

A View on Digital Classics Collaboration

from a cacophony of epigraphic databases to
a citizens' web of inscriptions

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- Background
- Digital Corpora
- User Reactions
- A Lesson from Papyrology
- Cyberscience and Epigraphy

BACKGROUND

Background: Print corpora

- CIG: Augustus Boeckh 1825 (IG: Adolf Kirchhof 1860)
 - 50,000 inscriptions
- CIL: Theodor Mommsen 1853
 - 180,000 texts
- Geographically organized
- Texts re-edited, if possible autopsied

Background: Print summaries

- AE: René Cagnat 1888
- SEG: J.J. Hondius 1923
- Annual summaries of new publications in given year
- Comprehensive within those constraints

DIGITAL CORPORA

Digital Corpora 1: PHI

- Kevin Clinton, Cornell 1985
- Funded and designed, David Packard (Packard Humanities Institute)
- 1987-1996: CD ROM
- 2007- : website (epigraphy.packhum.org)
- Texts plus minimal bibliography
- Documentation absent:
 - No of inscriptions? (208,000)
 - Collection/editing criteria? (sporadic)

Regions : Asia Minor : Caria : Aphrodisias

Aphrodisias 671 ← Aphrodisias 670 Aphrodisias 672 →

Christian honorary inscription for Rhodopaios, on columnar statue-base; 6; found at Aphrodisias: Reinach, REG 19, 1906, 142-143, no. 75; Hellenica 4, 127-128; BE 1949:178; Roueché, GRBS 20, 1979, 182; *Roueché, Aphrodisias in Late Antiquity no. 86 (PH).

Roueché, Aphrodisias 86

1 [τὸν ἀ]ληθάργητον εὐ-
[εφ]γέτην τὸν λου-
[τρ]οῖς καὶ σιταρχίαις
5 λοιμὸν καὶ λιμὸν ἀπε-
λάσαντα Ῥοδοπαῖον
[τ]ὸν φιλόπατριν ποθοῦ-
[σ]α πόλ[ε]ις δευτέρῃ
[τ]ῆδ' εἰκὸνι μαρμάραι
10 κοσμήσασα ἀξίαις
[ῆ]μείψατο τιμαῖς.
‡

PH257554

Digital corpora 1: PHI

“Our goal is to make available computerized texts of as many Greek inscriptions as possible, from all areas and periods. This data bank of inscriptions is not intended to replace or reproduce printed editions: we do not attempt to reproduce the precise layout of printed texts, broken letters, critical apparatus, or commentary. The primary purpose of the data bank is to allow the texts to be searched as quickly and efficiently as possible by a variety of computers with appropriate programs.”

John Mansfield

Digital corpora 2: EDH

- Géza Alföldy, Heidelberg 1986
- Website since 1997
- 65,000 texts
- Text + diplomatic + v detailed supporting and analytic data and categories
- Re-examined and re-edited by compilers
- Bibliography, photographs
- EAGLE Federation (Rome, Bari, Alcalá)

EDH - Epigraphic text database

HD no.: HD006785

work status: provisional work status
last update: 28 June 2007
responsible individual: Graf

Find spot / present location

| | | | |
|----------------------------------|------------|---------------------------|------------|
| province / Italic region: | Aegyptus | modern country: | Egypt |
| ancient find spot: | Alexandria | modern find spot : | Alexandria |

type of inscription / language

language: Latin

type of monument

Literature

AE 1980, 0894.

Text of inscription

Transcription: D(is) M(anubus) s(acrum) / M(arcus) Valerius Omuncio eq(ui)e(s) Valerini fili(us) / fecit monumentum(!) Valerini fili / qui vixit menses VII
majuscule: D M S
M VALERIVS OMVNCIO EQE VALERINI FILI
FECIT MONIMENTVM VALERINI FILI
QVI VIXIT MENSES VII

Digital corpora 2: EDH

“The texts and metadata of the inscriptions are thus presented on the basis of up to date scholarly research. One of the basic principles of the working method of *EDH* is that readings are not simply accepted from the editions and secondary literature. As much as possible these readings are verified at least on the basis of drawings or photographs ... or ideally through autopsy.”

EDH website, ‘Concept’

Digital Corpora 3: Clauss-Slaby


- www.manfredclauss.de
- 445,000 texts (“almost all Latin inscriptions”)
- Very little documentation/agenda
 - founding date? (Late ‘90s?)
 - collection/editing criteria?
- Raw text search only
 - minimal metadata
- Draws heavily on CIL/EDH and other databases

Conditions of search:

Publication: "ILBulg"
Province: ""
Place: ""
Search text 1: ""
Choice: "and"
Search text 2: ""
Sorting: "Publication"


Inscriptions found:

There were found 461 inscriptions.

