

## PHRC

### Towards a Semantic Markup of Ritual Action and its Social Underpinnings

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*Practicalities of Hellenistic Ruler Cults* (PHRC) is an ongoing (oct. 2015 – sept 2017) Marie Curie-funded project in Greek epigraphy and digital humanities focussing on the ritual action and the social agency of cults for rulers in Hellenistic Asia Minor, Cyprus and the Aegean Islands. It will produce a linked, open (CC BY-SA licensed) database of about 150 EpiDoc xml-encoded inscriptions (decrees and dedications) with commentary and translation (English, Italian). Users (researchers, teachers, students) can browse the database through Greek lemmata, English descriptors (support and content-related) and a geo-blog with active Open Streep Map-based maps.

The challenge for PHRC consists in developing a consistent and flexible model for semantic tagging concerning both ritual practice and social agency. *Europeana EAGLE* vocabularies currently leave these domains unexplored as they focus on support-related descriptors. The recently released Liège project *Collection of Greek Ritual Norms* (CGRN) provides a first set of categories fit for Greek religion, while the semantic markup for social agency remains out of the remit of this project.

Starting from this state of the art, PHRC aims at further developing, testing and sharing a coherent and augmentable model of semantic annotation for ritual action and agency related to cultic honours for human benefactors in the Hellenistic period.

The paper showcases some of the challenges, solutions and problems met during the first year of development of the project. A speaking example is related to religious dedications, where semantic annotation must give account of the following data: vocabulary of the offering; the triangle actor/dedicated good/recipient; syntax of the dedication (genitive, dative, accusative, hyper + genitive); social status of the involved persons; context.

#### Biography

Stefano Caneva has a MA degree in Greek Philology and Literature and a PhD in Greek History, with a thesis on the patterns of legitimation of power adopted by the Ptolemies in the third century BC (*Studia Hellenistica* 56, 2016). In the last five years he has worked at the Universities of Leuven, Liège and Padova, where he is currently Marie Curie research fellow with a project in Greek epigraphy and digital humanities. Since 2012 he has combined his profile as a researcher with the active participation in the activities of various cultural organizations in Europe (Wikimedia Italia, Wikimedia Belgium, Europeana), taking up tasks as project manager, board member, consultant. His domains of expertise include the cultural, religious and political history of the Hellenistic World; digital classics; participatory didactics; cultural management.

The results of the ongoing two-year project in Padova will be developed thanks to a three-year grant at the University of Liège (2017-2020).