FROM STONE TO BOOK TO E-BOOK

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The article briefly presents the tradition of Greek epigraphical corpora in Bulgaria, particularly examining the structure and the approach of the five-volume *Inscriptiones Graecae in Bulgaria repertae* edited by Georgi Mihailov. Then, the possibilities are discussed of re-creating Mihailov’s corpus as it is in digital form, and the choice is justified to not follow it strictly and create a different web-based structure, which was the first task of the Telamon Project at the Department of Classics, University of Sofia, Bulgaria.

In 2007, a small team at the Department of Classics to the University of Sofia, Bulgaria, consisting of the Greek linguists and epigraphers Mirena Slavova and Nicolay Sharankov and the writer of these pages launched the Telamon Project. The aim of the project can be summarized as publishing, in digital form, the rich ancient Greek epigraphic heritage from Bulgaria, concentrating at first on the regions of today’s Plovdiv (Philippopolis) and Stara Zagora (Augusta Traiana). In the course of our work, however, a number of issues arose, not least the problem of the relationship between the existing Bulgarian epigraphic corpora and the relatively new medium of electronic publication. This problem, and our approach to it, will be briefly discussed in the current paper in the light of the tradition of epigraphic publications in Bulgaria.

1. Bulgaria’s epigraphic heritage

Firstly, a few words have to be said about the epigraphic heritage in Bulgaria, and its Greek part in particular. The territory of today’s Bulgaria is unique with its crucial position between East and West which made it, throughout the centuries, the focus of many migration and colonization processes, the core of quite a few political entities such as the Thracian

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1 See the project’s URL at http://telamon.proclassics.org.
Odrysian Kingdom and the two medieval Bulgarian states, and the heart of three successive Empires: Roman, Byzantine, and Ottoman. A great part of the populations and structures to which today’s Bulgarian lands provided a home have left inscriptive traces of their activities: tombstones, dedications, contracts, laws, praises of eminent individuals and benevolent deities. Thus, epigraphic monuments are scattered throughout Bulgaria written in Greek, Latin, Slavic, Ottoman Turkish, as well as languages like Thracian of which only onomastic vestiges and single words in ancient glossaries have survived. Moreover, the linguistic boundary between Greek and Latin as spoken languages in the framework of the Roman Empire, one of the important cultural boundaries in the history of ancient society, can be drawn along the mountain range of the Balkans, i.e. passing right through the middle of the modern state of Bulgaria. Several languages can be even fully traced in their diachronic development through their epigraphic heritage found in our lands. Such is the case of the Slavic dialect spoken in Bulgaria. Monumental examples of its earliest phase, whose literary counterpart is widely known as Ancient Bulgarian, Old Slavic or Old Church Slavonic, exist from the end of 9. c. CE, and the inscriptive continuity hasn’t ceased until the modern Bulgarian language of today. Almost the same is the case with the Greek language. The first ancient Greek colonies on the Bulgarian Black Sea shore such as Apollonia Pontica (today’s Sozopol) were founded at the end of 7. c. BCE and the first inscriptive evidence from these settlements can be dated around that time. Greek was the official language of all the Hellenistic Thracian kingdoms such as the states of the Odrysae and the Getae. It continued being the official language under Roman rule in what is today Southern Bulgaria, the Roman province of Thrace (Latin being the official language of the province of Moesia Inferior, nowadays Northern Bulgaria). Greek inscriptions kept on appearing on tombs, churches, and other monuments well into the Byzantine and mediaeval Bulgarian periods, frequently alongside Protobulgarian glosses or parallel texts inscribed in Old Church Slavonic.

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2 This boundary, known as the „Jiřeček line” after the name of the great Czech student of Balkan history Josef Konstantin Jiřeček (first proposed in his Geschichte der Serben, Gotha, 1911), has been the object of many modifications and discussions since the 1950’s: see e.g. Kaimio, J., The Romans and the Greek Language, Societas Scientiarum Fennica, 1979, pp.87-88; Beshevliev, V., Prouchvaniya varhu lichnite imena u trakite [Research on the Personal Names among the Thracians, in Bulgarian], Sofia, 1965, p. 88 (with a map); Lindstedt, J., „Linguistic Balkanization: Contact-induced change by mutual reinforcement”, in: Gilbers, D. G., et al. (eds.), Languages in Contact, Amsterdam, 2000, pp. 231-246.

