Linked Data and Literature: Encoding the Facts in Fiction

Maximum Number of Participants: 40

Date: Monday, July 7, 2014 – All Day – 09:00 to 12:00 + 13:00 to 17:00

Facilitator(s):

Dr K Faith Lawrence,

Research Associate, King's College London

Overview:

How can you tell a story to a computer so it can process it? Can we computationally differentiate the Scotland of Tam Lin, Macbeth, Harry Potter and Brave while still acknowledging the shared concept of 'Scotland'? Or deal with Watson's wound being in both his leg and   his shoulder in Conan Doyle's Sherlock Holmes? This workshop will provide a practical introduction to the modelling of narrative elements for computational processing and look at the advantages and limitations of annotating stories in this way.

With a mix of discussion, examples and hands-on activities, this workshop will introduce through the basic steps needed to extract and define story elements in a meaningful semantic way. While the exercises will focus on the OntoMedia ontology attendees who have already begun work in this areas will be strongly encouraged to share their experiences and models.

The workshop will focus on fictional narratives because they present numerous challenges beyond those shared with non-fictional narratives including the malleable nature of reality and how we can deal with the idea of truth within fiction. The workshop will address the role of the model and the tension between the requirement to formularise to make the data computational and the inaccuracy and loss of information that is inherent in that process. We will discuss the effect that levels of granularity and expectation have on model use in narrative study and the concept of the computer as an unreliable narrator.

Audience:

This workshop is aimed at researchers annotating narratives, especially fictional (or debatably fictional) narratives, who are interested in using linked data techniques to open new possibilities for analysis and distant reading. This workshop will *not* cover natural language processing or similar methods of automated annotation.

Attendees should bring laptops for use during the practical sessions but will have the option of working in pairs. Short texts will be provided for use in the practical sessions for which access to the latest version of the Chrome browser will be necessary.

While the workshop will work with linked data and ontological models, the focus of the modelling discussion will be on the theoretical side and knowledge of OWL and other modelling languages will not be required. Some familiarity with inline and standoff markup may be helpful but the workshop is intended as an introduction and no knowledge/ability beyond basic computer use will be assumed.