

S A W S

Sharing **A**ncient **W**isdom**S**

Exploring the tradition of
Greek and Arabic wisdom literatures

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The **SAWS** project

- We aim to exploit digital technologies in order to understand and publish collections of citations
- We are investigating 'gnomic' sayings, moral and philosophical, in Greek and Arabic
- Our primary focus is on Greek collections of 'sayings', *gnomologia*, from the ninth - twelfth centuries, and on Arabic collections of sayings from the same period



Greek wise men debating, 13th century Arabic manuscript

We want to:

1. Make our texts searchable
2. Publish in a way that makes explicit the structure of the manuscripts
3. Demonstrate the links between *gnomologia*; between collections and 'source texts'; and between collections and the texts which made use of them
4. Develop tools to allow other scholars to publish similar material and link it to ours

New Editions

*Taqwîm al-siyâsa al-mulûkiyya - The
Rectification of Regal Policy and
Voluntary Morals*

A collection of political and ethical material
in the name of Plato

Dated 980-1020

Preserved in Istanbul (Ayasofya 2822)

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

فَقَرَّ مَجْمُوعَةٌ عَنْ فَلَاطُونَ فِي نَفْوِيرِ السِّيَاسَةِ
الْمُلُوكِيَّةِ وَالْأَخْلَافِ وَالْإِخْتِيَارِ بَيْنَ مَعَارِ فِلْسَافَتِهِ
قَالَ لَا تَصْحَبُوا الْأَشْرَارَ فَإِنَّهُمْ يُمُنُّونَ
عَلَيْكُمْ بِالسَّلَامَةِ مِنْهُمْ **وَقَالَ** إِذَا أَقْبَلَتْ
الْمَمْلَكَةُ خَدَمَتِ الشَّهَوَاتِ الْعُقُولَ وَإِذَا
أَدْبَرَتْ خَدَمَتِ الْعُقُولُ الشَّهَوَاتِ **وَقَالَ**
مَا أُعْطِيَ الْإِقْبَالُ أَحَدًا شَيْئًا إِلَّا سَلَبَهُ مِنْ
حَسَنِ الْأَسْعَدِ أَكْثَرُ مِنْهُ **وَقَالَ** لَا تَقْصُرُوا

أَبْنَاءَكُمْ عَلَى آدَابِكُمْ فَإِنَّهُمْ مَخْلُوقُونَ
لِزَمَانٍ غَيْرِ زَمَانِكُمْ **وَقَالَ** لَا تَطْلُبْ سُرْعَةَ
الْعَمَلِ وَاطْلُبْ تَجْوِيدَهُ فَإِنَّ النَّاسَ لَيْسَ
يُسْأَلُونَ فِي كَمِّ فُرْعٍ مِنْ هَذَا الْعَمَلِ وَأَمَّا يُسْأَلُونَ
كَيْفَ جُودُهُ **وَقَالَ** لَا تَخْتَفِزْ صَعْبًا
يَحْتَمِلُ الزِّيَادَةَ **وَقَالَ** لَوْ لَمْ تَكُنْ فِي الشَّرْفَةِ إِلَّا
إِحْتِمَالُ الْعَادَاتِ الرَّدِيَّةِ لَكَانَ كَافِيًا فِيهَا
وَقَالَ زِيَادَةُ كَلِمَةٍ فِي مُحَاطَبَةِ الْحُرَّاجِ
إِلَيْهِ مِنْ زِيَادَتِكَ جَزِيلًا فِي عَطَائِهِ **وَقَالَ**
عَطِيَّةُ الْعِلْمِ شَبِيهَةٌ بِمَوَاهِبِ اللَّهِ جَلَّ وَعَزَّ
لِأَنَّهَا لَا تَنْفَدُ عِنْدَ الْجُودِ بِهَا لَكِنَّهَا تَكُونُ

Structure of the texts

Compilers organised the collections in different ways:

- According to author
- According to theme, and then according to author within each theme
- BUT many discrepancies, misattributions, mistakes in transmission, sections missing

Examples

Simple statement:

One cannot cover a fire with a cloak nor a shameful sin with time.

Anecdotal statement:

Diogenes was asked by someone why people give to beggars but not at all to philosophers, and he said, "Because, perhaps, they expect to become lame or blind but not to become philosophers."