3 See, for example, Chichikova, M., P. Delev, A. Bozhkova, „Investigations of the Thracian Fortified Settlement near Sveshtari in the 1986-1988 Period”, Helis II (1992), pp.73-88, where, among other things, account is given for the Greek inscriptions found in the region.

2. Greek inscriptions from stone to book

This rich Greek epigraphic heritage which, in some places, stretches even into the modern era, has naturally been the object of much research and many publications since the beginnings of modern Bulgarian academic epigraphy established by the Czech archaeologist Vaclav Dobrusky. In the second half of the 20. c., it was organized in several large corpora. The Greek inscriptions from Late Antiquity (end of 3.-6. c. CE), largely Christian, became a part of Veselin Beshevliev’s corpus of late Greek and Latin inscriptions from Bulgaria published in Germany. The rich pagan Greek epigraphic evidence, however, could not be encompassed in one volume, and certainly not together with the Latin inscriptions from the same period which required, and still require, several separate volumes of their own. The ambitious goal of fully presenting the Greek inscriptions from Classical Antiquity was accomplished by one of the greatest epigraphers in Bulgarian academic history and a most distinguished scholar of international renown, Georgi Mihailov. Between 1956 and 1966, he published a 4-volume series entitled *Inscriptiones Graecae in Bulgaria repertae* (IGBulg from here on) containing about 4000 monuments from the earliest times up to the second half of 3. c. CE. A fifth volume with addenda and corrigenda was finished posthumously by a team under the guidance of Krassimir Banev and saw the light of the day in 1997.

After the apparition of IGBulg, every initiative having something to do with Greek epigraphy has to have this corpus in mind, even when in disagreement with Mihailov’s readings of particular monuments. That is why, we need to examine the way these five volumes are organized and formatted. For an important part of the information conveyed by a small and limited piece of text – such as an inscription – may depend on the context in which it is put. Much in the same way as with its literary avatar, the epigram, the meaning of which is sometimes very unclear unless we consider it in the
context of an anthology, an epigraphic monument can sometimes be approached in itself, but sometimes also as a part of a larger continuum that links all the urban and rural centres of similar inscriptions production. Thus, it is up to the editor of the epigraphic collection to make additional sense of what the monuments explicitly tell us by putting together different epigraphic texts in a certain order and establishing certain links between them. Having this in mind, let us proceed to the examination of the way the 4+1 volumes of *Inscriptiones Graecae in Bulgaria repertae* are organized.

The grouping of the inscriptions which are around four thousand and cover the period between early 6. c. BCE and 3. c. CE, could be based on many possible principles. The one chosen by Mihailov is rather curious. He roughly follows the natural division of Bulgaria in northern and southern part by the mountain range of the Balkan mountains, or Haemus, as it was called in antiquity. This division was more or less replicated in Roman times by the provincial boundaries. In its framework, there were smaller boundaries followed by Mihailov, such as the ancient division of χώραι, or *territoria*, of the respective Greek poleis, later incorporated into the Roman provincial system. But the problem remains how exactly the different *territoria* are to be ordered in one volume, and, generally, whence the whole volume series should start and in what direction it should proceed in covering the whole territory of Bulgaria. Mihailov’s solution is the following:

1) The Black Sea colonies and their χώραι provide the inscriptional material for volume I (published in 1956).

2) Volume II (published in 1958) contains all the monuments in Greek in today’s Northern Bulgaria (*inter Danubium et Haemum*, „between Danube and the Haemus mountain range”).

3) Volume III covering all the region of Thrace together with the Rhodope mountains is divided into two fasciculi of quite a significant length. III.1. (1961) is dedicated chiefly to the territory of the μητρόπολις Philippopolis (today’s Plovdiv), and III.2. (1964) covers the distance from ancient Augusta.

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8 Be it in the context of the Mediaeval *Anthologia Palatina*, our main source for Greek literary epigram, or in the (usually reconstructed) context of the original smaller collections of which it is a compilation. One ingenious attempt at such a reconstruction (albeit a little dated since the publication of the so-called ‘Milan Posidippus’) is Gutzwiller, K., *Poetic Garlands: Hellenistic Epigrams in Context*, Berkeley, 1998.

9 In the period to which the larger number of the inscriptions found in Plovdiv belongs, the first centuries of the Christian era, this title may or may not signify the provincial centre. See: Brown, P., *Power and Persuasion in Late Antiquity. Towards a Christian Empire*, 1992, p. 11, where the problem of official titling is briefly discussed in connexion with the processes of centralization and loss of local self-government in the course of 3. c. CE.
Trajana (Stara Zagora) up to the territories of Black Sea towns such as Anchialus (now Pomorie)\(^\text{10}\).

