Databasing Jungle-War

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How did culture, social practice and materiality of data-processing affect its results and usage during the Vietnam war?
Historical Background

- Advisory Mission 1961-1964 failed
- 1965: US openly enter civil war in Vietnam
- Creation of Office for Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support (CORDS) in 1967
- Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara orders thorough investigation and application of System Analysis principles
Pacification Database

• 67 different data-collections on various aspects of intelligence, security and development

• interconnectable via a hamlet gazetteer containing USID identifiers and geolocation:

→ Hamlet Evaluation System (HES)
Hamlet Evaluation System (HES)

- 44 provinces, 272 districts, 2,680 villages, 11,800 hamlets, 11-17 mio. people
- geoinformation and demographic data updated quarterly
- matrix of 18 indicators and 5 rating-categories (A-E), updated monthly
- operational since January 1967, revised in 1970 and 1972
« Databasing »

Concept
- Paradigm
- Operationalize

Collection
- Gathering of data
- Evaluation

Storage
- Maintenance
- Retrieval
- Archive

Analysis
- Aggregation
- Modelling
- Simulation

Application
- Interpretation
- Presentation
- Consultation

Scheme inspired by: Peter Graeff and Nina Baur, «Digital Data, Administrative Data, and Survey Compared»
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Village</th>
<th>Hamlet Name</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Type of Hamlet</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>Manor</td>
<td>Hamlet A</td>
<td>Manor house</td>
<td>Village</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>Farm</td>
<td>Hamlet B</td>
<td>Farm house</td>
<td>Village</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>Cottage</td>
<td>Hamlet C</td>
<td>Cottage</td>
<td>Villae</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>House</td>
<td>Hamlet D</td>
<td>House</td>
<td>Village</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>Hut</td>
<td>Hamlet E</td>
<td>Hut</td>
<td>Village</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: This is a simplified example of a Hamlet Worksheet. Actual worksheets may vary in complexity and content.*
From Punchcard to Tape
Storing
Application
Selected Literature and Sources


Thank You!

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