To publish our texts and make them searchable, we will use TEI-conformant **XML** (Extensible Markup Language)

- An international standard for the exchange of data
- A 'metalanguage'- a language for describing other languages
- Able to describe what something means, not just how it should appear, e.g.

HTML: `<i>The Roman Stonecutter</i>`

XML: `<title>The Roman Stonecutter</title>`

We wish to explore relationships:

1. Within a particular collection
2. Between collections
3. Between languages
4. Between collections and 'source texts'
5. Between collections and 'literary' texts which made use of them

GV 87 Ὁ αὐτὸς ἐρωτηθεὶς τίνα μᾶλλον ἀγαπᾷ, Φίλιππον ἢ Ἀριστοτέλην, εἶπεν· “ὁμοίως ἀμφοτέρους· ὁ μὲν γάρ μοι τὸ ζῆν ἐχαρίσατο, ὁ δὲ τὸ καλῶς ζῆν ἐπαίδευσεν.”

Alexander, asked whom he loved more, Philip or Aristotle, said: "Both equally, for one gave me the gift of life, the other taught me to live the virtuous life.

Plutarch, *Life of Alexander* 8.4.1

Ἀριστοτέλην δὲ θαυμάζων ἐν ἀρχῇ καὶ ἀγαπῶν οὐχ ἥττον, ὥς αὐτὸς ἔλεγε, τοῦ πατρός, ὥς δι' ἐκεῖνον μὲν ζῶν, διὰ τοῦτον δὲ καλῶς ζῶν ...

Alexander admired **Aristotle** at the start and loved him no less, as he himself said, than his own father, since he had life through his father but the virtuous life through Aristotle ...

Pythagoras? وقال الآباء هم سبب الحياة والحكماء هم سبب صلاح الحياة

He said: Fathers are the cause of life, but philosophers are the cause of the good life. - *Selections from the Sayings of the Four Philosophers*: (B) Pythagoras saying 18 (ed. Gutas)

Diogenes Laertius 5.19, *Life of Aristotle*

τῶν γονέων τοὺς παιδεύσαντας ἐντιμοτέρους εἶναι τῶν μόνον γενησάντων· τοὺς μὲν γὰρ τὸ ζῆν, τοὺς δὲ τὸ καλῶς ζῆν παρασχέσθαι.

Aristotle said that educators are more to be honored than mere begetters, for the latter offer life but the former offer the good life.

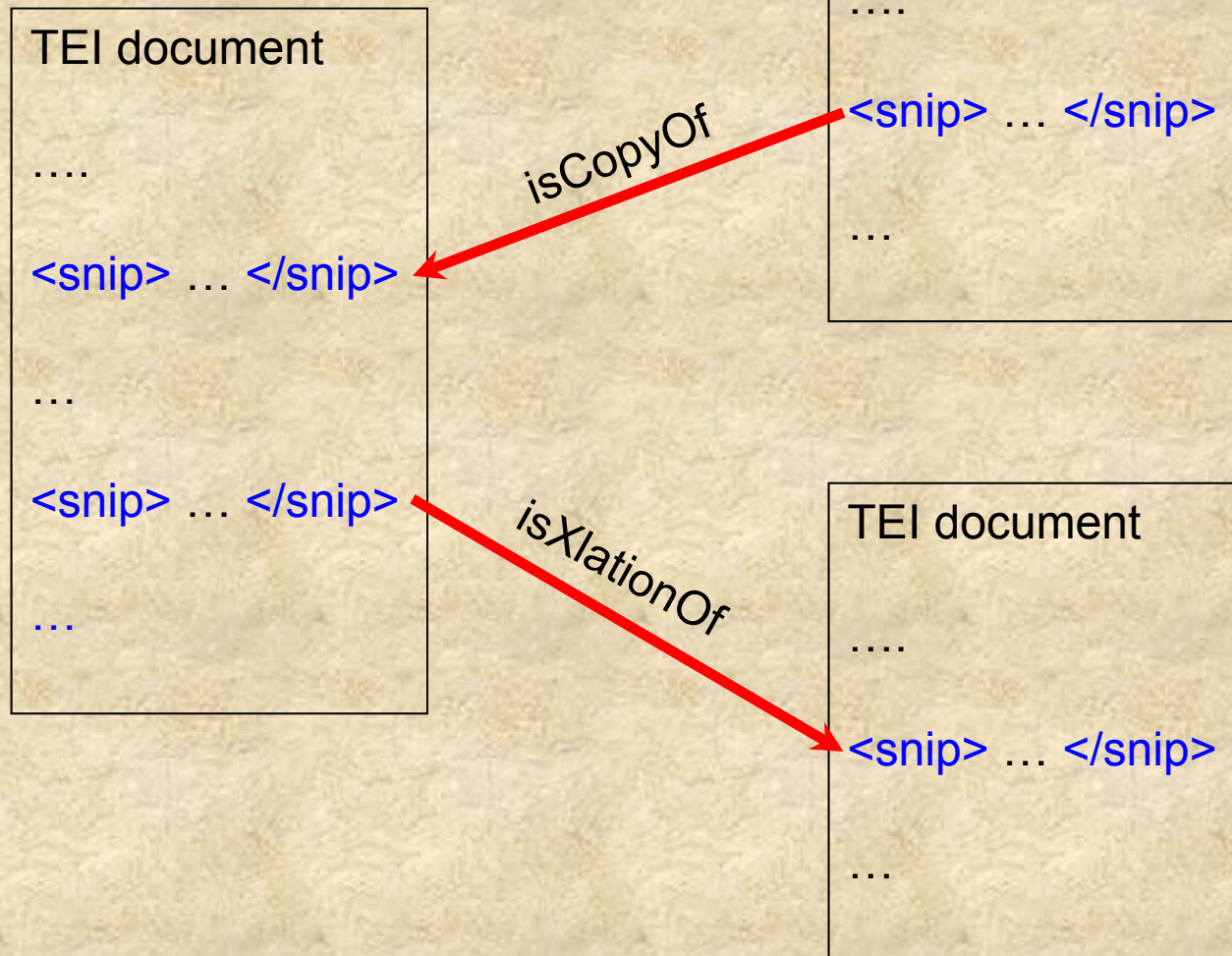
Using TEI will allow us to:

