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22. The Inscription between text and object

The deconstruction of a multifaceted notion with a view of a flexible digital representation

Emmanuelle Morlock, Eleonora Santin

Abstract

In scholarly use, the term ‘inscription’ is not always unambiguous. The same concept can designate either the signifiers on a support, regardless of their meaning and textual function, or can be used to distinguish different texts. In a digital representation, a distinct markup is utilised to encode the material and textual dimensions. In order to combine them in an adequate representation, we submit a definition of some epigraphic notions which supports the theoretical model of an encoding schema compliant with the EpiDoc guidelines, designed as a part of the *IGLouvre* project.

Keywords

Inscription (notion of), archaeological dimension of text-bearing objects, epigraphic edition, text representation, TEI, EpiDoc, digital edition.

22.1. Introduction and purposes

For a long time epigraphic editions have approached inscriptions mostly as texts, almost ignoring their physical nature. For example, reference corpora like the *Inscriptiones Graecae* were not illustrated with photographs. This period is fortunately over, although it left some consequences in editorial practices.

The 14th international symposium of Greek and Latin epigraphy, whose main theme was *Publicum, Monumentum, Textus*, has proved, once again, that any modern survey must regard an inscription as exposed writing, inseparable from its physical support (monument, object, vase, mosaic) and its context, whether certain or hypothetical. Incorporated into its support, the inscription regains its primary value as a semantic system to describe, read and interpret by incorporating at

least a threefold approach: archaeological, textual and historical.¹ An edition which strives for completeness must take all these aspects into account.

The following questions lie at the core of this approach to epigraphic objects and define a series of challenges in the editing of inscriptions and their contexts. How can earlier editorial practices be taken further in order to reduce the misinterpretations that arose in past, and might arise in the future, from a fragmented presentation or a partial analysis of a text-bearing artifact? How can epigraphic edition be properly re-structured in order to show a three-dimensional object which requires a multidisciplinary investigation? Can digital representation, digital encoding and digital edition help achieve such a difficult endeavor?

In the last decade, the digital edition of Greek and Latin inscriptions marked-up using the EpiDoc schema has gone through at least three important changes and gave rise to three types of publications:

1. Electronic republications: enhanced and expanded versions of printed books with a new presentation, improved particularly from the point of view of data availability and data query, quantity and quality of illustrations (e.g. *Vindolanda Tablets on line*² [TERRAS 2006] and the addition *Vindolanda tablets online 2³ - Aphrodisias in Late Antiquity 2004*,⁴ expanded version of the 1989 printed book by Charlotte Roueché).
2. New editions of corpora (e.g. *Inscriptions of Aphrodisias 2007*)⁵ that took advantage of the digital environment but are still close to the paper editions model [BODARD 2008]. In these first essays the apparatus criticus and textual commentary have been reduced, or sometimes omitted, in order to mind the encoding aspects.
3. Critical editions of new epigraphic corpora whose editors were able to give a more extensive and accurate representation of the

¹ For a similar approach see M. Lamé and P. Kossmann, From paper browser to digital edition of inscriptions: a new conceptual model for a global historical approach, poster presented at the TEI Conference (Rome, October 2014), <http://eer.hypotheses.org/posters>

² <http://vindolanda.csad.ox.ac.uk/>

³ <http://vto2.classics.ox.ac.uk/>

⁴ <http://insaph.kcl.ac.uk/ala2004>

⁵ <http://insaph.kcl.ac.uk/iaph2007>

text its restitution and commentary taking advantage of previous experiences (e.g. *Monumenta Asiae Minoris Antiquae XI*⁶).

Currently, in enhancing the archeological dimension of the inscriptions, great results can be observed in some ongoing, and quite advanced, epigraphic projects in Sanskrit/Cam-language, *The Corpus of the Inscriptions of Campā*) and in Celtic language, *Ogham in 3D*.⁷ The latter has revealed the great potential of the TEI-XML encoding associated with the 3D scanning process [DEVLIN et al. 2014a; DEVLIN et al. 2014b]. Now, progress remains to be made in order to create an encoding model that could combine the textual as well as the material dimension of an archeological object bearing text, and help us to determine:

1. The arrangement of an inscription on the support;
2. The textual cuts made by epigraphers on the base of different criteria.

In this endeavor, we have to bear in mind three basic values: structural eariness, flexibility and reversibility.

The diplomatic transcription of an inscription is the result of an act of interpretation, even if it is, to some extent, meant to be a neutral act. And, reading and recognizing different texts and subtexts is *a fortiori* an interpretative process. Their order and their presentation in a printed or digital edition is an editorial choice depending on the aim of the paper as well as from the scholarly habits of its author. Hence, one can understand the importance of creating a model that provides a clear ‘map’ of all the texts (coeval or not) readable on an object and the benefit of linking them to one or several high quality images. At the same time, such a model should be able to represent, and graphically display, the editor’s choices. This would allow readers to follow the editor’s interpretative path backwards and allow for the easy introduction of modifications, if they want to reuse the file.

The major challenge is finding an encoding structure that takes into account not just one, but several common epigraphic scenarios: a composite text on a single support, a simple or composite text on a composite support and the rather common case of the support’s re-use.

⁶ <http://mama.csad.ox.ac.uk/index.html>

⁷ <http://ogham.celt.dias.ie/menu.php?lang=en>

The solution found within the project *IGLouvre*⁸ should be considered as a suggestion and a starting point for a wider discussion.

