, region, women, social sciences
31	0.0571	thứ lần lẩn bổ_sung sửa_chữa hành tái_bản đại_hội tên một huân bấc bôi đẹp trang vàng pic quảng lửa thức Number, supplement, repair, reprint, meeting, north	Number, reprint
7	0.05663	văn nguyễn của phạm ngọc giới_thiệu dương hổng nguyên đinh xuân đức vãn chú tường hữu lâm bùi ngữ biên Literature, introduction, language	Literature, language
65	0.05164	thuyềt tiểu tiếu thuyết thuyèt tiéu người gián_điệp thuyêt rừng lịch_sử thuybt tiểu tiêu xanh bão vàng trè phò hận Novel, fiction, spy, forest, history	Novel, spy, history
97	0.04697	minh chí chi thành đổng phô truyện_ký trường_ca thông phồ lăng ca_dao thảnh đạo tiển lôc tiền cao triểu phường Memoir, epic, poem	Memoir, epics
24	0.04633	của người những bác anh làm thanh_niên tré điểu phẩn giông nghĩ tuổi súng tám cám trẻ như giờ bât Youth, young, think, age, time	Youth

Hanoi v. Saigon

1982

#	General Topic	Hanoi	Saigon
5	Poetry, nature, memoir, author	0.009808929	0.008638799
96	Revolution, action	0.030214885	0.021528166
78	Communism, region, women, social sciences	0.008836326	0.008266742

- From 1982 to 1987 decrease in topics Communism 96 and 78 for Saigon.
- In 1987 topic 96 difference in Hanoi and Saigon

1987

#	General Topic	Hanoi	Saigon
5	Poetry, nature, memoir, author	0.011779472	0.009184172
96	Revolution, action	0.034526805	0.013463745
78	Communism, region, women, social sciences	0.004967198	0.007170078

Results

- Different publication locations will have different distribution of topics.
 What are the topics/words most characteristic of a city?
 - a. H1: Hanoi will have more topics on Communism, war, revolution, army than Saigon.
 - i. \rightarrow Naive bayes suggest this is true.
 - ii. → Topic models suggests* cN
 - b. H2: Saigon will have more topics on US ideas (modernity, democracy, anti-Communism)
 - i. \rightarrow Naive bayes suggests other topics such as Buddhism, homeland
 - ii. → Topic models suggests * CN
 - c. H3: LOC collection will prefer Saigon (ally) materials over Hanoi.
 - i. Frequency counts demonstrate preference over Hanoi than Saigon.

Concluding Remarks

- Challenges of data cleaning/OCR
- Confounding factor of collection policy of LOC v. universe of published materials in Vietnam
- Value of quantitative analysis for history discipline

Concluding Remarks

Power of counting

2. Power of probability

Future Directions

Feature	β
Published in Hanoi	
Published in Saigon	
Topic 44 "Revolution, worker"	
Topic 51 "Saigon, home"	
Topic 5 "War poetry"	
P(X = "Hero" Y=Hanoi) = .0005298	

Classification:

- Was this published in Hanoi? Saigon?
- Was this text pro-Communist or anti-Communist?

Research:

- What types of works were published in Saigon? Hanoi?
- What types of works were collected by the LOC?

Possible Ways to Featurize Data

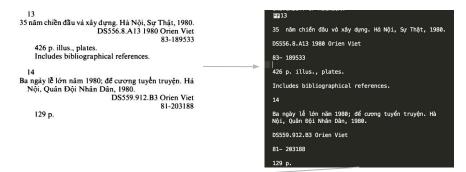
Reading by
Machines: Open
Refine on OCR
Output Data

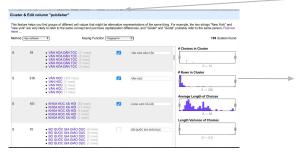
Cindy A. Nguyen, History University of California, Berkeley

Data Cleaning

- Data cleaning and preparation:
 - Optical Character Recognition (Abbyy Finereader): from PDF to text file
 - Regex: extract author, title, year, publisher, location
 - Google Refine: clean up data fields, resolve OCR errors and misspellings
 - vnTokenizer: tokenize Vietnamese words cách mạng = cách-mạng [revolution]

DATA





35 years of war and building

3 major holidays in 1980; an outline of the stories of beloved uncle Hồ

35 năm chiến đâu vả xây dựng ba ngày lễ lớn năm 1980 ; để cương tuyển truyện bác hổ kính yêu

Open Refine

OpenRefine (formerly Google Refine) is an open powerful tool for working with messy data: cleaning it; transforming it from one format into another; and extending it with web services and external data.

Why?

Exploring, finding, fixing inconsistencies due to typos and OCR output

Undo/Redo (track changes): freedom to make mistakes

Tutorial Resources

Programming Historian

http://programminghistorian.org/lessons/cleaning-data-with-openrefine

Videos & Community Board (Install Google Refine 2.5 - Stable)

http://openrefine.org

Digital Humanities & Open Refine (Today's walkthrough)

http://thomaspadilla.org/dataprep/

Data

https://github.com/cindyanguyen/tutorial-data

Favorite Operations

- Text Facet/Numeric Facet: Locating inconsistencies in OCR, typos (sort by count/name)
- 2. Clustering: Helpful with diacritical errors in Vietnamese
- 3. Google Refine Expression Language(GREL): value.replace('||', '|')
 - a. https://github.com/OpenRefine/OpenRefine/wiki/GREL-Functions
- 4. Common error: multiple facets/filters layered

First Steps:

- 1. Remove trailing whitespace
- 2. Capitalization: all lower case

Resources

Open Refine Lessons for Digital Humanities

https://data-lessons.github.io/dh-openrefine/

Tidy Data by Hadley Wickham - Datasets easy to manipulate, model, visualize, have specific structure: each variable is a column, each observation is a row, and each type of observational unit is a table.

https://vita.had.co.nz/papers/tidy-data.pdf

Digital Humanities x Data Science Short Reading List

https://cindyanguyen.com/2016/04/09/digital-humanities-data-science-list/