Publication: CIL 03, 00749 (p 992, 1338) = D 05956 = IGLNovae 00073 = ILBulg 00357 = ILBulg 00386 


Province: Moesia inferior **Place:** [Swischtow / Svishtov / Novae](#)

Ex auctoritate Imperatoris Caesaris / divi Traiani Parthici filio(!) divi Nervae / nepotis Traiani Hadriani Augusti patris patriae pontificis maximo(!) tribuniciae / potestatis XX consulis II[II] / Antius Rufinus in terra Moesia et Thraciae fines posuit

Publication: CIL 03, 00750 (p 992, 1338) = IGLNovae 00030 = ILBulg 00292 

Province: Moesia inferior **Place:** [Swischtow / Svishtov / Novae](#)

Libero Patri Caius Iulius Caerianus primus pilus / legionis Italicae ex equite Romano

Publication: CIL 03, 00751 (p 992) = CIL 03, 07434 = CIL 03, 12345a = D 01855 = ILBulg 00441 = AE 1902, 00122 

Province: Moesia inferior **Place:** [Swischtow / Svishtov / Novae](#)

Numini Augustorum / et Genio publici portorii Hermes / Iuliorum Ianuarii Capitonis / Epaphroditii / conductorum / publici portorii Illyrici et ripae Thraciae servus vilicus posuit

USER REACTIONS

Cambridge workshop 2007

- **lack of coherence in collection strategy and coverage (unlike therefore SEG or AE, which can claim to be complete for a given year)**
- **"a work in progress is no use to me"**
- **PHI (maybe less so EDH) is full of mistakes—inconsistent checking because of so many different editors/data entry folk**
- **you can't cite it, so you always have to go to the publication as well**
- **you can't trust the search, so you always have to go to SEG/AE indices as well**

General impressions

- “I’ll use Clauss-Slaby because EDH doesn’t have everything”
- “I don’t need detailed metadata and carefully edited texts, I just need all the inscriptions”
- “But EDH only has Eastern Europe!”

EPIGRAPHIC DATABASE HEIDELBERG



[Project](#) [Inscriptions](#) [Photos](#) [Bibliography](#) [Links](#)



geographic distribution of the entered inscriptions

Challenges

- Scale is obviously important
- Quality and detail are important too
 - How can you trust large-scale search if quality of text is sacrificed?
 - Users don't trust *any* databases, so quality is not recognized as a factor?
- Data for faceting search/discovery
- Linked Data to connect with external projects
 - Geographical
 - Prosopographical
 - Archaeological

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A LESSON FROM POPYROLOGY

Integrating Digital Papyrology

- Josh Sosin, director, DDbDP
- James Cowey, Heidelberger Gesamtverzeichnis
- 2007-2011, Mellon-funded project
- 55,000 texts in DDb (+HGV database)
 - 30,000 APIS records
 - HGV, APIS, and other translations
 - Trismegistos identifiers

Integrating Digital Papyrology

- Data migration to EpiDoc (TEI) XML
 - King's College London
- Papyri.info search and browse/LD interface
 - Columbia/NYU
- SoSOL community editing platform
 - University of Kentucky
- Training programme for papyrologists
- Documentation and dissemination

Papyri.info

[home](#) | [gabrielbodard](#) | [sign out](#)

Browse: [DDbDP](#) [HGV](#) [APIS](#) [TM Number](#) or Search: [Data](#) [Bibliography](#)

Papyri.info is dedicated to the study of ancient papyrological documents. It offers links to papyrological resources, a customized search engine (called the Papyrological Navigator) capable of retrieving information from multiple related collections, and an editing application, the Papyrological Editor, which contributors can use to suggest emendations to PN texts.

The Papyrological Navigator aggregates and displays information from the Advanced Papyrological Information System (APIS), the Duke Databank of Documentary Papyri (DDbDP), the Heidelberger Gesamtverzeichnis der griechischen Papyrusurkunden Ägyptens (HGV), and Bibliographie Papyrologique (BP), as well as links to Trismegistos.

[Search the navigator](#)

[Suggest emendations](#)

About

[about papyri.info](#)

[about APIS](#)

[about DDbDP](#)

[about HGV](#)

[about BP](#)

[about Trismegistos](#)

More information

[Digital Papyrology blog](#)

[papyrological resources](#)

[send feedback](#)

IDP: Papyrological Editor

- Management interface
 - Editorial board vet all contributions/emendations
 - Reject/accept/accept to apparatus
- Tags-free editing (Leiden+)
 - 600 registered users
 - 000s of new texts / corrigenda
 - Professors marshalling student helpers
 - Retired civil servants keeping active

Papyri.info: a model for epigraphy?

