Annotating Humanities Research Data

Annotation is one of the oldest cultural techniques of mankind. While in past centuries pen and paper were the means of choice to add annotations to a source, this activity has increasingly shifted to the digital world in recent years. With the W3C recommendation 'Web Annotation Data Model', a powerful tool has been available since 2017 to model annotations in a wide variety of disciplines and to enable cross-disciplinary analysis.

In this poster, we would like to give an insight into our annotation infrastructure, which is in use in three humanities research projects. The focus is on a custom-developed annotation server with RDF backend (fully compliant to the 'Web Annotation Protocol') as well as our annotation interfaces. The interaction of these components with each other but also with other infrastructure components such as a research data repository or a vocabulary editor as well as the daily work of researchers with these components will be illustrated.

Special attention will be paid to the modeling of annotations in our different use cases. Examples range from labeling of logical diagrams in medieval Aristotle manuscripts, to the analysis of metaphors in religious meaning-making, to the capture of particular Hebrew letter variations in Torah scrolls. The discussion of similarities and differences in these use cases holds great potential for transferability and fruitfulness in further scientific disciplines and is thus a main part of our contribution.

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WADM
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Annotation infrastructure

Primary authors: TONNE, Danah (Karlsruhe Institute of Technology); ERNST, Felix; GÖTZELMANN, Germaine; FRANK, Laura; TÖGEL, Philipp; Dr JHA, Vandana

Presenters: TONNE, Danah (Karlsruhe Institute of Technology); GÖTZELMANN, Germaine; FRANK, Laura; TÖGEL, Philipp; Dr JHA, Vandana

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