Making the stones speak

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Aphrodisias, 1994: Thomas Roueché and Joyce Reynolds examining a letter from the Emperor Hadrian
I started with stones:
I was looking for a way of presenting all this material
And I was directed towards XML and EpiDoc
EpiDoc represents a growing, global collaboration of humanists and information technologists (a.k.a., the “EpiDoc Community”) whose joint aim is the creation of flexible but rigorous standards and tools for the digital encoding and interchange of scholarly and educational editions of ancient texts, especially those preserved on stone, metal and other durable materials, as well as on papyrus.

Getting Started
To learn more about EpiDoc, or to get started using it, please take advantage of the following resources:

- Principles
- About EpiDoc
- Introduction for Epigraphers
- UPDATED 17 April 2008: Available EpiDoc Resources and Tools
- Past and Present EpiDoc Projects
- introduction to EpiDoc Development

Principles
Five important principles have governed the elaboration of EpiDoc techniques and tools from the beginning:

- EpiDoc and its tools should be open and available to the widest possible range of individuals and groups; therefore, all documents and software produced by the EpiDoc Community are released under the GNU General Public License
- Insofar as possible, EpiDoc should be compliant or compatible with other published standards: we should strive to avoid re-inventing wheels or creating data silos
- EpiDoc projects work collaboratively and supportively with other digital epigraphy initiatives, especially those sanctioned by the Association Internationale d’Epigraphie Grecque et Latine
- In the arena of transcription, EpiDoc must facilitate the encoding of all editorial observations and distinctions signaled in traditional print editions through the use of sigla and typographic indicia
- We avoid encoding the appearance of these sigla and indicia; rather, we encode the character (or semantics) of the distinction or observation the human editor is making. The rendering of typographic representations of these distinctions are accomplished using XSLTs or other methods.

About EpiDoc
EpiDoc was started in the late 1990s by Tom Elliott, then a graduate student in Ancient History at the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill (U.S.A.). Elliott made public his initial work on epigraphic encoding in XML in response to the promulgation, by Prof. Silvio Panceria and colleagues, of a manifesto recommending the establishment of an on-line, free and unrestricted “database ... of all surviving Greek and Latin epigraphical texts produced down to the end of Antiquity.”

The manifesto itself had emerged from a round-table meeting on the subject of “Epigraphy and Information Technology” in Rome, convened by Prof. Panceria in May 1999 in his capacity as President of the “Commission for Epigraphy and Information
νεός Οὐλίαν Εὐσεβίας Ἐυπτυχίας Ἀττακράτωρ καὶ Ποιμήν Σεβαστὸς Ἐκκλησίας Φιλοσώφων Καὶ Ἀλήθειας Ἐκκλησίας Εὐσεβίας Ἐυπτυχίας Ἀττακράτωρ καὶ Ποιμήν Σεβαστὸς Ἐκκλησίας Φιλοσώφων Καὶ Ἀλήθειας Ἐκκλησίας Εὐσεβίας Ἐυπτυχίας Ἀττακράτωρ καὶ Ποιμήν Σεβαστὸς Ἐκκλησίας Φιλοσώφων Καὶ Ἀλήθειας Ἐκκλησίας Εὐσεβίας Ἐυπτυχίας Καὶ Ἀλήθειας Ἐκκλησίας Φιλοσώφων Καὶ Ἀλήθειας Ἐκκλησίας Εὐσεβίας Ἐυπτυχίας Καὶ Ἀλήθειας Ἐκκλησίας Φιλοσώφων Καὶ Ἀλήθειας Ἐκκλησίας Εὐσεβίας Ἐυπτυχίας
Output media/formats

XML repository

Database

Web
Mobile
PDA

Book
Journal
PDF
This medium resolved the issues of capacity.
It offers detailed search and analysis.
It frees the users to choose their own directions.
Interchange was facilitated
But in the early 2000s the benefits were largely internal: not because we didn’t want to link, but because there was relatively little to which to link
By 2008 linking to Pleiades became possible.
Pleiades were our partners in the Concordia project, which funded the Inscriptions of Roman Tripolitania.
Inscriptions of Roman Cyrene

Place: Cyrene
http://pleiades.stoa.org/places/373778

An ancient place, cited:
Biblia 38 C1 Cyrene
Further references at Pelagios

Findspot: Cyrene (Pleidies): South Necropolis, Cassels S.9. On the north side of the old road from Cyrene to Beida, just beside the milestone.

