



The Gandhi Social Network

Examining Gandhi's Collected
Works as Data



Collected Works as Data

Goal: Explore the prospects and limits of turning archives (Gandhi's writings) into a neat set of data for analysis.

Collected Works as Network Analysis

Goal: Visualize Gandhi's shifting discourse communities to detect new patterns of his political thinking

Collected Works as Public Resource

Goal: Build a public resource that expands the geographical and cultural lens of digital history beyond a western framework.

Source: The Collected Works of Gandhi

Digitally Accessible and Available:

- 98 Volumes of his letters, speeches, and public writing



GANDHI LITERATURE

- **Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi: Volumes 1 to 98**
- Selected Works of M. Gandhi
- Selected Letters
- Famous Speeches

Source: The Collected Works of Gandhi

Limits of Source (1)

- Digital accessible writings are “out-network” or Gandhi’s writings to people / publications (with some exception)



GANDHI LITERATURE

- Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi: Volumes 1 to 98
- Selected Works of M.Gandhi
- Selected Letters
- Famous Speeches

Process: Python & Data Cleaning

Step 1: Convert Collected Works into plain text (readable for Python)

Step 2: Upload into the Python environment

Step 3: Run Named Entity Recognition (NER)

Process: Python & Data Cleaning

For a barrister's education. It is true that one can live on vegetable foods without injuring one's health, why should not all live on a vegetable diet because it is more economical than a meat diet? That vegetarianism exists in England there are living examples to prove.

There are vegetarian societies and any quantity of vegetarian literature to testify to the existence of vegetarianism in England. There are living notable Englishmen who are vegetarians.

Lord Hannen of the H.M.'s Privy Council, better known as Sir James Hannen, the President of the late Parnell Commission, is a vegetarian.

Mr. Gotling of Bombay is a vegetarian. John Wesley was a vegetarian. So was Howard the philanthropist and a host of others all men of light and learning. The poet Shelley was a vegetarian. It is impossible in the compass of a small book to do so much as do justice to such a vast subject. I must content myself with referring the inquisitive reader to Perfect Way in Diet by Dr. Anna Kingsford who says of herself: I cured myself of tubercular consumption by living on vegetable food. A doctor told me I had not six months to live. What was I to do? I was to eat raw meat and drink port wine. Well, I went into the country and ate porridge and fruit and appear today on this platform.

There is another advisable book to which the reader might be referred. It is entitled A Plea for Vegetarianism by H. S. Salt.²

Dr. Benjamin Ward Richardson, M.B., L.R.C.S., etc., himself not a vegetarian, has come to the following conclusions in his Food for Man.

1.

Man, although possessing the capacity of existing on an animal diet in whole or in part, is by original cast adapted to a diet of grain and fruit and, on a scientific adaptation of his natural supplies, might easily be provided with all he can require from that source of subsistence.

	A	B	C
31	['Amod Bayat', 'PERSON'],		
32	['Amod Bhayat', 'PERSON'],		
33	['Amolakh', 'PERSON'],		
34	['Amrita Bazar Patrika', 'PERSON'],		
35	['Andrew Carnegie', 'PERSON'],		
36	['Andrew Murray', 'PERSON'],		
37	['Anna Kingsford', 'PERSON'],		
38	['Anna Kingsford', 'PERSON'],		
39	['Anna Kingsford', 'PERSON'],		
40	['Anna Kingsford', 'PERSON'],		
41	['Anna Kingsford1', 'PERSON'],		
42	['Annie Besant', 'PERSON'],		
43	['Annie Besant', 'PERSON'],		
44	['Archbishop Manning', 'PERSON'],		
45	['Archibald', 'PERSON'],		
46	['Arjun Singh', 'PERSON'],		

Process: Python & Data Cleaning

*The problem with NER...
Or, who is "Bill"?*

	A	B
92	['Bill', 'PERSON'],	
93	['Bill', 'PERSON'],	
94	['Bill', 'PERSON'],	
95	['Bill', 'PERSON'],	
96	['Bill', 'PERSON'],	
97	['Bill', 'PERSON'],	
98	['Bill', 'PERSON'],	
99	['Bill', 'PERSON'],	
100	['Bill', 'PERSON'],	
101	['Bill', 'PERSON'],	
102	['Bill', 'PERSON'],	
103	['Bill', 'PERSON'],	
104	['Bill', 'PERSON'],	
105	['Bill', 'PERSON'],	
106	['Bill', 'PERSON'],	
107	['Bill', 'PERSON'],	
108	['Bill', 'PERSON'],	
109	['Bill', 'PERSON'],	

“Data” Source

Instances of Writing:

- Publications
- Speeches
- Diary Entries
- Letters

Data



Attributes for Analysis

- Nationality / Ethnicity
- Gender
- Race / Caste

Experiment

	A	B	C
31	['Amod Bayat', 'PERSON'],		
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33	['Amolakh', 'PERSON'],		
34	['Amrita Bazar Patrika', 'PERSON'],		
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BACKGROUND RESEARCH