Starting from four possible configurations of interaction between text and object, we first suggest a clarification of the notions embedded in our model and then we propose a method to encode, and thus better represent, the main relationships between the inscription, in its material dimension, and the text.

22.2. Interaction between text and object: four possible configurations

22.2.1. One simple text written on a single object

Let us start from the one-to-one relationship, the most linear and, fortunately, the most common. The prevalence of this configuration is perhaps the reason why some epigraphic projects do not need a way to encode more complex configuration.

A round funerary altar bearing epitaphs for three members of the same family is a good example to start with, for two kinds of reasons: the arrangement of the writing on the round surface and the internal chronology of the inscription.

22.2.1.1. Epitaph of Damophon, Epaphroditos and Theudoris

Monument description: Funerary altar decorated with bucrania.

Present location: Paris, Louvre Museum (MA 2327)

Original location: Kos.

Last recorded locations: Athens, then Toulon arsenal.

Date: 2nd half of the second century BC.

Bibliography

Monument: HAMIAUX et al. 1998, 205, n. 221; BERGES 1996, 115-116, n. 26 (the text of the inscription is not the right one), pl. 12, 3.

Editions: DAIN 1933, 17-18, n. 9 (reviewed by L. Robert, *Revue Archéologique* 2, 1933, 123, n. 9).

⁸ French project lead by Michèle Brunet, Professor of Greek Epigraphy, University Lumière-Lyon 2, selected for funding by the ANR (French National Research Agency, ref. number: ANR-12-BSH3-0012). It aims to publish a digital edition of the Louvre collection of Greek Inscriptions.

Δαμοφῶντος
 τοῦ
 Ἐπαφροδίτου

Ἐπαφροδίτου
 τοῦ
 Ἐπαφροδίτου
 πρεσβυτέρου
 Θευδωρίδος <τᾶς>
 τᾶς
 [Ἐπαφ]ροδίτου ζῶν[των]

I. 10. Dain: [Εὐμ]όλπου ζῶν[τος].

Firstly, in order to give a precise idea of the text layout and lettering, a 3D image would be far more effective than a two-dimensional photo.⁹ Secondly, the decision to present the inscription as just one text without any further divisions or, alternately, as one text divided in three textual components, is a scientific statement coming from the assumption that the three names have either been carved at the same time or not. A. Dain assumes that there are three inscriptions carved in three different stages.¹⁰ Revising the stone and the context of its fabrication, the modern editors will be able to confirm Dain's opinion and in this case they might want to divide the text in three sections (for this configuration see the next paragraph). Instead, they might assume that the monument was commissioned by all the people mentioned on the stone during their lifetime, and that the inscriptions have been carved all at the same time. This last hypothesis seems to be supported by some epigraphic

⁹ See the photo in HAMIAUX et al. 1998, 205, n 221. A program of 3D scanning and imaging of all these kind of monuments (altars with bucrania) is underway within the *IGLouvre* project.

¹⁰ In the description of the stone Dain writes: "au-dessous de la guirlande reliant deux têtes de béliers, première inscription de trois lignes; au-dessous de la même guirlande, deux autres inscriptions". In the critical notes he adds: "L'inscription a été gravée à trois reprises différentes". Maybe he hesitates between singular and plural, *inscriptions/inscription*, because the singular represents the neutral point of view of a contemporary reader (what we can see today avoiding any assumption) and the plural his interpretation.