4) Vol. IV (1966) encompasses the territories south of the Balkan range not belonging to the Roman province of Thrace but either to Moesia or to Macedonia. These are the region of Serdica (today’s Sofia) and the valleys of the rivers Strymon (nowadays Struma) and Nestos (Mesta).

Volume V, as we already mentioned, falls outside this territorial classification and is complementary to the previous four. From them, we see that the boundaries of the ancient Roman provinces are loosely followed, but are not regarded as primary, since a lot of monuments date long before these provinces were established. That is why, the whole of the Black Sea coast, belonging to two separate Roman provinces, Moesia Inferior and Thracia, is encompassed in a volume of its own. And this is the opening volume of the series due to the fact that the territories of the coastal colonies saw the apparition of the earliest epigraphic monuments in Greek. Thus, the classification proposed by Mihailov and having become the standard for the ancient Greek inscriptions in Bulgaria is partly territorial and partly chronological, at least as far as volume sequence is concerned. The fact that all the volumes of \textit{IGBulg} have a common numbering coincides well with the volume division, to the effect that the monuments described in volume I, i.e. from the places with the oldest epigraphic tradition attested, appear in the common nomenclature with the smallest numbers\(^\text{11}\).

Apart from the settlements on the Black Sea, the picture deeper in the mainland is sometimes also rather complex and doesn’t quite fit neither the Roman nor any other territorial organization in particular. For example, there are instances such as the big contract from Seuthopolis, the capital of the Thracian Odrysian ruler Seuthes III (deceased ca. 300 BCE). Seuthopolis is an ancient Thracian settlement now buried under the waters of the Koprinka dam. In the 1950’s, just before the dam was built, it was excavated by the Bulgarian archaeologist D.P. Dimitrov and his team. At first, Dimitrov published the large text of the Seuthopolis oath partially, and Mihailov’s edited version of this preliminary sketch was first published as \textit{IGBulg} III.2, 1731. The full Greek text was included in the series posthumously both to Mihailov and Dimitrov as \textit{IGBulg} V, 5614. Now, if we think of it, how was

\(^{10}\) On the complexity of determining the exact borders of Anchialus’s \textit{territorium}, see Mihailov’s \textit{Praefatio} to \textit{IGBulg} III.2, Serdicae, 1964, pp. 5-6.

\(^{11}\) The continuous numbering of the inscriptions throughout all the corpus allows for alternative ways of quotation: \textit{IGBulg} 215 is always identical with \textit{IGBulg} I, 215, and the volume number can be omitted, since no other volume but I can contain an inscription 215. However, we chose to keep the volume number for the purposes of our text. The whole collection of Mihailov is not easily accessed and consulted, especially outside Bulgaria, and for readers that don’t have it at their disposition it may not be obvious that e.g. \textit{IGBulg} 1765 has to be sought in the third volume, fasc. 2.
Mihailov to deal with a text originally belonging to a territorial unit of unknown exact extent and having seen the light of the day only in part? Probably for such reasons, his decision was to order the inscriptions by going along the main ancient roads in Bulgaria, most of them built by the local Thracians and later rebuilt by various Greek cities and, eventually, the Roman state. Volume I follows the so-called Via Pontica connecting the Black Sea settlements all the way down to the Bosporus. Volume II travels along Danube, through the middle of the Danube valley, following another ancient arterial road. Volume III gives all the inscriptions to be found along the famous Via militaris or Via diagonalis from Naissus (today’s Nish in Serbia) to Byzantion, the future Constantinople. Volume IV goes along the natural road arteries of two major rivers that have national highways along them even nowadays.