- embed meaning within the transcribed text
- produce each of the required outputs and indices
- ensure interoperability with other projects

To express the relationships within and between texts, we will use:

RDF (Resource Description Framework)

- This is another standard, for expressing relationships
- Tripartite system – **Object**, **Predicate** and **Subject**



Possible approach: TEI Sequence element

“Urged by this friends to beget children, he said, Don't worry, as offspring I leave behind my victories in battle”

Possible approach: TEI Segment element

```
<seg type="contentItem">
```

```
<seg type="narrative">
```

```
<seg type="statement">
```

```
<seg type="contentItem">
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```
<seg type="narrative">
```

```
Urged by this friends to beget children, he said, </seg>
```

```
<seg type="statement">Don't worry, as offspring I leave behind my  
victories in battle
```

```
</seg>
```

```
<seg type="narrative" xml:id="n0034"> Urged by this friends to beget  
children, he said,
```

```
<seg type="statement" xml:id="s0125">Don't worry, as offspring  
I leave behind my victories in battle
```

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<seg/>
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</seg>
```


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</seg>

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<seg type="narrative">

<seg type="statement">

<seg type="contentItem">

<seg type="narrative">

Urged by this friends to beget children, he said, **</seg>**

<seg type="statement">Don't worry, as offspring I leave behind my
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</seg>

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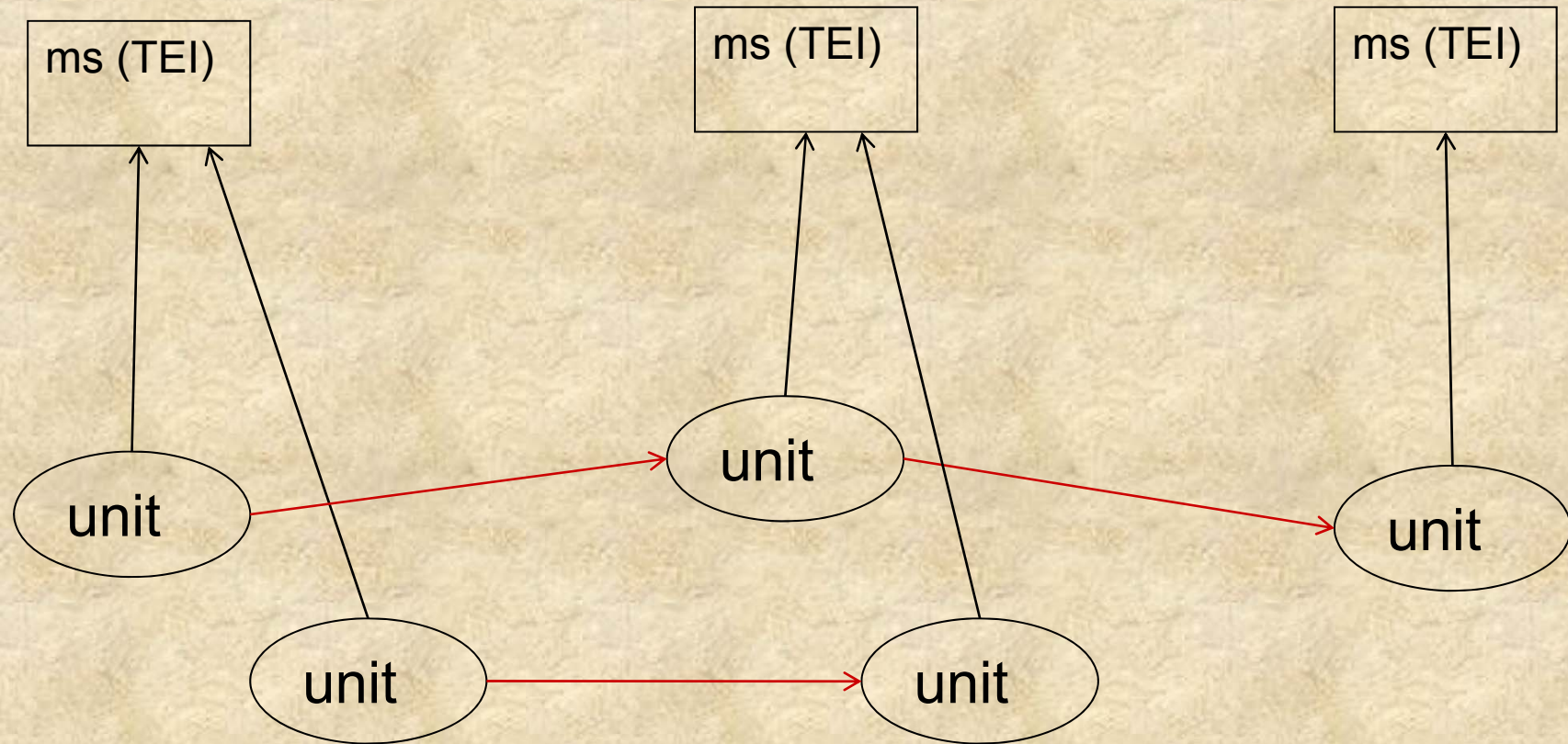
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```
<seg/>
```

```
</seg>
```

Annotation tools

User adds relationships

Triplestore

User query/browse

Research questions

1: Identification

- What is a snippet? A citation? A proverb? Something else?
- How is it identified?
