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Referencing annotations as a core concept of the hallerNet edition and research platform

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Keywords: publication platform, annotations, models of text, data analysis
Permalink: https://gams.uni-graz.at/o:tei2019.171

May 2019 saw the launch of hallerNet, a platform revolving around prominent actors of the Enlightenment and nature research in eightteenth century Switzerland. HallerNet aims to illuminate the transformation of the early modern *République des Lettres* into the modern scientific community and its discipliniary differentiation by combining digital source editions with a very rich body of prosopographical and bibliographical research data.

Whereas the online platform is brand new in its current shape, the underlying metadata was compiled over a span of almost three decades. From the outset, the main focus of the data collection was on Haller's correspondence, the actors related to it and bibliographic information – pertaining to Haller's works, his library but also a vast amount of secondary literature of note –, and resulting in encompassing print publications such as **Repertorium zu Albrecht von Hallers Korrespondenz 1724–1777** (Boschung et al. 2002) and **Bibliographia Halleriana** (Steinke and Profos 2004). These endeavors led to a voluminous research database with considerable depth (Steinke 2003), built up between 1991 and 2016 and subsequently transformed into TEI (cf. Recker-Hamm and Stuber 2015, Stuber, Daengeli and Forney 2019). With the onset of a large project on Albrecht von Haller's reviews and letters, funded by the Swiss National Science Foundation (2018–2023), all ca. nine thousand extant reviews by Haller will be edited in conjunction with some eight thousand thematically related letters (on their relationship cf. Stuber 2004).

This undertaking, again, relies heavily on earlier research and more specifically on a series of printed editions of Haller's correspondence, which provides the basis for the encoding of more than half of the selected letters. The proposed contribution will discuss the process of the *digitisation* and re-working of such print predecessors. Specifically, the fate of the footnote shall be pondered and the chosen solution in the context of hallerNet editions presented, both on the level of the TEI encoding and the presentational rendering. When developing the data model of these re-editions it quickly showed that porting existing annotations from footnotes in print to footnotes in the digital edition would not leverage the full potential of the new environment. Instead, as much information as possible is attached to references to database objects (persons, institutions, publications, plants and so on). Only critical (philological) annotations and historical information that cannot be related to a database object is retained in footnotes.

The implemented model for annotated references is straightforward and basically consists of notes in referencing strings. In the course of the re-edition, information on, e.g., the social position or the place of activity of an actor as it may be given in a legacy footnote is brought over to the respective database object, from where it may be queried also from other occurrences. Consequently, this interweaving of textual data with extensive metadata makes it possible to evaluate this kind of information not only for a single letter, but also for a correspondence as a whole and in doing so to derive and compare social profiles of specific correspondences (Sonntag, Stuber and Forney 2019).

A guiding principle of the migration from the (relatively) private database to TEI was to allow for more openness. For one, both the transcribed documents but also the gist of the database objects will be made available in public in a FAIR repository. In addition to this, the data will also be retrievable directly from the platform in a programmatical manner. To this end the database objects are related to authority files wherever possible so that the information may be shared with other projects and resources. Besides using existing interfaces such as corrispSearch and integrating the data with, e.g., HistHub and Metagrid, it will be very interesting to provide access to specific bits of the valuable knowledge contained within the hallerNet platform through nascent interfaces such as prosopograPhI.

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