

DH-Case 2013

**PROSO:
prosopographic
records**

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PROSO

- A model to think of prosopographic data.
- An XML format to store and exchange prosopographic data.
- A solid base for Linked Data silos.

Prosopographic projects...

- Amore Scientiae Facti Sunt Exules (ASFE, UniBO)
- Repertorium Academicum Germanicum (RAG)
- Repertorium Academicum Pictaviense (RAP)
- SymoGIH (LARHRA)
- Teachers of Arts and Medicine in Renaissance Italy
- Onomasticon
- Catalogus Professorum Lipsiensium

...and prosopographic data

- People
- Roles
- Salaries
- Places
- Travels
- Acquaintances
- Grades
- Degrees
- Dates
- Events
- Relationships
- Origin

Similarities

All projects...

...deal with similar
concepts

...focus on different
aspects or have
different perspectives

...store data in a
different way

Data exchange

- To exchange data we need
 - A shared conceptual model
 - A shared exchange format
- If we want to exchange and merge data we also need
 - A way to deal with imprecise or incomplete data
 - A way to deal with conflicting data

PROSO structure

Model/data

A precise definition of what is being talked about

Serialization format

A way to describe our data as computer symbols (bytes in the end)

Export format

Additional (imprecise) ways to force our data into existing formats

Part 1: the model

- In the PROSO model there are
 - Entities: the things to be described
 - Factoids: the assertions about the entities
 - Collections: sets of factoids collected by the same author about an entity
 - Sources: people, groups or documents from which the factoids have been extracted

Raw data

Castner Wolphgangus è un de li studenti tedeschi

From raw data to structured data

Person {

Id = 0918

Name = Castner Wolphgangus

Occupation = Student

Origin = Germany

}

Data can be temporally bound

Castner Wolphgangus è un de li studenti tedeschi

Annali 1570-1571

Data can be imprecise

Cas__er WoIphga è un de li studenti 'deschi

Data can be incoherent

Castner Wolphgangus è un de li studenti tedeschi

Marcus Bononii et Wolfgangus Kastner amici sunt

Solution: factoids

- PROSO factoids are inspired by Bradley and Short, 2005: “The evolving field of new-style prosopography”.

Author *ASFE* states that

Source *Belvisi* states that

Wolfgang Castner was a student from 1571 to 1573

Wolfgang Castner was a student from 1571 to 1573

Factoid

Each factoid has

- Attributes (e.g. fact id)
- Source
- Target entity
- Property

Part 2: serialization

- XML-based;
- The root is always an entity with an ID;
- Each element in the root (or in a collection) is a factoid;
- Each factoid has a type (free or from a controlled vocabulary);
- Each factoid connects the root entity to a simple value or to another entity.


```
<person xml:id="http://proso.example/person/CastnerW01">
  <info-collection author="http://asfe.unibo.it"
    xml:id="http://asfe.unibo.it/persona/NG0306">

    <name normalized="true">
      <given-name>Wolfgang</given-name>
      <surname>Castner</surname>
      <source href="http://asfe.unibo.it/source/ASFE"/>
    </name>
    <name>
      <given-name>Wolfgangus</given-name>
      <surname>Kastner</surname>
      <source href="http://asfe.unibo.it/source/Siena1-123"/>
    </name>
    <name>
      <value>Castner Wolphgangus</value>
      <source href="http://asfe.unibo.it/source/Belvisi-135v"/>
      <source href="http://asfe.unibo.it/source/Belvisi-136r"/>
    </name>

    . . .
```

```
<location>
  <place type="region">
    <value>Tirrolensis Germanus</value>
  </place>
  <source href="http://asfe.unibo.it/source/Belvisi-136r"/>
</location>

<location>
  <place href="http://asfe.unibo.it/places/Germanus"/>
  <source href="http://asfe.unibo.it/source/Belvisi-135r"/>
</location>

<factoid type="note">
  <value>Probably received a
    scholarship for 1 year.</value>
  <source useFallback="true"/>
</factoid>
```

Part 3: export

- We created a simple RDF/OWL transformation using current ontologies:
 - FOAF (Friend of a friend): people and their names;
 - BIO: events
 - Biography Light: biographic data
- Many other transformation are possible, PROSO records contain more information than most other formats currently used.

Conclusions

- PROSO has been created looking at existing project and trying to address a real, current need.
- The PROSO model and format allow:
 - exchange of prosopographic data
 - identification of sources (precise or imprecise)
 - conflicting informations