

17.588f13 Week 9 Paper Topic Option #1

(N = 1-4 people)

Lurking somewhere in Anderson's book is a testable claim about linguistic differences, the printing press, and the emergence of nationalism. He does not really present any tests himself, but you can. Specifically, for this class project, you should:

- Articulate what you see as Anderson's core claim, or some other interesting argument he makes;
- Identify a number of observable implications of that claim;
- Select the one(s) that seem(s) most readily testable;
- Identify the data necessary to conduct your tests – for example, categorization of language families, timing of the emergence of the moveable type in different countries, likely geographic ranges for papers, measures of your outcome (presumably, manifestations of nationalism or lack thereof), etc.;
- Collect the data;
- Run the requisite analyses; and
- Write up your key findings.

You will presumably need to brainstorm a good deal about the theoretical side. However, I want to make sure that you perform at least one clean, compelling empirical test. Given time constraints, this means that you will want to look for as simple as possible a test of Anderson's core claim – a task that will likely require some cleverness.

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