Inside this larger scheme, the inscriptions from the separate dwelling places by which the reader of Mihailov as if passes on his way to somewhere else, are mainly classified according to their findspot. Sometimes, it is introduced with its ancient name, as in the cases of greater centres such as Serdica or Philippopolis and, in several instances, smaller settlements like the village Scaptopara, with its famous insessional pleading before the emperor Gordian. Mostly, however, the finding places of the inscriptions are given in their modern form dating from the time when Mihailov himself sought the inscriptions for publication. Thus, the bulk of the rubrics in IGBulg consists of Bulgarian (or, more rarely, Turkish) toponyms rendered in the Latin alphabet according to the established standards by the time. Consequently, for example, the territorium of ancient Pautalia (Kyustendil) in volume IV contains monuments from: Goročevci (= Горочевци), Dolna Dikanja (= Долна Диканя), Gjueševo (= Гюешево), etc. Each new place is introduced by notes about its history and archaeology, together with a select bibliography on the subject. So, Mihailov’s corpus is useful not only as a book repository of ancient inscriptions, but also as an index of all the places in today’s Bulgaria that have a traceable history until ancient times. Their names and geography throughout the ages are discussed, and the more important literature on the subject is carefully selected and quoted by Mihailov (the terminus ante quem for it being, of course, limited to the date of publication of the respective IGBulg volume, so today they have to be supplemented).

This information, together with all the other metadata for each monument, is given by Mihailov in Latin. Here, he follows a tradition that goes back to

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12 IGBulg. IV, 2236.
the first influential epigraphic corpora of the modern times\textsuperscript{13}. Thus, under each separate position in the corpus provided with a number of its own, a text in Greek is published together with a metatext in Latin containing a description of the physical monument and a commentary on the text. All such positions are organized according to the following standard pattern (see fig. 1):

1) A brief description of the original context where the monument was found, including the discussion of possible transfers from elsewhere\textsuperscript{14}. Here, a mention is made of the museum or the depository where the monuments are registered, together with their inventory number. Sometimes, Mihailov didn’t succeed in finding them and recorded the fact in his notes: \textit{Non vidi} („I didn’t see it”). In other cases, the inscriptions in question are long lost and the editor only mentions the source of the facsimile he reproduces\textsuperscript{15}.

2) Physical description of the monument, its dimensions, its condition, and the position of the text on it.

3) Bibliography of the previous editions of the inscription, if any. Usually, it also gives information on the editors’ methods of taking down the text (rewriting, drawing, etc.), as well as an estimation of the qualities of their publications: \textit{edidit bene} „published it well”, or \textit{edidit male}, „published it badly”.

4) The Greek text of the inscription.

5) Historical and prosopographical commentary, if required by the nature of the text: e.g. dating, imperators or magistrates mentioned, hypotheses on dubious meanings of titles, on relations to other monuments and to known historical events, etc.

6) Notes on the palaeography of the text, with enumeration of all the ligatures line by line.

7) \textit{Apparatus criticus} to the text, with notes on the various lectures given by previous editors.

The text itself is given in normalized Greek orthography, with small letters except for the beginnings of sentences and proper names. All the accents and breathings are on their standard places, except for words for which the original accent is unknown, mostly Thracian and other foreign names. The original uncial lettering of the monuments is given only in

\textsuperscript{13} The most obvious influence is the large series \textit{Inscriptiones Graecae (IG)} whose volume I appeared in 1873 and which continues to be published until nowadays under the auspices of the Berlin-Brandenburg Academy.

\textsuperscript{14} For example, \textit{IGBulg} II, 683-684: two inscribed vessels found in the locality Chestaka (i.e. the Thicket) near the town Lyaskovets believed to have served as decoration for the Bulgarian royal baths in mediaeval Tarnovo after being transferred there from the ancient site of Nicopolis ad Istrum.

\textsuperscript{15} Examples of such cases are \textit{IGBulg} III.1, 1038-1039.
isolated instances in the apparatus, if it is an object of discussion. All the photos, or facsimiles of the monuments are located at the end of each volume.

Each of the volumes also contains indices of personal names and of language peculiarities to be found in the inscriptions.

The text-critical signs used in representing the Greek of the monuments are the following:

[ ] The square brackets serve to restore lost or erased\textsuperscript{16} letters: a spot on the stone originally reading $\text{ΑΓΑΘ}//////\text{ΥΦΗΙ}$ can be rendered by the editor as $\text{Ἀγαθὲ}$

< > The triangular brackets are used by Mihailov to signify superfluous letters added by mistake to the monument, frequently the result of the so-called dittography, that is „double carving”: $\text{ΕΔΟΞΕ} \text{TΩΙΤΩΙΔΗΜΩΙ}$ is rendered as $\text{ἇδοξε} \tau$\(\omega\) $\delta$\(\ita\)$\mu$\(\omega\)$\iota$.