parallels found in the round altars from Kos.¹¹

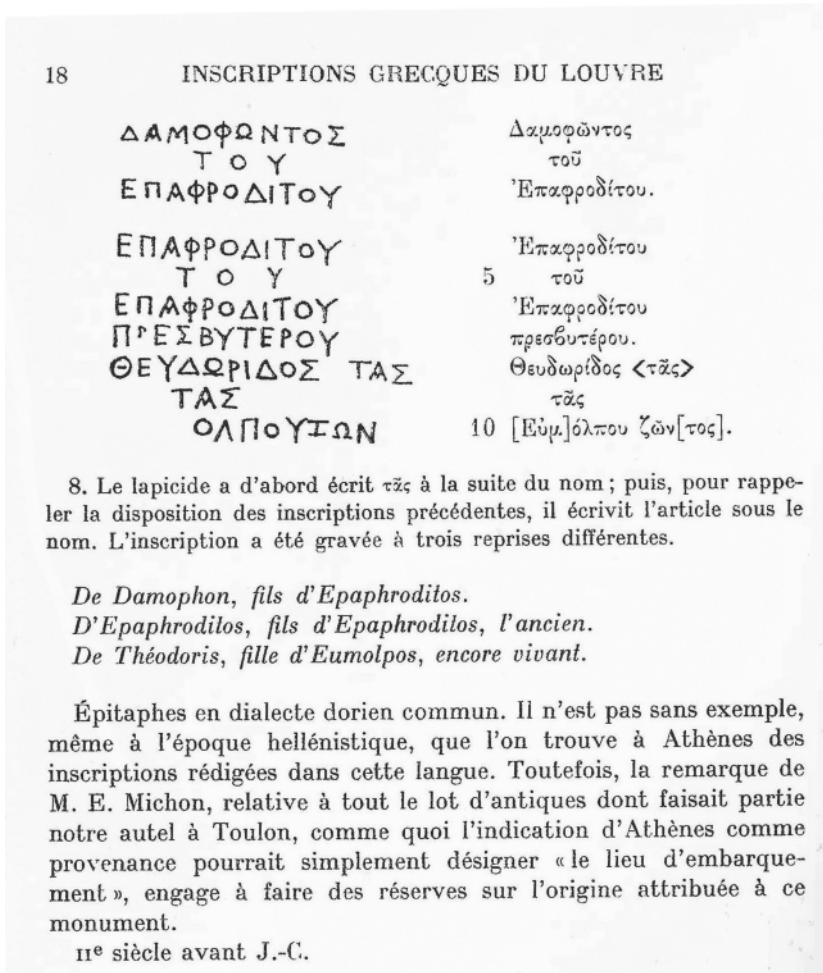


Fig. 22.1. Dain, Inscriptions grecques du Musée du Louvre, n. 9

¹¹ See BERGES 1996, Katalog ns. 1-111 (Rundaltäre aus Kos), in particular the monument n. 32 where the word ζώντων after two personal names at the genitive case is well legible.

22.2.2. One structured text consisting of multiple textual components, written on a single object or on one object-part

The textual components can be homogeneous with respect to their text type or function (several epitaphs, see 22.2) or heterogeneous (e. g. a dedication and a signature; an epitaph and a defixio, a dedication and a decree). An ancient reader, or a modern observer, could see them as parts of a composite text.

Within thematically classified epigraphic editions, the observance of strict classification rules leads editors to sometimes split into two different entries what has been conceived and realised as a cohesive ensemble. Such a practice could result in misinterpretations, especially when the necessary cross-references are omitted. An editorial presentation that compromises the overall view of an inscription, even in a thematic corpus, is fortunately less and less common. But one of the most valuable advantages of a digital edition is the possibility to markup different text forms (i.e. different taxonomies), without compromising the overall view. Giving that fact, it would be better to publish these composite texts as a whole while at the same time showing that they consist of heterogeneous components. In that way, it would be possible to link every component to the previous epigraphic editions in which it has been treated as an independent text included into different thematic groups (e.g. dedications vs decrees).

This case is exemplified by the editorial history of a marble slab from Delos (after 166 BC) bearing a dedication and a decree of the dionysiac artists honouring the aulos-player Craton, son of Zotichos from Calcedonia, now in the collection of the Louvre Museum.¹² The inscription, published by W. Froehner [1865, n 67, DÜRRBACH 1921, n 75] starting from the stone's autopsy, was then edited as an unitary text by all the principal editors except P. Roussel¹³ who, following thematic criteria, splits it into two different texts and puts them into distinct sections of the IG volume (*decreta collegiorum*: IG XI 4 1061 and *dedicationes artificum dionysiacum*: IG XI 4 1136).

¹² See the full bibliography in LE GUEN 2001, 231-239, n 45 and ANEZIRI 2003, D10.

¹³ Like G. Daux reminds in his edition of 1935 "dans les IG la dédicace et le décret proprement dit sont placés dans deux sections différentes (nos 1136 et 1061) et que leurs lignes ont reçu une numérotation indépendante".

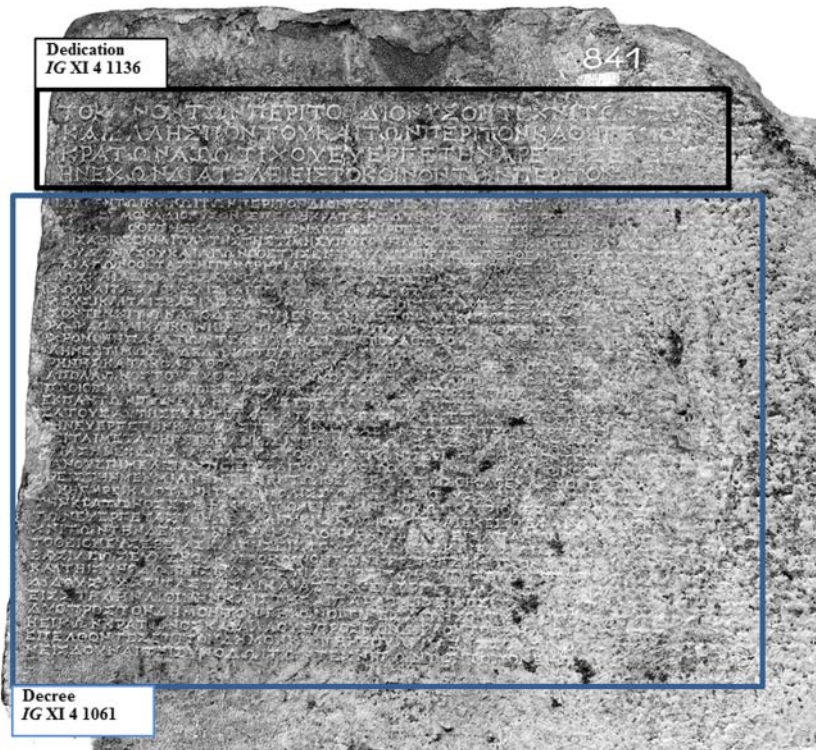


Fig. 22.2. Louvre Museum (MA 841) - Dedication and decree in honor of Kraton, son of Zotichos, from Delos, after 166 BC (IG XI 4 1061 + 1136). From a photograph provided by the Louvre Museum, cliché Lebée-Déambrosis

22.2.3. One structured text consisting of multiple textual components, written on multiple objects that are themselves parts of a composite object

Every object is a complete part or a broken part of a composite object, assembled or disassembled and scattered in different or in the same repositories and archaeological sites. This is the situation that epigraphers have to describe every time they publish an inscription written as an example on different parts of a composite funerary monument (e.g. a sarcophagus) or on different blocks of a wall. The textual components can be homogeneous or heterogeneous with respect to text type or function.