- How do you mark it up and described in the edition?
- How many different kinds of units of research are there?

Research questions

2. Terminology

- Are there agreed definitions/preferred terms for various aspects of the texts?
- Are there any problematic definitions?
- How can common aspects of proverbs in different languages/scripts be described according to common technical standards?

Research questions

3. Searching

- How are particular units/snippets found within texts?
- How important are search mechanisms?

Research questions

4. Publication

- What form do (e)Publications of MSS take?
 - (1) Collections
 - (2) Complete texts
- How do the indexing systems of these texts work?
- Printed editions are out of scope, but may still need to be included in the RDF structure
- Will the publications involve non-textual information such as images or maps?

Research questions

5. Relationships

- What kinds of relationships between units are present?
- What definitions of relationships already exist?
- Are the relationships quantitative, qualitative, direct, inferred, explicit, implicit, semantic, textual, literal, linguistic?
- Are they internal to the text, or external, or both?
- How do you describe these relationships? Can there be a shared list of relationships?

Observations

- Number of analogous mss is very large.
- Not *just* creating digital editions of some mss they form the kernel of a larger corpus.
- Research value of relationships will increase dramatically with the size of the corpus.
- We are creating a *framework* for others to use and extend
- A growing network of interconnected information

Outcomes

A better understanding of the cultural dynamics of such texts and collections

By means of:

- New editions published online (Open Access).
- Identified relationships between texts.
- A methodology to be used by others analyzing and publishing similar material.

The SAWS project is essentially about relationships; and we are very interested in developing relationships with the other MSS based projects.

Aristotle tutoring Alexander
(13th century manuscript)