() The round brackets in \textit{IGBulg} indicate letter(s) not originally present on the stone at all (as opposed to letter(s) that have been there but are now illegible), including various abbreviations. They can also serve to correct a letter wrongly carved instead of another. The first instance can be illustrated by a sequence of the type $\text{ΕΔΟΞΕ}\text{ΔΗΜΩΙ}$ represented in the edition as $\text{ἇδοξε} \tau$\(\omega\) $\delta$\(\ita\)$\mu$\(\omega\)$. The second case is when, for example, a word on the stone reads $\text{ΕΑΟΞΕ}$, with A wrongly carved instead of the similarly shaped $\Delta$. In such cases, the editor corrects to $\text{ἇδοξε}$ and indicates in the apparatus for which original letter the (δ) is substituted\textsuperscript{17}.

A letter (or string of letters) dotted below indicates that what can be seen on the monument is not clear and sometimes its reconstruction is uncertain.

… Multiple dots signify a lacuna in the text of exact and known extent.

--- Multiple dashes indicate a lacuna of uncertain extent.

\textsuperscript{16} One of the most frequent and peculiar causes of intentional deletion in Roman times was the so-called \textit{damnatio memoriae}. Public figures declared by the Senate to be enemies of the state have all their names and images removed from public monuments. These were frequently emperors or members of the imperial family killed by their rivals and successors for the throne. An interesting case of \textit{damnation memoriae} from Bulgarian lands is the emperor Balbinus that reigned shortly in 238 CE and is rarely mentioned in epigraphic texts: see \textit{IGBulg} III.1, 1510.

\textsuperscript{17} The examples using the widespread inscriptive formula $\text{ἇδοξε} \tau$\(\omega\)$\delta$\(\ita\)$\mu$\(\omega\)$,$\text{\textit{the Assembly (and the Council) decided}}$ are taken from the \textit{Notae} rubric in Mihailov’s corpus, except for the first example that includes another popular inscriptive expression, $\text{Ἀγαθὲ}$, „good fortune, good luck!” provided by the team of our project.
3. A question of standards

Today, more than half a century after the apparition of *IGBulg*’s first volume, the system of text-critical signs just explained above is considered obsolete. Most of the epigraphic and papyrological teams at work nowadays use a slightly different system first proposed by the scholars at the University of Leiden in the 1930’s. Gradually, it was accepted by almost all of the epigraphic projects and was established as the current norm in authoritative series such as *Supplementum Epigraphicum Graecum* (SEG) and *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum* (CIL). The signs used in this revised system are the following:

[ ] The square brackets serve more or less the same purpose as described above: indicating an unclear place in the text restored by the editor.

[[ ] ] The double square brackets indicate an intentionally deleted passage of the text, mostly due to damnation memoriae, restored by the editor: Αὐτοκράτορ[[[ρὰ Καίσαρα Δέκιον Καίλιον ἰ Βαλβείον]]]. For this purpose, Mihailov also used the single square brackets and explained the reason for the illegibility of the text in the commentary. In the *Notae* section at the beginning of each volume of his corpus where critical signs are explained, he explains that the double square brackets are not unknown to him and some other editors use them in their publications. But, obviously, by that time they were far from universally accepted.

( ) The round brackets are used for supplying the missing letters of a name or title written, in the original text, in abbreviated form: ΑΥΡ·ΑΝΤΩΝΙΝΟΣ is rendered in the edition as Αὐπ (ήλιος) Ἀνηωνῖνος.

< > The triangular brackets either include a letter missed by the carver of the stone: Ἀγαθῆι τ <υ> χη standing for ΑΓΑΘΗΙ·ΤΥΦΗΙ, or indicate a letter which was wrongly carved instead of another: Αγαθη <θ> η ὑσηιι standing for ΑΓΑΟΗΙ·ΤΥΦΝΙ. In other words, the triangular brackets in the Leiden system have the same function as the round brackets in the older system used by Mihailov – except for abbreviation supplying, in which function the former use of round brackets is preserved.

{ } The curly brackets serve the same purpose as the triangular brackets in Mihailov: the exclusion of superfluous characters. For example, ΑΓΑΓΑΘΗΙΤΥΦΗΙ is rendered in the editions as Αγ {αγαθη} τυχηι.

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19 *IGBulg* III.1, 1510, see n.16.
A letter (or string of letters) dotted below indicates that what can be seen on the monument is not clear and sometimes its reconstruction is uncertain.

[…] Multiple dots enclosed in square brackets signify a lacuna in the text of exact and known extent.

