

NFDI4Objects
Collecting

Community Cluster (CC) Objects as Information Carriers

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The CC within NFDI4Objects

NFDI4Objects is an initiative within the National Research Data Infrastructure (NFDI) which pursues the establishment of a sustainable research data infrastructure on a national and international level according to the FAIR and CARE principles. NFDI4Objects represents a broad range of numerous disciplines from the humanities, cultural studies and natural sciences with an archaeological and historical focus that deals with the material legacies of past human activities: Artefacts, architecture, archaeological features, anthropogenically shaped landscapes and ecological remains. Community Clusters are constructed according to mutual research data management (RDM) needs and made up of individuals from the NFDI4Objects member institutions, specialists from outside and all other interested persons. This cluster aims to establish an open community representing both collecting and editing institutions as well as researchers from disciplines that deal with written artefacts as a material tradition from different areas and periods.

Aims and Objectives

Ever since the *material turn*, which has shifted the focus to the materiality of objects, their design, their use and their placement in (past) societies, the material aspect of text-bearing objects has received new attention. We therefore see a need to make the materiality of all kinds of inscribed or written artefacts adequately accessible and researchable in the digital research environment. This addresses the question of how the relation between the objects' design and the textual information expressed in texts, letters and signs is or can be modelled in RDM (fig. 1). Needs, goals and feasibility are therefore to be defined in processes driven by the members of the cluster. Topics covered include:

- qualification of research data through generally accepted and semantically coordinated authority files, vocabularies and ontologies developed by the community at the interface between textual, object-descriptive, visual and (geo-)spatial information.
- improving the interoperability of existing data collections and data discovery services.
- transfer of high-quality research standards from reference works (e.g. CIL, CSIR, IG, LIMC, RPC) to the semantic web.
- criteria for the development and systematic improvement of data collections / databases that record aspects of the materiality of written artefacts in a structured manner.

The overarching goal is to capture the interrelations between the materiality of an object, the respective object history and the textual information conveyed from the perspective of research data management.

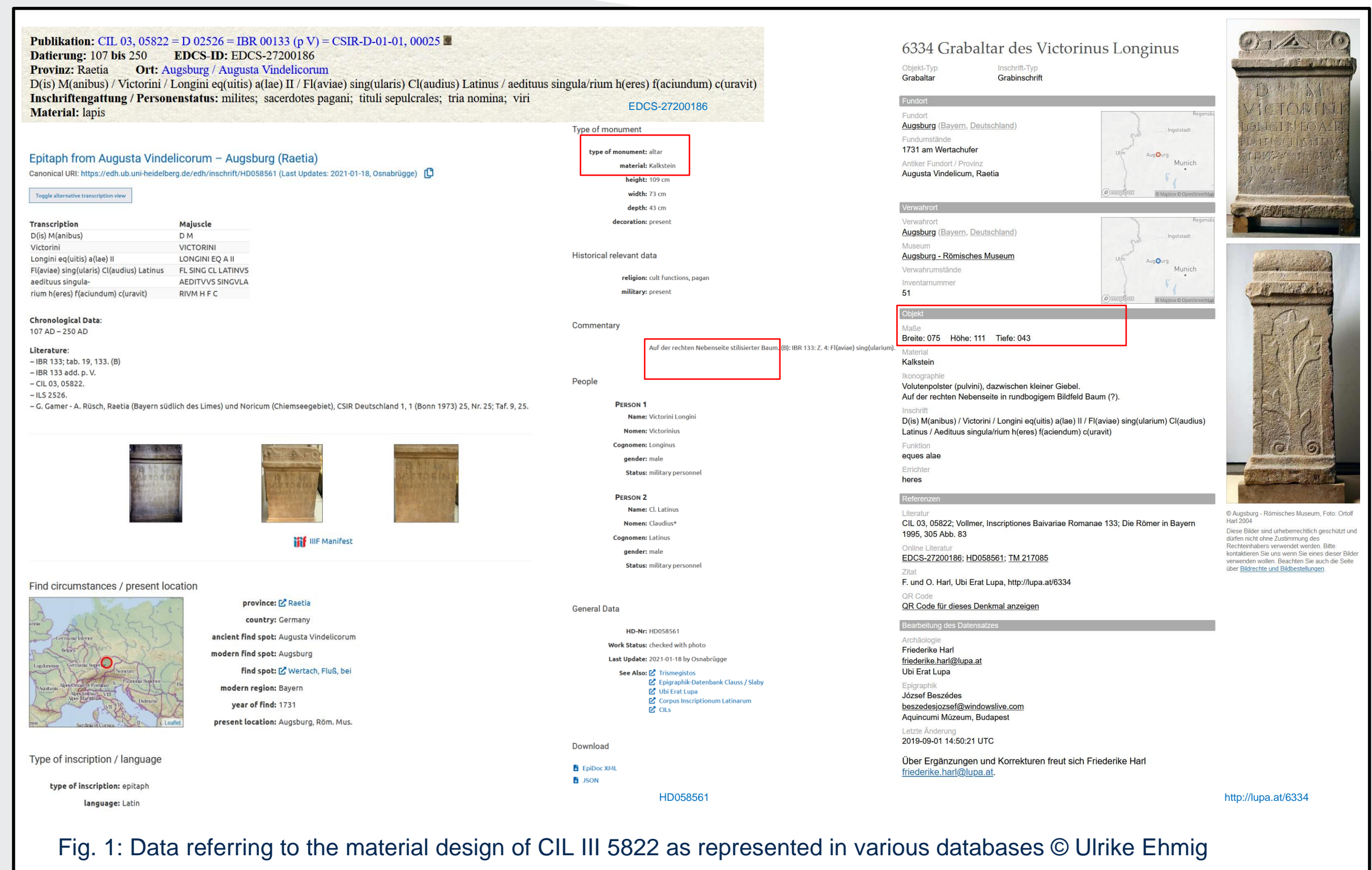


Fig. 1: Data referring to the material design of CIL III 5822 as represented in various databases © Ulrike Ehmig

Temporary Working Groups

Depending on the research area and question, some object classes, edition formats and disciplines are more ready for the digital transformation as they already have well-established databases, data collections and metadata standardisation initiatives are in progress, while others are still on the lookout.

We are therefore convinced that it is a profitable endeavour to survey the existing digital possibilities in this area. This overview should include databases and data collections and also address the question of how the material properties of the written artefacts and their design can be traced and researched in the respective examples.

This survey will be the work of the first Temporary Working Group (TWG), the working body of NFDI4Objects and its Community Clusters. However, TWGs can also be set up for topics yet to be defined by the community. Another important issue for us seems to be a TWG that deals with the modelling of the, not rarely complex, object history of written artefacts. The relation between materiality and text in their temporal and functional framework is determined on the basis of reused and repurposed artefacts and the resulting requirements for the RDM are defined.

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Who we are and how to join

We appreciate all types of co-operation, partnership and support. New enthusiastic members are always welcome!

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