

SPINTime:
DYNAMICALLY MAPPING EVOLVING NETWORKS

Introduction:

SpInTime is a browser-based visualization of correspondence networks both in space (on the map of Europe) and in time (over the course of the nineteenth century). On the map, each letter is represented as a trace-line from sender's location to receiver's location; in time, the letter is visible only when its date matches the settings of the time scale.

Both map and time scale are user-adjustable in such a way as to allow for a dynamic display of shape-changing correspondence networks as these evolve in outline and density, and span different European locations, over time.

Warnings:

1. SpInTime does not work in Internet Explorer version 8 or lower; it works in most other browsers (Firefox, Chrome, Apple browsers etc.).
2. What is displayed here is a "Proof of Concept". It does not pretend to offer a representative approximation, let alone a complete picture, of the totality of scholarly correspondence networks in 19th-century Europe, but visualizes the limited set of data in a database still in its infancy and currently containing ca. 1500 letters.
3. All data, design and functionalities, including the "slide rule" (dateline / period lens) concept, are under copyright. Do not use or copy without prior written permission. Contact SPIN for details.

Instructions:

1. map:

The map of Europe can be zoomed in and out to four different levels (use +/- scale at top left of screen). You can click/drag the section visible on your screen.

2. time scale:

The time scale (bottom of the screen) is designed as a "slide rule", consisting of a fixed chronological dateline and a sliding period lens.

- You can slide the period lens back and forth along the dateline either by click-dragging, or by clicking the left or right arrows at the dateline ends.
- You can give the period lens a wider or narrower temporal focus, either by click/dragging its outer edges (marking the begin- and end-dates of the time focus) or by using the calendar daters underneath (useful for fine-tuning).

3. trace-lines:

The letters displayed as trace-lines on the map are those falling within the temporal focus defined by [a] the width of the period lens and [b] its position on the dateline. These letters can be listed by clicking the "List these letters" button.

– A wide focus will encompass more letters over a longer period, a narrow focus will give a more specific view of network development as you slide the period lens along the dateline. To show the progressive, cumulative expansion of a network, slide the end-date (right-hand edge of the period lens) forward along the dateline while leaving the begin-date (left-hand edge) in place.

– Hovering the cursor on a line will pop up the names and locations of the correspondents, as well as the beginning- and end-date of their exchange. Note that individuals move around and may be found at various points on the map, especially if you use a wide period lens.

4. sets:

The letters displayed are part of selected data sets, each of which includes the network or "meta-network" of an individual. Which of the data sets is/are being mapped in SpInTime can be seen (and selected) from the "Sets" menu (top right of screen). At present, there are 6 test sets available:

[1] Grimm1: correspondents of Jacob Grimm

[2] Grimm2: correspondents of Jacob Grimm *and* correspondents of those correspondents (i.e. Grimm's "meta-network"; note that the letters in the set "Grimm1" are all included also in "Grimm2")

[3] Rask: correspondents of Rasmus Rask

[4] Stur: correspondents of Lúdevit Štúr.

The data sets Grimm1 and Grimm2 are displayed by default. You can select/deselect each data set, and combine more than one data set.

5. persons:

The grey menu "Persons S/R" (top right of screen) has a double function.

– Hovering the cursor over the S (Sender) or R (Receiver) columns will fog the network displayed on the map, highlighting only the trace-lines involving the person under the cursor.

– Individual correspondents may be filtered in/out within the chosen data set. For example, deselecting Jacob Grimm as sender and as receiver from the data set "Grimm2" will display only those correspondents between whom Grimm mediated, not the letters to/from Grimm himself.

An option "select/unselect all" is at the top of the list.

The list of names may be longer than the ones displayed. You can click-drag the name-list to scroll through.

6. colours:

The colour gradations to identify the various correspondents involved can be selected from a limited menu labelled "Color" (top right of screen).