[---] Multiple dashes enclosed in square brackets indicate a lacuna of uncertain extent.

[---ca. 15 litt.---] Multiple dashes enclosed in square brackets with a text reading c(irc)a X litt(eras) where X is a number indicates an approximate extent of an illegible passage.

As can be seen from the examples above, the Leiden system is a little more diversified than the one used for IGBulg, and takes into account a greater variety of distinct cases. This is another reason for it to be preferable for a new epigraphic project like Telamon, even if this project has to be based on Mihalov’s edition.

This led the Telamon team to the question of the exact object of digitization. It is possible to approach the task from several different angles, one of which consists simply in creating an online edition of IGBulg. This is the closest that comes to mind, and its obvious advantages would be that the web-site can follow an already existing structure, namely the one created by Mihailov for is corpus. This structure not only followed the best epigraphic standards of the time made consistent with our local heritage and conditions, but it also proved quite suitable for the raw material it treated and has remained unsurpassed in Bulgarian scholarly literature until today. However, the adoption of a new system of critical signs imposed itself as indispensable for a new electronic edition of Mihailov’s volumes. Which led us directly to the problem: a) if there are other features of the original IGBulg that need to be updated, and b) if, after such update(s), the new electronic corpus will have the legitimate right to be considered a „digital re-edition” at all. The second issue is not of the least importance, since the answer of the first question proved immediately to be positive.

4. Changes needed for a digital epigraphic edition

As exposed above, the editorial format of Georgi Mihailov’s series has two features that would obviously have to be changed in a digital corpus.

Firstly, the photos of the inscriptions themselves in IGBulg are a potential source of many editorial problems. It was mentioned that, in the paper edition, they were all published in the end of the volumes, after the texts to which they refer. The structure of a web-site not only makes possible but, which is more, obliges its creators to link the text and the respective photograph. On the one hand, this creates a textual interface rather different
from the one of the original edition: an inevitable part of electronic publication that cannot be dispensed with. On the other hand, in order to better meet the needs of the potential readers of the web-site, it is advisable to go one step further. A considerable part of the photographs published in Mihailov’s edition are of relatively poor quality, and scanning them as they are in the volumes would not make things better. It is preferable to take new photographs whenever this is possible, and one of the first tasks of the Telamon project was exactly this.

Another change that has to be made in IGBulg in order to make the new epigraphic corpus more accessible is the change of the language. Latin was the standard metalanguage for all the epigraphic corpora published in 19. and the most of the 20. c. But the requirement for a larger accessibility of the new digital corpus calls for a translation of all the metadata concerning the monuments in English. All the more that, in the context of the new medium of the Internet, a web-site in Latin would seem even in the eyes of the professional epigrapher, in his quality of a World Wide Web user, a layout decision so elitist that it borders with the eccentric.

A third feature of IGBulg that is of some concern for the scholars intending to use it as a basis for new publication is the transliteration of Bulgarian Cyrillic characters adopted by it. The system was approbated by the Supreme Standardization Committee of the People’s Republic of Bulgaria in 1956, the same year when vol. I of Mihailov’s corpus was published. In itself, the system is not without elegance and logic. With the advent of Unicode, it is not even a great problem any more that it contains symbols such as č, š, â, and ž which could not be processed by older HTML and required the installation of special fonts. The issue consists in the way this transliteration system is used by Mihailov. His explanation of the sound value of the different letters was included in every volume, so even this is more of a solution than of a real problem. But Mihailov’s decision to represent the names of the Bulgarian authors in his bibliography in a unified form is less fortunate than the transliteration itself. For example, in the apparatus to each inscription from the sanctuary to Asclepius found near the village of Batkun (IGBulg III.1, 1114-1296), a reference is given to the archaeological publication of the materials from the site. The reference reads as follows: „ed. D. Cončev Batkun p. …”. However, if the reader searches for a bibliographical reference to the publication in question, he finds out that it is

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20 There are exceptions such as Klein, S., Jüdisch-palästinisches Corpus Inscriptionum (Ossuar-, Grab- und Synagogeninschriften), Berlin, 1920, and Beshevliev, V., Prabilgarski epigrafski pametnici [Protobulgarian Epigraphic Monuments, in Bulgarian], Sofia, 1981. But such accounts written in the national languages of their authors are, in their larger part, popular works intended for the widest possible audience.
in French and the name of the archaeologist appears Latinized in its title in a different way: Tsontchev, D., Le sanctuaire thrace près du village de Batkoun, Sofia, 1941. It appears that Mihailov’s desire for unification of the way Bulgarian personal names appear in his corpus may lead to a slight confusion on the part of the reader trying to find the sources that the great epigrapher quotes in his commentary.

