INTRODUCTION

This workshop grew out from my postdoctoral research project on *The boundaries and territorial geographies of Archaic and early Roman central Italy* carried out at Stockholm University in Sweden. Within this project I started to explore the local identities in central Italy from the Orientalising and Archaic periods to the colonial times after the Roman conquest. Within the short time span of the project it was possible to acknowledge and show the potential of epigraphy and databases of different ancient languages in the study of past group identities, ultimately exploring the possibilities of creating a platform for presenting different Italic inscriptions, especially in Faliscan, Etruscan, Oscan and other Sabellic languages, that exist in a variety of types and media. Thus, I presented the Riksbankens Jubileumsfond in Sweden a plan for this workshop in order to explore the potential of the epigraphic digital approach in the wider European research framework and to bring together a group of Swedish, Italian and other European scholars in order to investigate inscription databases from different viewpoints. The aim was to look for a common ground and check whether the creation of a wider open access Italic inscription database is possible.

I received the funding in early summer 2014 and could organize the workshop on September 23, 2014, in the Swedish Institute in Rome with the kind help from Director Kristian Göransson and his staff. The participants of this workshop represented different disciplines, specialisms and research periods making it truly a multinational and multidisciplinary event. The workshop later resulted in an ERC Consolidator Grant application and a further initiative in Digital Humanities. Even if different grant applications were not to be successful, the workshop produced a lively discussion on different issues in creating, maintaining and using epigraphic databases, and helped to present research projects from Sweden, Italy and other countries and to introduce researchers, administrators and schemes from Sweden, Finland, Denmark, Italy, Germany and from the Anglo-Saxon world to each other.

During the discussions the participants touched upon the current usability of the existing online databases. The fields in the prototype EAGLE viewer, representing the common nominators between different databases, were not all-embracing and they emphasized the textual content. Even if many finds do lack context information, more detail could be incorporated. The importance of research questions in querying material was also noted, as was the importance of images; the copyright issues were raised in this context. This led to the discussions on tags, metadata and meta-metadata, i.e., who is the authority proposing different interpretations. The long-term preservation of

the databases was also discussed and the role of repositories was underlined; when the content is saved in an archive format, it can be preserved and reused if placed in an open access repository. The preservation of the EAGLE portal and the consortium databases was also briefly considered in the light of the fixed-term funding.

This workshop would not have found a more appropriate publication forum than the open access journal «Archeologia e Calcolatori».

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