Original Location: Unknown.
Last recorded location: Findspot.

<table>
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<th>Edition</th>
<th>Diplomatic</th>
<th>Epidoc (XML)</th>
<th>[Conventions][Font help]</th>
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</table>

a

1

Αρίσταρχος
Πανταλέωντος

2

{Φ} Φιλίτα

b

1
The material makes its own demands on the editor
We aim to report what is important to the writer of the text.
Cyrene

An ancient place, cited: BAtlas 38 C1 Cyrene
http://pleiades.stoa.org/places/373778

Alternative Names: Claudiapolis, Cyrene
Coverage: Ain Sharat, Greanah

4120 References to Cyrene

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<td>Pelagios Annotations from Online Coins of the Roman Empire</td>
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<tr>
<td>ORBIS: The Stanford Geospatial Network Model of the Roman World</td>
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Related Places What's This?

Pelagios is transformative
It performs the functions of a spider, not a magic ring
The future will see many specialist gazetteers, each with its own raison d’être
This framework means that we are talking about the distribution of labour.

For every project a big question is **Who Does What?**

*I should do those things that only I can best do*
What questions come next?

Where? Pleiades and Pelagios
Who?
What?
When?
Who?
People
ABOUT

In the first phase of the Standards for Networking Ancient Prosopographies: Data and Relations in Greco-Roman Names (hereafter SNAP:DRGN or SNAP) project (Jan-Dec 2014) we aimed to address the problem of linking together large collections of material (datasets) containing information about persons, names and person-like entities managed in heterogeneous systems and formats.

SNAP was funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) under the Digital Transformations big data scheme. The Principal Investigator was Gabriel Bodard (then at King’s College London), and Co-Investigators were Hugh Cayless (Duke), Mark Depauw (Leuven), Leif Isaksen (then at Southampton), K. Faith Lawrence (King’s College London) and Sebastian Rahtz (Oxford).

Bid Document

SNAP:DRGN is building a virtual authority list for ancient people through Linked Data collection of common information from many collaborating projects. The graph will provide: 1. identifiers for all persons who appear in one or more corpora and catalogues; 2. gold standard normalization data for parsing and proofing tools; 3. visualization of ancient persons, names, titles and relationships; 4. research tools for historians; 5. standards and software contributing to the Linked Ancient World Data community.
What?

Linked Data for Text

http://www.ancientwisdoms.ac.uk/
Presentation of the network

**Diktyon** is a scientific network of digital resources and databases on Greek manuscripts.

This network sprang informally from a workshop held in January 2013 at the Institut de recherche et d’histoire des textes in Paris (see conclusions of the workshop).

Faced with the proliferation of digital resources on the web and the risk of dispersion of the data, the idea was to find ways to coordinate different enterprises in the field of Greek manuscript studies.

The network operates through the presence of unique identifiers for items that are common to the different resources (shelf marks, authors, etc.). These identifiers are integrated in each database participating in the network, which then develops the necessary scripts to query other databases of the network through these identifiers.

The first step to create this network is based on the creation of unique identifiers for manuscripts shelf marks that will be integrated in the different databases from the beginning of 2014. The creation of identifiers for other common items (authors, texts, people) will then follow.

The **Diktyon** network is an open network that will extend to digital projects on Greek texts and manuscripts willing to join.

For more information or to join the network please contact: diktyon.contact@gmail.com
SAWS manuscripts contain references to geographical places that are listed in the Pleiades ancient gazetteer.

Pelagios links together several datasets via shared geographical links (using Pleiades URIs, OAC annotations and VoID descriptions).

Several datasets are linked together in Pelagios, including...

SPQR semantic data describe data on inscriptions and papyri.
Linked Open Data have a lot to contribute to classical studies – but far more, I would suggest, to study of the periods after the disintegration of the Graeco-Roman world.
For the medieval world, of multiple cultures, **Linked Time** could work the transformation. Bring it on!