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LMC 2700
TA Example

World Relations

I wanted to create a visualization that depicts how documents and artifacts within the Digital Public Library of America collection ties two countries together. I based my info vis on how Delta shows their airline routes. I like how it's easy to see where flights cluster based on the number of lines that extend out of a city. However, I dislike how difficult it is to trace a line from start to finish in this view. This later affected my decision to make my connection lines interactive.

My project World Relations takes a search term and queries the DPLA API for entries with the term in the title. My code parses the JSON file for entries that mention two different countries in the subject. It draws those relations on the map. The user can click on the curve to go to the actual entry.

The default query is "treaty," but the user can input his/her own term and press enter to get a different relationship map.

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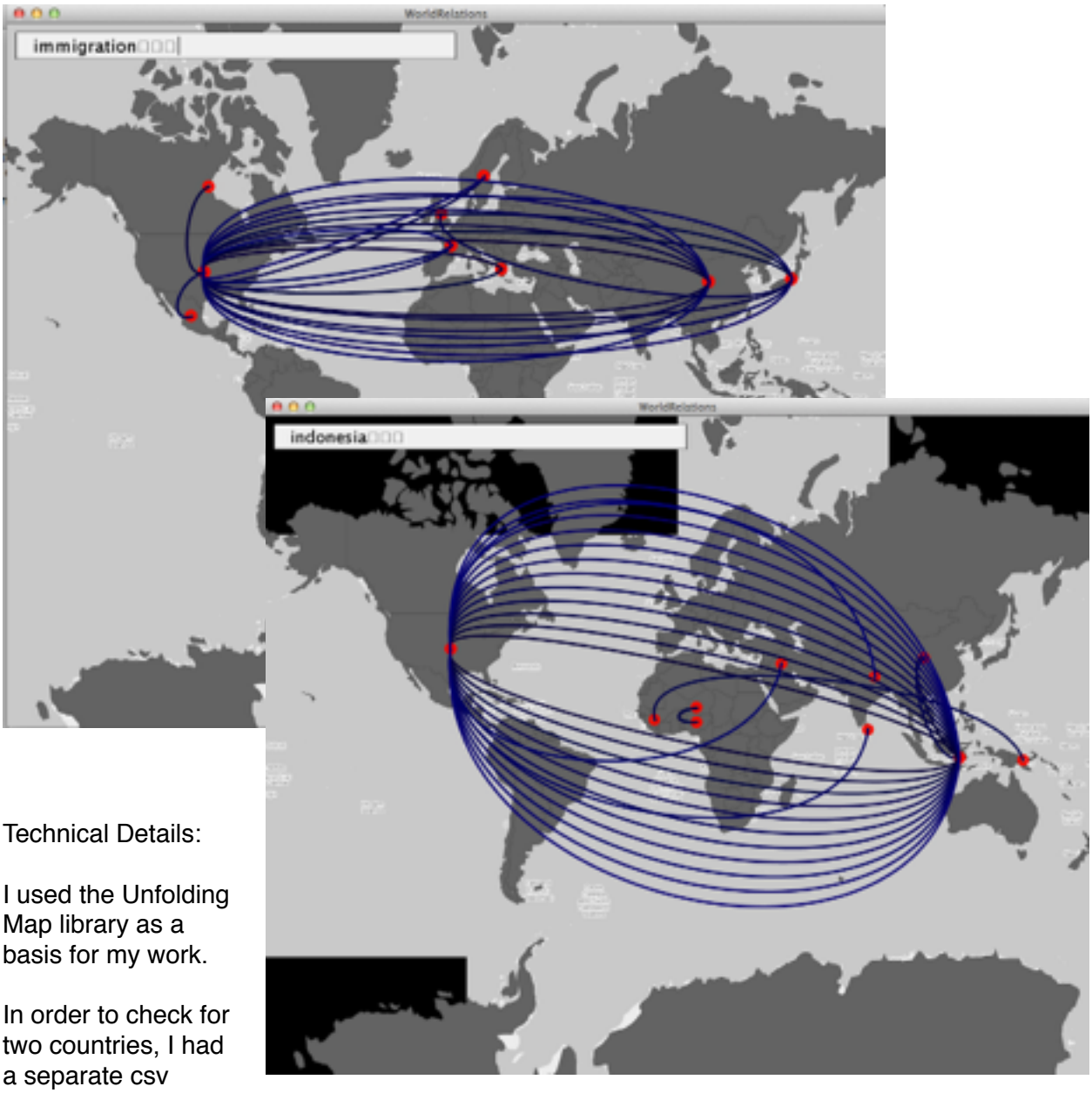
Here are a few examples:



Technical Details:

I used the Unfolding Map library as a basis for my work.

In order to check for two countries, I had a separate csv (comma separated value) file that lists all the countries as well as names for people of that country's heritage (eg. Aussie). My code looks through all of the subjects and tries to match 2 countries in one subject. If there are 2 countries mentioned, it creates a MarkerPair with those two countries.

Patterns:

It's not surprising that many of these lines extend out of America. After all, I'm pulling from the Digital Public Library of America. I've tried varying search queries (eg. trade, immigration), and the same pattern emerges. If anything, my visualization shows how skewed the collection is,

either because America is such a world player or because a large majority of the entries are United States-centric. Most likely both.

When I input “Mexico,” many lines appear to connect Mexico to India. I needed to click on the documents before I realized this results because the subjects contain “Indians of Mexico,” pertaining to Native Americans. It’s an interesting example of how the user can quickly process context and natural language while the program only follows an algorithm.