Once again, the collection of the Louvre Museum provides us with an interesting example: three funerary epigrams written on two slabs that were parts of the same funerary monument, perhaps a sarcophagus.

22.2.3.1. Funerary epigrams for Antiphon and Eurymenides sons of Sophocles

A. Monument description: A rectangular white marble slab cut again in the modern age, at the top there is a plate frame slightly prominent.

Dimensions: H. 55 x W. 100 x D. 11 cm.

Text layout: 8 lines, one l. per verse, flush left, second line indented.

Present location: Paris Louvre Museum (MA 905-1).

Findspot: Thasos, loc. Μούγγινα.

B. Monument description: A rectangular white marble slab cut again in the modern age, largely damaged at the upper left corner and broken into two parts stuck back together.

Dimensions: H. 61 x W. 94 x D. 8 cm.

Text layout: 18 lines, one l. per verse. Two lines groups, the first consisting of 8 lines (flush left, second line indented) and the second consisting of 10 lines (flush left, no indentation).

Present location: Paris, Louvre Museum (MA 905-2).

Findspot: Thasos, loc. Μούγγινα.

Original location: Thasos.

Date: about 100 BC.

Bibliography

Editions: CONZE 1860, pp. 18-21, [textual order: a, c, b] (Kaibel, *Epigr. Gr.* 208, add. p. 519; Demitsas, n. 1161-1162); IG XII 8 441, [textual order: a, c, b]; from a squeeze PEEK 1955, GV 2038 [textual order: a, c, b] (Peek, *Griechische Grabgedichte*, 1960, n. 47); DUNANT et al. 1958, 160, pl. 40.

Studies: MENDEL 1900, p. 281; LANE 1988.

A. Marble slab (MA 905-1)**a. Epigram for Antiphon****Meter:** elegiac couplet**Narrative form:** 1st person

ἄρτι με νυμφιδίων ἀπὸ δύσμορον ἄρπασε παστῶν
 δαίμων ἐς τριτάταν νισόμενον δεκάδα,
 ἄρτι βίου περὸντα κατ' εὐκλέα θέσμια δόξας
 στυγνὸς ἄπαιδα δόμοις ἀμφεκάλυψ' Αἶδας
 Ἀντιφῶντα, γοναῖσι Σοφοκλέος ὄν τέκε μάτηρ
 Ἥρω, τᾷ λιπόμαν οὐ τέκος ἀλλὰ τάφον.
 αἰαῖ, τίπτε, Τύχα, με τὸν εὐκλέα πατρῖδι κόσμον,
 τλάμονα, δυσπενθής, ὠρφάνισας βιότου;

B. Marble slab (MA 905-2)**b. Epigram for Eurymenides****Meter:** elegiac couplet**Narrative form:** 1st person

οὐ γάμον, οὐχ ὑμέναιον ἐμοὶ [c. 6 - 7]
 Ἥρω, ἀποφθίμενον δ' ἐστενάχησε γό[οις]
 εἰκοστὸν τανύσανθ' ἐτέων δρόμον· ἄ μμε δ' ὄμ[αίμους]
 τλάμονας ἐν δισσοῖς μηνσὶν ὄδ' ἔσχε τάφος·
 πατρὸς δ' εὐόλβοιο Σοφοκλέος ἄρσενα γέν[ν]αν
 ὠκύμορον φθιμέναν ἐστενάχησε Θάσος·
 μάτηρ δ' ἄ μεγάλαυχος ἐφ' υἰάσιν, ἄ πάρ[ο]ς εὐπαις,
 οὐχὶ τέκη, κω[φ]ο[ρ]ὺς δ' ἄντι δέδορκε τάφους.
 (vac. 2 lines)

c. Epigram for Eurymenides**Meter:** iambic trimeter**Narrative form:** 3rd person

ὁ τύμβος ἐσθλὸν υἷα τὸν Σοφοκλέος
 Εὐρυμενίδην κέκευθεν, ὦι βίου μόνα

ἐτῶν διεξάμειπτο διπλόα δεκάς·
 κατεῖδε δ' οὔτι νυμφικῶν ἐφίμερον
 παστὸν γάμων πάρεδρον, ἀλλ' ἀπ' ὀλβίων
 σφαλεῖς μελάθρων στυγνὸν ἦλθ' ὑπ' Αἶδαν,
 δυσπενθὲς Ἡροῖ ματρὶ καὶ συναίμοσι
 λιπῶν φίλαισιν ἄλγος· ἅ δ' ἀλιστεφῆς
 δόξας ἕκατι τῶιδε πατρία Θάσος
 τὰ σεμνὰ τιμᾶς δῶρ' ἔνειμεν εὐκλέος.

