

What is old is new again

Eric Lease Morgan <eric_morgan@infomotions.com>
ADLUG Annual Meeting, Rome (October 19, 2015)

The how's of librarianship are changing, but not the what's.

Linked Data

Linked Data is a method for describing things. These things can be the objects in a library. Thus, Linked Data can be a type of bibliographic description.

Triples

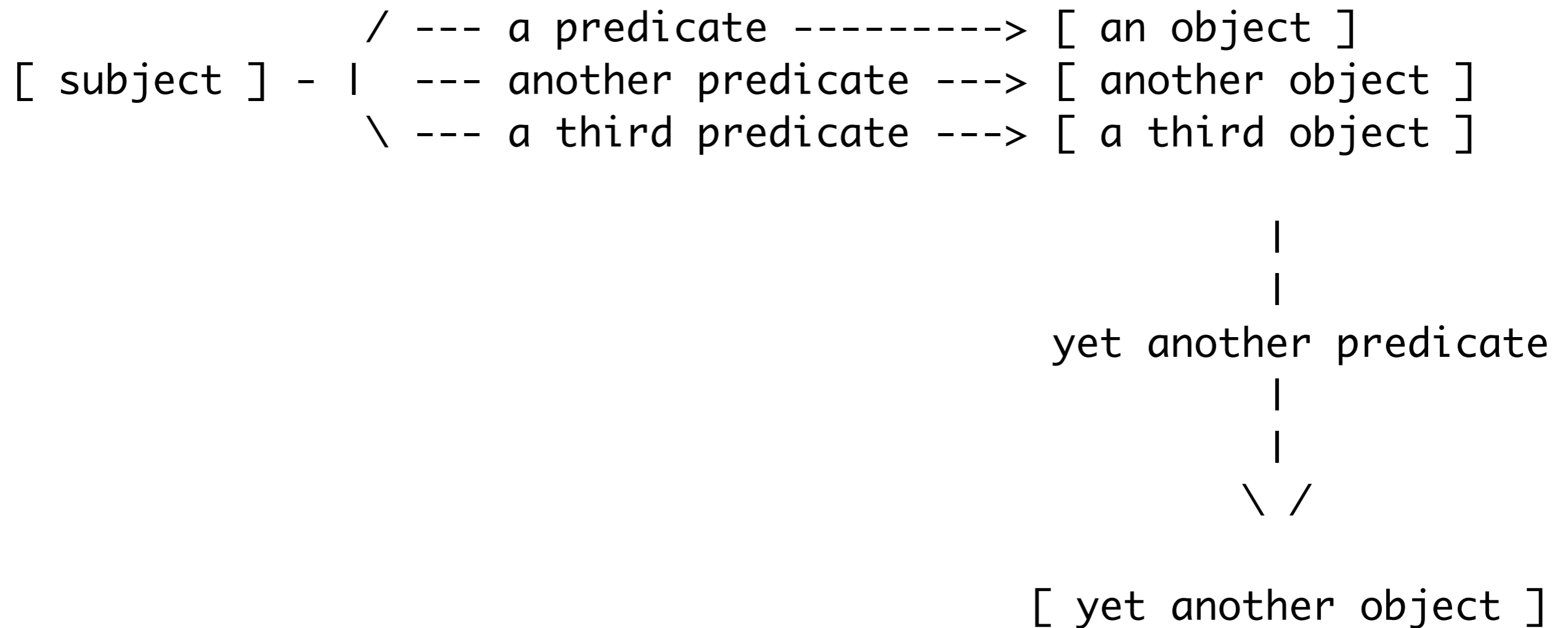
Triples are the basic data structure of Linked Data, and, they are made up of three parts:

1. **subjects** - URIs pointing to things real or imaginary
2. **objects** - URIs or literals (words, phrases, or numbers)
3. **predicates** - URIs denoting relationships between subjects and objects

Triples, continued

[subject] --- predicate ---> [object]