- IDP was possible because of *amicitia papyrologorum*
 - DDb (+HGV) main database, no rivalry
 - Young discipline, 1880s onward
 - Greek encoding and display issues slowed down proliferation of databases
- Epigraphy fragmented, cacophonous
 - Many databases (esp. Latin)
 - No *amicitia epigraphicorum*
 - Ancient conflicting traditions
 - Italian and German giants

Papyri.info: a model for epigraphy?

- Texts already in EpiDoc:
 - Aphrodisias, Vindolanda, US Epigraphy, Tripolitania, Curse tablets, Roman Cyrenaica, Northern Black Sea, Israel-Palestine, Macedonia/Thrace, MAMA XI, Archaic Latin, Bruttium, Roman Britain...
 - In progress: Beischriften, A nastro, Dionysiac, Hydriical administration, Croatia, Latium Vetus, Minoan, Apparatus inscriptions, Greek Cyrenaica
- Compatible databases:
 - Heidelberg, Bari, Hispania Epigraphica, Jüdischen Grabsteinepigraphik

<http://wiki.digitalclassicist.org/Category:EpiDoc>

Papyri.info: a model for epigraphy?

- Heidelberg and Rome already massively collaborative
 - Scholars and teams of students
 - Overseas collaborators
- EAGLE partners in contact with EpiDoc community
- Linked Data projects such as Pleiades, Pelagios
 - Value of interoperability and interchange
 - Necessity of collaboration
 - Futility of negative criticism/complaining
 - Academic engagement

PLEIADES

A community-built gazetteer and graph of ancient places

[Tricores?](#)

Last modified: Wed Feb 15 2012 by admin

An ancient place, cited: BAtlas 15 E3 Tricores?

Search the 34,344 Places

PLEIADES

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An ancient place, cited: BAAtlas 15 E3 Tricores?

PELAGIOS

Pelagios means 'of the sea', the networking medium for ancient places

[Home](#)[About PELAGIOS](#)[Pelagios in Use](#)[API](#)[Data](#)[Cookbook](#)[Find a Place](#)[Map](#)

About PELAGIOS

PELAGIOS stands for 'Pelagios: Enable Linked Ancient Geodata In Open Systems' - its aim is to help introduce Linked Open Data goodness into online resources that refer to places in the Ancient World. Why do we want to do that? Well, we think it will make all sorts of other things possible, including new modes of discovery and visualization for scholars and the general public. Pelagios also means 'of the sea', the superhighway of the ancient world - a metaphor we consider appropriate for a digital resource that will connect references to ancient places

Who are Pelagios?

Pelagios are a collective of projects connected by a shared vision of a world - most eloquently described in Tom Elliott's article 'Digital Geography and Classics'

SEARCH THE PELAGIOS BLOG

PARTNERS

[Arachne](#)[British Museum](#)[CLAROS](#)[Digital Memory Engineering](#)[Fasti Online](#)[Google Ancient Places](#)[Inscriptions of Israel/Palestine](#)[ISAW papers](#)[jiscGEO](#)[LUCERO](#)

Citizens' Web of Inscriptions

- We are academics, but no more ivory tower
- Serve public interest:
 - Not only to educate academics
 - To engage, educate, entertain public
- Publications serve more than ourselves
 - Popular history
 - Edit Wikipedia
 - Educate ourselves on digital scholarship
 - and digital culture

Citizens' Web of Inscriptions

- Linked Data approach to existing cacophony
 - Assign URIs to digital records
- Community annotation and enhancement
 - owl:sameAs
 - oac:related
 - gawd:attestsTo
- Massive database without single silo
 - Decentralize
 - Open license
 - LOCKSS

Citizens' Web of Inscriptions

- SoSOL approach to community editing
 - Papyrological Editor, Perseus, Homer Multitext, CTS, Charta
 - Gated crowdsourcing / Scholarly cyberscience
- Everyone likes to shoot down what's there more than to build something new!
 - Revision
 - Enhancement
 - Full credit
 - Résumé/tenure package



Explore Europe's cultural collections

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Featured search: The Numismatic Collection of the Bode Museum

From the blog



[Map Nerds: Jodocus Hondius and Me](#)

What is it about maps? I know I'm not the only one who can spend hours poring over them – places I've been, places I haven't, places ...

[Nobel Prizes: Economic Sciences](#)

The final Nobel Prize has been announced, bringing an end to our collection of blogposts celebrating each category from this year's

Featured item



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Beautiful watercolour painting of a shaded terrace. French National Library (Public Domain)

Citizens' Web of Inscriptions

- Decentralized data/texts
 - Core editing interface
 - Multiple editorial boards
 - Two-way data migration (keep FMP platform)
 - Until realize they like XML more anyway!
 - Enhancements from LD
- Relationships with other data
 - Papyrology
 - Geography
 - Prosopography

Thank you!

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