How many text structures, how many sequences are acceptable for a composite text like this? As many as the perspectives which an editor might hold as possible and worthy of notice:

- The chronological sequence of recorded events (is the text chronologically structured?);
- The poet's perspective (is the text based on a poetic project and a consequent poetic arrangement?);
- The 'engraving perspective' (what was the order of engraving? Is there a connection between this order and the inner chronology?).

If the display context and the mutual position of the marble slabs can be reconstructed, one might also add the ancient reader's point of view.

22.2.4. Multiple distinct texts, consisting of one or several textual components, written on a single object (no links with one another apart from the support)

It is the case of the support's re-use. In order to show various scholarly approaches in publishing this particular occurrence, we will compare two editions in which editors decided to present the inscription from two different perspectives. In IG IX 2, 1040 a-d (Fig. 22.3), O. Kern had an object-perspective, since he published under the same text-entry all that is readable on the stone and performed text divisions both in the diplomatic and in the critical transcription by means of a sequence of lower case letters (elsewhere in the same volume he used roman numbers). In the inscriptions of Gonnoi (*Gonnoi* nos. 114, 115, 122, 123, 127, 198,¹⁴ see Fig. 22.4, 22.5 and 22.6), B. Helly adopted thematic and

¹⁴ In the epigraphic archive of HiSoMA at Lyon, the number of the object is GHW 4348, see photos; the inventory number in Larissa Museum is 318.

IG IX 2, n.	Gonnoi, n.	Type of text	Date	Position
1040 a	198	votive dedication	2 nd c. BC	front face
1040b, ll. 1-5	114	manumission	end 1 st c. BC	front face
1040b, ll. 6-15	115	manumission	about 25 BC	front face
1040b, ll. 16-19	122	manumission	1 st half of the first c. AD	front face
1040c	123	manumission	Tiberius reign?	left side
1040d	127	manumission	45-46 AD	right side

Tab. 22.1. Bibliographical concordance

chronologic collecting criteria and so decided to split the ‘inscription’ into six different text-entries.

On the one hand, it is reasonable to separate texts that have no relation with one another, on the other hand it would be important to show the history of the different uses and reuses of an object, and make readers able to verify: the fact that there are really no links between the texts apart from the fact that they are on the same support; all the material aspects of the writing: changes of hands and writing style, text layout, etc.

22.3. Defining concepts: key entities for the material and textual dimensions

Our first attempts to represent these configurations involving a one-to-many text/object relationship by means of an EpiDoc markup stumbled upon the ambiguity of the notion of ‘inscription’. If the notion mainly describes a ‘text’, is it correct practice to use the EpiDoc ‘textpart’ subdivision of the ‘text’ element to encode material parts of an object? Since the term is often used as a substitute for a unique ‘object’ or ‘document’¹⁵ bearing a unique text, what should we do with texts that

¹⁵ See CAYLESS et al. 2009. The authors restate the historical and theoretical background of the creation of EpiDoc. The dual use of the term ‘inscription’ throughout the article to designate the source alternatively as an object and as a text, must be related to the fact that “the collaborators were seeking a digital encoding method that preserved the time-tested combination of flexibility and rigor in editorial expression to which classical epigraphers were accustomed in print, while bringing to both the creator and the reader of epigraphic editions the power and reusability of XML”.

GONNVS.

De Gonnii parietinis apud vicium *Deroli* cf. Leake *Travels III* 371. 377. | 1862, 60 sq.; Georgiadis Θεσσαλία 1880, 168 sqq. Addidi titulum in vico 381. 397; Heuzey *Mont Olympe* 1860, 12 sqq.; Burstan *Geogr. Græcienl. I* | *Nocerò* prope lacum *Nocerò* (Ασκωνίς) reperitur.

1940 Tabula marmoris subcaerulea supra et infra fracta cum aſtomate in quo vs. 1—5 tit. b̄ insculpti sunt, a. 0,52, l. 0,45, cr. 0,12. In anteriore lapidis parte titulus α (dedicatorius) tertii a. Chr. n. saeculi, e in sinistro, d in dextro latere. Exscripta in vico *Deroli* in aedibus Topal Mehmed et edidit Inscr. Thessal. Rostochii 1899/1900, 10, Tab. IV. 1.

