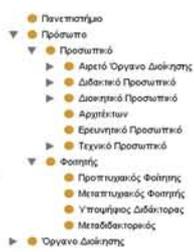


Ontologies as Tools for Historians

Representational Model



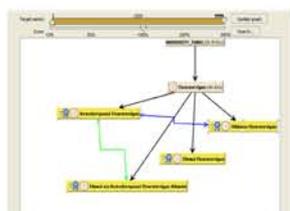
Ontology

Instant: 1837-08-24
 Period: [1837, 1911] [1922-now]
 + Temporal slots:
 Othonian University [1837-1911]
 National University [1911-1922]
 National and Kapodistrian University [1922-now]

Special Data Types

+ Lifespan
 Previous
 Next
 Probable previous
 Probable next

Special slots



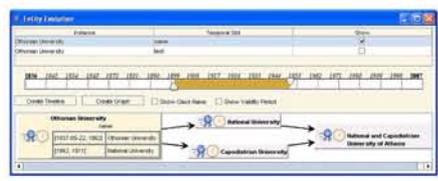
Timeviz



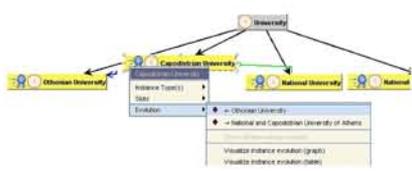
Evolution detection heuristics



Visualization and Heuristics



Evolution visualization



Papyrus



The Papyrus project (<http://www.ict-papyrus.eu>), is an EU funded project, aiming at the creation of a multi-disciplinary digital library coupling the domain of History and the domain of News. End-users will be able to browse and query the history ontology and through it access related news items from the news archives of several European news agencies.

Ontologies have been proven invaluable tools in areas like the semantic web and personal information management. They model concepts and relationships in a high level of abstraction, providing rich semantics for humans to work with and the required formalism for computers to perform mechanical processing and reasoning.

In the context of a PhD scholarship programme supported in part by the Greek Secretariat for Research and Development under the PENED 2003 framework we have investigated issues related to ontologies in the context of history, and more specifically:

Ontology modeling. An ontology modeling historical information has a very important characteristic: Concepts and instances involved most probably have evolved during the time-span in question.

Ontology visualization. We have concluded and extensive study of existing ontology visualizations and evaluated with an experiment their suitability for end users. Based on these findings we have created TimeViz, a visualization tool for ontologies that have evolved in the passage of time.

The insight gained from our research will be applied to:

- A website presenting the History of the National and Capodistrian University of Athens, in the context of a national project. The basis for this web site will be an ontology of important concepts for the history of the organization, which will be populated with a number of instances, linked with related exhibits of the History Museum and the Historical Archive of the University, the information repositories of which are mostly taxonomy-based.
- The Papyrus project

