Diogenes at 10 years: milestones and morals

Peter Heslin

Digital Classicist Seminar, London

22 August 2008

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- Moral: Visual markup is evil!

First steps

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- Perl for poetry: crude work-title and book and line numbers.
- Rudimentary browser.
- Added beginnings Greek output: Ibycus encoding for Latex.
- Started to get curious about the citation info embedded in the text.

Reverse engineering

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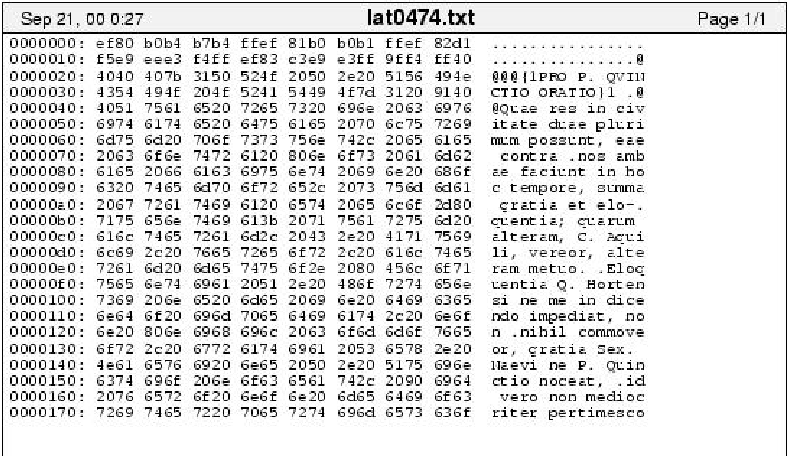
- Originally was decoded in hardware!
- Eureka – every 8KB chunk resets the state.
- Much richer information and suggested the possibility of robust decoding.

Reverse engineering



Sep 21, 00 0:27 **lat0474.txt** Page 1/1

```
0000000: ef80 b0b4 b7b4 ffef 81b0 b0b1 ffef 82d1  ................
0000010: f5e9 eee3 f4ff ef83 c3e9 e3ff 9ff4 ff40  ...............@
0000020: 4040 407b 3150 524f 2050 2e20 5156 494e  @@@{1PRO P. QVIN
0000030: 4354 494f 204f 5241 5449 4f7d 3120 9140  CTIO ORATIO}1 .@
0000040: 4051 7561 6520 7265 7320 696e 2063 6976  @Quae res in civ
0000050: 6974 6174 6520 6475 6165 2070 6c75 7269  itate duae pluri
0000060: 6d75 6d20 706f 7373 756e 742c 2065 6165  mum possunt, eae
0000070: 2063 6f6e 7472 6120 806e 6f73 2061 6d62   contra .nos amb
0000080: 6165 2066 6163 6975 6e74 2069 6e20 686f  ae faciunt in ho
0000090: 6320 7465 6d70 6f72 652c 2073 756d 6d61  c tempore, summa
00000a0: 2067 7261 7469 6120 6574 2065 6c6f 2d80   gratia et elo-.
00000b0: 7175 656e 7469 613b 2071 7561 7275 6d20  quentia; quarum
00000c0: 616c 7465 7261 6d2c 2043 2e20 4171 7569  alteram, C. Aqui
00000d0: 6c69 2c20 7665 7265 6f72 2c20 616c 7465  li, vereor, alte
00000e0: 7261 6d20 6d65 7475 6f2e 2080 456c 6f71  ram metuo. .Eloq
00000f0: 7565 6e74 6961 2051 2e20 486f 7274 656e  uentia Q. Horten
0000100: 7369 206e 6520 6d65 2069 6e20 6469 6365  si ne me in dice
0000110: 6e64 6f20 696d 7065 6469 6174 2c20 6e6f  ndo impediat, no
0000120: 6e20 806e 6968 696c 2063 6f6d 6d6f 7665  n .nihil commove
0000130: 6f72 2c20 6772 6174 6961 2053 6578 2e20  or, gratia Sex.
0000140: 4e61 6576 6920 6e65 2050 2e20 5175 696e  Naevi ne P. Quin
0000150: 6374 696f 206e 6f63 6561 742c 2090 6964  ctio noceat, .id
0000160: 2076 6572 6f20 6e6f 6e20 6d65 6469 6f63   vero non medioc
0000170: 7269 7465 7220 7065 7274 696d 6573 636f  riter pertimesco
```

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“Read in all bytes with the sign bit set. This is the ID for the first record. Call a subroutine to decode the ID data. Now read in all bytes with the sign bit unset. This is the text of the first record. Call a subroutine to process the text. Repeat this process for all records in the block, that is, until the ID data contains the end of block marker.”