δ
 Η Μ Ο Κ Ρ /
 Ε Ν Σ Τ Ρ Α Τ
 Υ Ο Ε Ρ Θ Ο Ε Ι Σ Ε Π Α
 Τ Ο Υ Ε Υ Η Ο Ι
 ε
 5 Ξ Ε Ν Ι Κ Η Φ Δ Ω Κ Κ Ε Ν Τ Ο Γ Ε Ι Ν Ο Μ Ε Ν Ο Ι .
 Σ Ω Τ Α Σ Α Ν Τ Ι Φ Ι Λ Ο Υ
 ι Ε Ρ Η Τ Ε Υ Σ Α Σ Α Σ Κ Λ Η Π Ι Ω
 10 Τ Α Γ Ε Υ Ο Ν Τ Ω Ν Η Σ Π Ο Λ Ε Ω Σ Τ Ο Ν Ε Ν Ι
 Λ Υ Τ Ο Ν Τ Ο Ν Ε Π Ι Σ Τ Ρ Α Τ Η Γ Ο Υ Ε Ρ Υ Δ Α Μ Α Ν
 Τ Ο Σ Τ Ο Υ Α Ν Δ Ρ Ο Σ Ο Ε Ν Ο Υ Σ Α Ν Τ Ι Φ Ι Λ Ο Υ Τ Ο Υ Σ Ω Κ Ρ Α
 Τ Ο Υ Σ Α Ν Τ Ι Γ Ο Ν Ο Υ Τ Ο Μ Ε Ν Ε Κ Ρ Α Τ Ο Υ Σ Α Σ Κ Λ Η Π Ι Α
 15 Δ Ο Υ Τ Ο Υ Α Ρ Ι Σ Τ Ο Κ Ρ Α Τ Ο Υ Σ Ο Α Π Ε Λ Ε Υ Θ Ε Ρ Θ Ο Ε Ι Σ Ε Π /
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 Σ Ι Λ Ο Χ Ο Υ Τ Ω Ν Θ Ε Ο Δ Δ Ρ Ο Υ Κ Α Ι Υ Π Ο Ο Ρ Θ Ο Π Ο Λ Ε Ω Σ Τ Η
 Δ Ι Κ Α Ι Ο Κ Ρ Α Τ Ο Υ Σ Τ Η Μ Η Τ Ρ Ο Κ Α Ι Ε Π Ι Τ Ρ Ο Π Ο Ο Υ Ο Δ
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 γ
 5 ξενική δάικεν τὸ γενόμενον (ἀδελφία) κβκ.
 ΤΑΓΕΥΟΝΤΩΝ ΤΗΣ ΠΟΛΕΩΣ ΤΩΝ ΕΠΙ-
 ΑΥΤΩΝ ΤΩΝ ΕΠΙ ΣΤΡΑΤΗΓΩΝ ΕΡΥΔΑΜΑΝ-
 ΤΟΣ ΤΟΥ ΑΝΑΡΘΡΕΝΟΥΣ ΑΝΤΙΛΟΥ ΤΟΥ ΣΩΚΡΑ-
 ΤΟΥΣ, ΑΝΤΙΓΟΝΟΥ ΤΟΥ ΜΕΝΕΚΡΑΤΟΥΣ, ΑΣΚΑΝΤΙ-
 10 ΔΟΥ ΤΟΥ ΑΡΙΣΤΟΚΡΑΤΟΥΣ ὁ ΑΠΕΛΕΥΘΕΡΩΘΕΙΣ ΕΠ' [Αφ-]
 ΤΩΝ ΑΠΟΛΛΩΝΕΩΣ ΤΗΣ ΤΕ ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΟΥΣ ΚΑΙ ΜΗΝ-
 ΣΙΛΧΟΥ ΤΩΝ ΘΕΟΔΩΡΩΝ ΚΑΙ ΤΗΣ ΟΥΦΟΛΩΝΕΩΣ ΤΗΣ[ε]
 ΔΗΜΟΚΡΑΤΟΥΣ ΤΗΣ ΜΗΤΡΟΣ ΚΑΙ ΕΠΙΤΡΟΠΟΥ ΘΕΟΔΩ[δ-]
 ΡΟΥ ΚΑΙ ΚΑΛΣΑΔΡΑΣ ΤΩΝ ΕΠΙΜΕΝΟΥΣ ΔΑΙΚΕΝ [τὸ]
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Eurydamas f. Androsthensis, Euphronios praetores adline ignoti; Sosander n. 287 b 5.

Fig. 22.3. Kern, IG IX 2 1040 a-d



Fig. 22.4. Larissa Museum inv. n. 318, front face - IG IX 2 1040 a-b



Fig. 22.5. Larissa Museum inv. n. 318 - IG IX 2 1040 c



Fig. 22.6. Larissa Museum inv. n. 318 - IG IX 2 1040 d

run across several objects or fragments? The recommended practice taught in the EpiDoc training sessions¹⁶ is very flexible, permitting the use of the `textpart` subdivision both for purely textual units or text areas

¹⁶ See Bodard's slides Structure of the Epigraphic Text from the Digital Classicist wiki page: http://wiki.digitalclassicist.org/EpiDoc_Summer_School

visible on specific parts of the object.¹⁷ But as D. Buzzetti demonstrates it, the process of text encoding, in a scholarly context, is at the same time the building of a *representation* and of *the representation of a representation* [BUZZETTI 2002]. It requires the clarification of the underlying text model necessarily used (knowingly or not).

In order to properly represent these configurations, we tried to model the distinctions we needed to clarify the relationships between the abstract and material dimensions, leaving aside for the moment the ambiguous notions.¹⁸

These distinctions help us clarify certain structural issues that appeared in our first attempts to provide an EpiDoc transcription for these configurations presented in section 22.2. The way an entity can be identified, described and represented by means of markup is never a direct consequence of its intrinsic nature, but depends on the perspective adopted. For example, if a standing statue is entirely preserved in a museum in one piece, its base would be described as what we call ‘a typological object part’, but not as a ‘physical object part’. In contrast, if a similar statue is broken into two different parts (e.g. one being the base and the other the body), and is then located in different museums, both the base and body parts will then be described as ‘physical object parts’ according to this typology. From the textual perspective, parallel examples can be explored. A composite text consisting of heterogeneous components [22.2.2] may not be considered as an abstract textual unit fitting into existing literary genres. As an existing unit of the source yet implicit, its identification is subject to interpretation. Its inclusion in the representation as a logical textual unit depends on the decision of the editor. If it is represented, it must then be seen as an *editorial unit* which materializes an entity that is implicitly present in the source. The nature of this editorial decision is structural. As it operates at the highest level of the hierarchy (the text that encompasses the others), it impacts the way the entities are defined. All of these key entities have found a corresponding element in the EpiDoc schema. Does this allow us to build a coherent encoding strategy?