Triples, continued



Triples, examples

[subject]	[predicate]	[object]
<code>http://example.org/rome</code>	<code>http://example.org/name</code>	<code>"Rome"</code>

Triples, examples

[subjects]

`http://example.org/rome`
`http://example.org/rome`
`http://example.org/rome`
`http://example.org/rome`
`http://example.org/rome`

[predicates]

`http://example.org/name`
`http://example.org/founding-date`
`http://example.org/description`
`http://example.org/type`
`http://example.org/sub-part`

[objects]

`"Rome"`
`"1000 BC"`
`"A long long time ago,.."`
`http://example.org/city`
`http://example.org/italy`

Triples, examples

```
[http://example.org/rome]
```

```
|  
|
```

```
--- / -- http://example.org/name -----> ["Rome"]  
| -- http://example.org/description ---> ["A long time ago.."]  
| -- http://example.org/founding-date -> ["1000 BC"]  
| -- http://example.org/sub-part -----> [http://example.org/italy]  
\ -- http://example.org/type -----> [http://example.org/city]
```

Triples, examples

[subjects]

<http://example.org/italy>

<http://example.org/italy>

<http://example.org/italy>

<http://example.org/italy>

[predicates]

<http://example.org/name>

<http://example.org/founding-date>

<http://example.org/type>

<http://example.org/sub-part>

[objects]

"Italy"

"1923 AD"

<http://example.org/country>

<http://example.org/europe>

Triples, examples

[subjects]

<http://example.org/paris>
<http://example.org/paris>
<http://example.org/paris>
<http://example.org/paris>
<http://example.org/paris>

[predicates]

<http://example.org/name>
<http://example.org/founding-date>
<http://example.org/description>
<http://example.org/type>
<http://example.org/sub-part>

[objects]

"Paris"
"100 BC"
"There's this tower..."
<http://example.org/city>
<http://example.org/france>

<http://example.org/london>
<http://example.org/london>
<http://example.org/london>
<http://example.org/london>
<http://example.org/london>

<http://example.org/name>
<http://example.org/description>
<http://example.org/founding-date>
<http://example.org/type>
<http://example.org/sub-part>

"London"
"Warm beer is here."
"100 BC"
<http://example.org/city>
<http://example.org/england>

<http://example.org/newyork>
<http://example.org/newyork>
<http://example.org/newyork>
<http://example.org/newyork>
<http://example.org/newyork>

<http://example.org/founding-date>
<http://example.org/name>
<http://example.org/description>
<http://example.org/type>
<http://example.org/sub-part>

"1640 AD"
"New York"
"Never sleeps."
<http://example.org/city>
<http://example.org/usa>

Triples, usefulness

- What things are denoted as types of cities, and what are their names?
- What is the oldest city?
- What cities were founded after the year 1 AD?
- What countries are sub-parts of Europe?
- How would you describe Rome?

Linked Data, why

When the content of libraries is manifested as Linked Data, then new relationships between resources will be discovered and uncovered.

Linked Data is a newer, more timely method of describing collections; *what is old is new again.*

Curation of digital objects

The curation of collections does not have to be limited to physical objects.

With the advent of the Internet there exists an abundance of full-text digital objects just waiting to be harvested, collected, and cached.

But it is not good enough to link and point to such objects because links break and institutions (websites) dissolve.

Curation, continued

Digital curation is not easy, and it requires systematic organization and evaluation in order to be useful.

There are many advantages, including: long-term access, analysis & evaluation, use & re-use, and relationship building. Examples include: institutional repositories, bibliographic indexes, and collections of complete works of interest.

Curation, an example

In the recent past I have created “browsers” used to do “distant reading” against curated collections of materials harvested from the HathiTrust, the EEBO-TCP, and JSTOR.



Curation, an example

[Demonstrate one or more of the browsers here.]

What is old is new again

The traditional principles of librarianship (collection, organization, preservation, and dissemination) are alive and well in this digital age. Such are the what's of librarianship. It is the how's of the librarianship that need to evolve in order the profession to remain relevant.