**Issue Topic**

How to disambiguate polysemous concepts used as ontological classes

**Overall Issue Topic:**

Example for the Modelling Principles document.

**Website Link:**

<http://www.cidoc-crm.org/Issue/ID-533-how-to-disambiguate-polysemous-concepts-used-as-ontological-classes>

**Present State of Issue**

ORIGINAL

In the 49th CIDOC CRM and 42nd FRBR CRM sig meeting (virtual), upon resolving issue [368](http://www.cidoc-crm.org/Issue/ID-368-concept-of-inscription-in-the-epigraphic-sense), the sig assigned AF to redraft the use case of unpacking the polysemous concept "inscripition" into semantically distinct classes, to form part of the Modelling Principles document (see issue[351](http://www.cidoc-crm.org/Issue/ID-351-modelling-principles)).

PROPOSED SOLUTION

Please find below a reformulation of issue 368 to be used for the Modelling Principles document.

**Polysemic Concepts Used as Ontological Classes**

An example from epigraphy

For epigraphists the term “inscription” comprises a **compression of multiple concepts.** As an example of their vision, consider the polysemic understanding used in *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum* (CIL) for recording an inscription, which is, from time to time, described as:

1. A **physical** **object** on which an inscription occurs, and all the aspects concerning its material composition, finding spot, status at finding time, status at record creation time, etc.
2. A **text** intended as an exact reproduction of letters’ (and symbols') arrangements on the physical support.
3. The **linguistic** **meaning** of the text as deduced by its accurate investigation and study.

A valid methodology to deal with this issue could be to try and decompress the various intrinsic meanings of “inscription” to identify the **chain of distinct senses** that it comprises, and in particular**:**

a) the **material aspect** of the physical feature

b) the **individual appearance** of the physical feature

c) the **arrangement of symbols** and their **status**: readable, partially readable/unreadable

d) the **expansion into a meaningful text** or other meanings

To render all these aspects, it is possible for instance to instantiate classes of CIDOC CRM and CRMtex to capture all the possible meanings of the “inscription” compound, and then relate all these instances between each other to reassemble all the possible facets of this polysemic concept by means of CIDOC CRM propositions. For instance, it is possible to use:

* Instances of the *E33 Linguistic Object* or *E34 Inscription* class to identify d).
* Instances of the *TX1 Written Text* or *TX7 Written Text Segment* to render a) and b)
* Instances of the *TX10 Style* and the *TXP12 has style* property to render c)

Finally, it is possible to relate the inscription to the object on which it is located by means of the *P128 is carried by* and the *P56 is found on* properties.

**Action to be Taken:**

Readapt the text above for inclusion as part of the Modelling Principles document (issue[351](http://www.cidoc-crm.org/Issue/ID-351-modelling-principles)) and close this issue.