TopoText: Interactive Digital Mapping of Literary Text

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WHAT IS TOPOTEXT?
TopoText is an interactive text mapping tool that allows us to examine language used in the vicinity of places mentioned in texts. It allows users to create rich maps without having to face a steep learning curve. It keeps the “human in the loop” of geoparsing.

WHAT DOES TOPOTEXT DO?
• place name extraction
• geo-parsing
• POS tagging
• basic word cloud visualization
• human in the loop disambiguation
• Creates reusable data.

WHAT IS A GEO-CENTRIC APPROACH TO READING?
A geo-centric approach, inspired by Westphal and Tally, focuses on the place, rather than the subject, as the center around which events unfold. This is achieved by singling out place names and providing the linguistic context in which they show up facilitating both close and distant reading.

TopoText emerged from a digital humanities collaboration between the Departments of English and Computer Science at the American University of Beirut.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS
-fine tuning the tool for fuzzier orthography (historical language)
-adapting the tool to work with other historical gazetteers
-expanding the tool to including other languages
-evaluating the tool through user studies

REFERENCES