There are several more reasons why a new digital corpus of the Greek inscriptions in Bulgaria shouldn’t follow closely the analogue corpus of Mihailov. Firstly, as it was mentioned above, not every number in the corpus has behind it a unique and unrepeatable inscription. We examined the case of IGBulg III.2, 1731 that refers to the same monument as IGBulg V, 5614 but contains an abridged preliminary version of the text. There are some other positions in the corpus that are revisions, sometimes significant, of earlier publications from previous volumes: for example, IGBulg III.2, 1890 = IGBulg III.1, 884. In addition, some numbers in the corpus contain not an actual inscription but a reference. For example, while examining the sequence of inscriptive numbers found in the region of the ancient Διάμπολις (today’s Yambol), one will labour under the impression that fourteen monuments are found there: from no. 1778 to no. 1792. After a check into IGBulg. III.2, however, nos. 1778-1781 prove to be short notes by Mihailov concerning monuments that, according to him, once were wrongly believed to have been found at, or transferred from, this place. So, under these positions, no actual inscriptions can be found. Mihailov only gives references to the inscriptions themselves, that he has treated elsewhere in his corpus, even in other volumes, such as IGBulg III.2, 1779 = IGBulg. II, 502.

That is why, if we adhere strictly to the IGBulg. is followed strictly, a linear publication of all the positions in the corpus one after another, even the „empty” ones, must be followed according to the sequence to be found in Mihailov. Its structure would look like this:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IGBulg 884</th>
<th>.......</th>
<th>IGBulg 1890</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

By contrast, the hypertext gives the opportunity of a simultaneous representation of all the revisions of a particular monument under one position in the sequence:

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IGBulg 884 = IGBulg 1890
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Last but not least, the five volumes of *IGBulg* do not represent a collection of items closed and sealed once and for all by their publication. New inscriptions are constantly found on the territory of Bulgaria by various teams. Sometimes, even in the course of publication of a volume, Mihailov had to insert a newly found item right into the middle of his series, and numbers such as 1853bis had to be introduced so that the new finding is included in its most appropriate place among earlier monuments of the same provenance, without breaking the number sequence. If the new electronic corpus was to be organized according to the principle of *"the Inscriptiiones Graecae in Bulgaria repertae online"*, the numerous newly excavated items would not be able to fit into Mihailov’s sequence. Not to mention the revisions and emendations of texts already existing in Mihailov’s collection in the light of new archaeological evidence.

Thus, we naturally reached the conclusion that a digital re-edition of *IGBulg* is neither recommendable nor possible. If it was attempted, against all odds, it would have to include primary texts published according to different text-critical standards, a secondary text translated from Latin into English and, at times, with some significant revisions, a radical restructuring and reordering of some lemmas, and new images. Without all these changes, a digital epigraphic corpus would hardly be useable. And, if such changes are introduced, it is highly questionable if the result could be labeled a re-edition of Mihailov’s corpus. It would rather be appropriately defined as a new corpus partly but not entirely based on *IGBulg* and, therefore, following more or less differing principles and structure.

One last implication of a broader nature follows from the series of choices and changes described above. The question of whether or not to digitize Mihailov’s corpus as-is is not only a question of form. To a significant extent, it is also a question of content. If the first option is chosen, the object of digitization will be the corpus itself. If we go for the second option, the object are the inscriptions themselves. And the object of digital publication defines the focus of attention of the reader and the potential object of his studies. Because not only the Greek inscriptions in themselves can be objects of study. The corpus that once collected them can also be studied as a separate entity of its own. This is another aim of creating digital documents that are not „born digital” but based on already existing analogue copies. This kind of digitization gives the opportunity to put display and make available as a research object not only the topic or content of an old edition but the container itself and the way it is structured and organized. By choosing to digitize the inscriptions themselves, sometimes following Mihailov but sometimes differing from him, and, in any case, organizing the items
differently, the Telamon project lost this potential double profit. But what it gained in exchange to that was a more dynamic, more interactive and more flexible structure: exactly the feature that makes digital publication an approach entirely different from simply creating the electronic replica of an analogue document. At least if it is followed to a full effect which we believe we have achieved on the Telamon Project’s web-site.