¹⁷ No more than the TEI, EpiDoc is meant to be a prescriptive standard with respect to the use of the elements.

¹⁸ For a comprehensive exploration of the definition of what an inscription is from an ontological perspective, see PANCIERA 2012.

Entity name	Definition
Text-bearing object	A material object (artifact) that bears one or several inscribed texts. The material object can consist of one single piece or several distinct physical elements.
Physical object part	A detachable physical part of a material object that can be physically isolated: such as a slab, a bloc or a fragment. Several objects parts originating from the same object (whether single or composite) may be kept in different institutions.
Typological object part (or 'physical feature')	A non detachable part of an object identified with reference to a given epigraphic or archeological typology (e.g. base, front-face, side, etc.)
Inscribed entity	The set of marks that were inscribed on a material support.
Abstract text	An abstract entity corresponding to the 'object of thought' that is the denotata of the inscribed entity or its intellectual content. It can be classified into a textual genre, such as a decree, a dedication, a manumission, etc. It may be structured as a unified or composite text.
Textual component of a composite text	A distinct text that pertains to a defined genre and that structurally functions as a component of an overall composite text.
Edited text	A representation of the inscribed text intended for publication. As the result of a scholarly process involving interpretation and editorial choices, it is supposed to respect some shared standards or conventions for both the structure and the distinctions represented.

Tab. 22.2. Key entities and their definitions

22.4. The encoding strategy of the *IGLouvre* project

This encoding strategy is being defined within the framework of the *IGLouvre* project. Our first objective is to offer a system, compliant with the EpiDoc schema, which should be able to coherently represent with markup all the configurations we have identified in our corpus. A second and derived objective is to enable the highest possible flexibility in the exploitation and representation of these relationships in the web interface. The contours of the final web application that will give an interface to the digital publication are not specified yet. But since the aim is to exploit thoroughly the material and textual dimensions of the various items present in the Louvre collection, we need to be able to define a precise connection between these entities. As is highlighted in table 22.3, the mapping between the EpiDoc schema and the entities of our model has been established rather easily. However, we need to say that the decision to use the 'msPart' element to represent the entity 'physical object part' is currently under discussion¹⁹ within the EpiDoc and TEI communities.

¹⁹ In her feature request ticket (<http://sourceforge.net/p/tei/feature-requests/505/>) posted on 2014, April 29th, C. Schroeder asks for a re-definition of the element in the guidelines for exactly the same kind of use for the element.

Entity name	Function of the element	Path (position in tree)	Possible elements
A text-bearing object	Identification	TEI/teiHeader/sourceDesc/ msDesc	<msIdentifier/> <altIdentifier/>
A physical object part	Description	TEI/teiHeader/sourceDesc/msDesc/physDesc/objectDesc/ supportDesc	<support/>
A physical object part	Identification	TEI/teiHeader/sourceDesc/msDesc/ msPart	<msIdentifier/> <altIdentifier/>
A physical object part	Description (object)	TEI/teiHeader/sourceDesc/msDesc/msPart/physDesc/objectDesc/ supportDesc	<support/>
A physical object part	Description (history)	TEI/teiHeader/sourceDesc/msDesc/msPart/ history	<origin/> <provenance/>
A typological object part	Identification	TEI/text/body/div[@type='edition']/ div [@type='textpart']	[@xml:id]
A typological object part	Categorization	TEI/text/body/div[@type='edition']/ div [@type='textpart'][@subtype]	Controlled vocabulary
A typological object part	Description (layout)	TEI/teiHeader/sourceDesc/msDesc/msPart/physDesc/objectDesc/ layoutDesc	<layout/>
A typological object part	Content (transcription)	TEI/text/body/div[@type='edition']/ div [@type='textpart']/ ab	mixed content
The abstract text	Identification	TEI/teiHeader/sourceDesc/msDesc/ msContents	<msItem[@xml:id]/>

Category	TEI/teiHeader/sourceDesc/msDesc/msContents	<msItem[@class]/>
Name	TEI/teiHeader/sourceDesc/msDesc/msContents/ msItem	<title />
A textual component of a composite text	TEI/text/body/div[@type='edition']/ div[@type='textpart']	[@xml:id]
Category	TEI/text/body/div[@type='edition']/ div[@type='textpart'] [@subtype]	Controlled vocabulary
The edited text		A collection of web pages designed from the transformation of the EpiDoc XML representation.