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I
1	Source	Target	Country of T:	Nationality	Date	PubType	CWMG Ref	Gender	Caste
2	Gandhi	Anna Kingsfo	England	British		Article		F	N/A
3	Gandhi	Anna Kingsfo	England	British		Article		F	N/A

The Natal Mercury

India
South Africa

Albert Weir Baker, White /
British Missionary

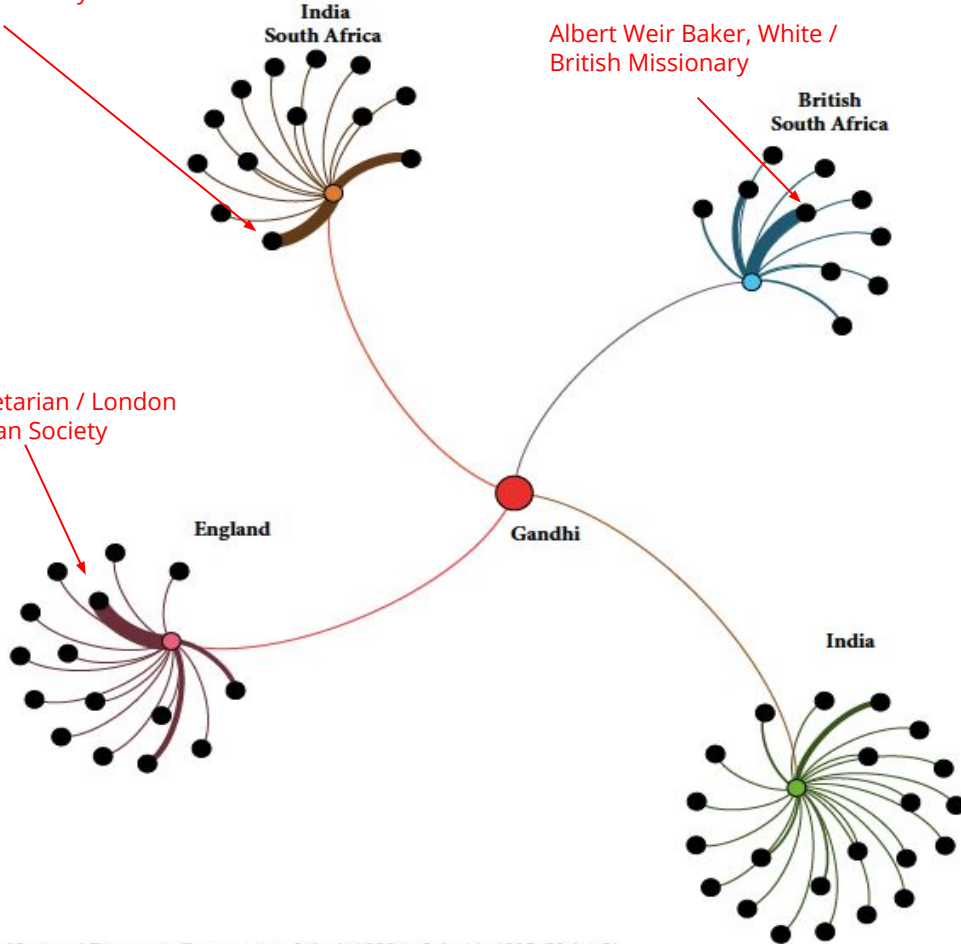
British
South Africa

The Vegetarian / London
Vegetarian Society

England

Gandhi

India



So What?

Gandhi's early writings suggest:

- 1) An interest in the social significance of food (*fasting as a political act)
- 2) Editorials functioned as his primary form of political action
- 3) Extensive correspondence with British missionary community

It also suggests that the discourse community of Gandhi's early political life (post-Law school) is *mostly British informed (judicial justice).

Exploratory / Analysis

1) Questions

- a) How many individuals from a lower caste background (if at all) did Gandhi correspond with and when?
- b) Was Gandhi's network mostly European? Or did it shift? If it did, when did the shifts occur and what, if anything, do the shifts reveal about Gandhi's politics?**
- c) Did Gandhi correspond / engage with the Black South African community? If so, to what extent?
- d) To what extent did he correspond with those in South Africa after leaving the country?
- e) Was there a shift in Gandhi's correspondence in 1907? And 1914? And 1920? And 1931?
- f) Does Gandhi's discourse community shift in 1907? Does Gandhi come to an intellectual synthesis in 1907? Both questions are after why: why does Gandhi's political tactics change from an emphasis on Juridical justice?
- g) What do Gandhi's shifting discourse communities reveal about how we build and sustain social movements?

Next Steps

- 1) Short Term: Finalize / type up methods for analysis
 - a) Text conversation
 - b) Named Entity Recognition (people *and places*)
 - c) Data Cleaning & Source Categorization
 - d) Network Visualizations by attributes
- 2) Short Term: Project 1
 - a) Report on the national contours of Gandhi's discourse communities
- 3) Long Term:
 - a) New Projects
 - b) *Network as public resource