Tab. 22.3. A mapping between our typology and the key entities within the EpiDoc schema

In order to achieve our second aim, we intend to use the linking mechanisms provided by the TEI framework. Once the entities are identified with an `@xml:id` attribute, the markup can establish with precision the relations between one another, using attributes like `@target` or `@corresp`. To give a detailed example, the case illustrated in paragraph 22.2.3 is developed in table 22.4: the encoding distinguishes two `msParts` elements in the `teiHeader`, and four textual units, one for each epigram and one for the group they constitute.²⁰

Identified elements can be pointed to using the `@xml:id` attribute. More precise linking between the abstract texts listed in the `msContent` element (`teiHeader`) can be provided using as many `<locus/>` elements as needed, with a `@target` attribute. The same pattern may also be used to record distinct stonecutters (in `handNote` elements) or different dates (in `origDate` elements) and associate them with the relevant parts in the transcribed text.²¹ For cases such as those we treated in the examples commented in 22.2.1, 22.2.2 and 22.2.4, where the inscription is carved on a single object, we decided to use a 'default `msPart`' to draw a symmetry with the case where several `msParts` are used.

In cases where the textual structure overlaps the physical agency of inscribed texts areas, the use of an empty element milestone, assorted with the relevant `@unit` attribute (e.g. 'section')²² resolves the problem caused by the need to represent two overlapping structures in a single XML tree. It should however not be denied that this approach impacts the workload of the task of encoding. But in our point of view, it proves to be worthwhile, as soon as you consider the range of possibilities offered in the digital web interface. In some cases like the re-use of the same support for the engraving of successive texts, this strategy is also entirely necessary in order to link them to the same object.

²⁰ The ODD file which formalises the schema and its documentation is supposed to include the typology used for the `@subtype` attribute. The EpiDoc documentation states that `@subtype` is not constrained, but common values might include "fragment", "column", "section", etc. We consider that any categorisation can be used.

²¹ It is also possible to record data related to illustrations of the objects or inscribed portions of the objects (e.g. drawings, photographs, etc.) in a `facsimile` element, to provide links to an image, or a region of an image, via the `@facs` attribute, but it is a quite a widespread practice which doesn't require special comments for our purpose.

²² The term 'section' denotes the abstract nature of the entity considered. It can be opposed to another kind of milestone unit like 'block', which can be used when a physical structure overlaps a textual one.

Entities	Type	Encoding
Slabs	physical object part	<pre><- - in the teiHeader - -> <msPart xml:id="mspart01" n="A" corresp="#milst01"/> <msPart xml:id="mspart02" n="B" corresp="#milst02"/></pre>
Epigrams	Abstract texts	<pre><- - in the teiHeader - -> <msItem xml:id="msi01"> <title>Epigram for Antiphon</title> <locus target="#lg01"/> </msItem> <msItem xml:id="msi02"> <title>Epigram for Eurymenides</title> <locus target="#lg02"/> <msItem xml:id="msi03"> <title>Epigram for Eurymenides</title> <locus target="#lg03"/> </msItem></pre>
A group of epigrams for the sons of Sophocles	The edited overall text	<pre><! - - in the TEI/text element- -> <div type="edition"> <div type="textpart" subtype="group-of-epigrams25"> (...) </div> </div></pre>
Each epigram	Textual components of a composite text	<pre><! - - in the TEI/text/div@type='edition' element- -> <milestone xml:id="milst01" unit="block" corresp="#mspart01"/> (...) <milestone xml:id="milst02" unit="block" corresp="#mspart02"/> (...)</pre>
The verses of each epigram	Text inscribed in each textual component	<pre><lg xml:id="lg01" > <l><lb/>οὐ γάμων (...)</l> <l><lb/>(...)</l> </lg></pre>

Tab. 22.4. EpiDoc markup of the example presented in 22.2.3

22.5. Conclusions and perspectives

This encoding strategy permits us to meet the following requirements:

- the material and abstract dimensions of the items in the Louvre collection are taken into account in a compliant EpiDoc markup, exploiting its capacity to provide fine grained identifiers and linking mechanisms that are required to build on an interface showing inscriptions not just as decontextualized texts;
- the scientific editors keep full control on the editorial choices they made beyond the structure of the printed or digital publication;
- the deconstruction of the notion of ‘inscription’ will also provide help for designing and implementing several extractions and data exports that will have to be developed in the near future to ensure the interop-erability of the digital collection and its re-use for other projects.

Further work needs to be done to make explicit this encoding strategy in the form of an ODD schema and documentation file. One of the important next steps of the *IGLouvre* project will be the specification of the web interface of the digital edition. But before this further stage, it would be interesting to reformulate our model of what an inscription is using the CIDOC-CRM metamodel.²³ This work may provide critique and opportunity for enhancements. It also may help see to what extent our work can be useful for other projects. In conclusion, even though the material and the textual dimensions cannot be separated in the editorial representation, they need to be precisely distinguished in the abstract model of the source that must be clarified before structuring this representation. Finally, is the ambiguity of the notion of ‘inscription’ a hurdle impossible to avoid? What is an inscription? It is an inscribed text, an inscribed object in a given state of preservation or an edited text? We think that in order to escape ambiguity, we have only two ways: stepping back to the ancient meaning of the Greek *epigramma* (ἐπίγραμμα), and state that an inscription is nothing else but letters on a support, or accept that in the epigraphic field, an inscription

²³ Other authors have already explored this perspective [ORE et al. 2009]. In the last meeting of the TEI consortium, the same authors suggested the introduction of new elements for the entities `physicalObject` and `conceptualObject`: <http://www.tei-c.org/SIG/Ontologies/meetings/m20131003.html>

is above all an editorial unit which results from individual scientific choices and disciplinary criteria. The need for a clear understanding of this underlying model may be considered as one of the most fruitful contributions of the digital edition.

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