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- This code was slow .....

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- I think other software may still do it the wrong way.
- Moral: when the corpus is closed, you do better to ignore the spec.

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- Time, genre, etc. info. Probably worth doing, but some more useful than others.
- Moral: don't assume that you need to support all features in the spec – some are obsolete (or nearly so) and speed-up hacks.

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- Moral: Web was a good choice of interface.

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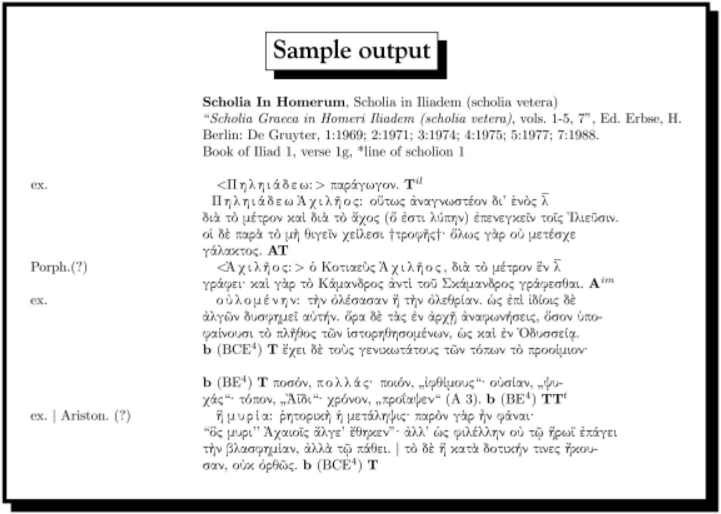

Sample output

Scholia In Homerum, Scholia in Iliadem (scholia vetera)
"*Scholia Graeca in Homeri Iliadem (scholia vetera)*, vols. 1-5, 7", Ed. Erbse, H.
Berlin: De Gruyter, 1:1969; 2:1971; 3:1974; 4:1975; 5:1977; 7:1988.
Book of Iliad 1, verse 1g, *line of scholion 1

ex. <Πηληιάδεω:> παράγωγον. **T**^{il}
Πηληιάδεω Ἀχιλῆος: οὕτως ἀναγνωστέον δι' ἑνὸς λ̄
διὰ τὸ μέτρον καὶ διὰ τὸ ἄχος (ὅ ἐστι λύπην) ἐπενεγκεῖν τοῖς Ἰλιεῦσιν.
οἱ δὲ παρὰ τὸ μὴ θιγεῖν χείλεσι †τροφῆς†· ὅλως γὰρ οὐ μετέσχε
γάλακτος. **AT**
Porph.(?) <Ἀχιλῆος:> ὁ Κοτιαεὺς Ἀχιλῆος, διὰ τὸ μέτρον ἓν λ̄
γράφει· καὶ γὰρ τὸ Κάμανδρος ἀντὶ τοῦ Σκάμανδρος γράφεσθαι. **A**^{im}
ex. οὐλομένην: τὴν ὀλέσασαν ἢ τὴν ὀλεθρίαν. ὡς ἐπὶ ἰδίοις δὲ
ἀλγῶν δυσφημεῖ αὐτήν. ὅρα δὲ τὰς ἐν ἀρχῇ ἀναφωνήσεις, ὅσον ὑποφαίνουσι
τὸ πλῆθος τῶν ἱστορηθησομένων, ὡς καὶ ἐν Ὀδυσσείᾳ.
b (BCE^4) **T** ἔχει δὲ τοὺς γενικωτάτους τῶν τόπων τὸ προοίμιον·

b (BE^4) **T** ποσόν, πολλάς· ποιόν, „ἰφθίμους“· οὐσίαν, „ψυχάς“·
τόπον, „Ἄϊδι“· χρόνον, „προΐαψεν“ (A 3). **b** (BE^4) **TT**^{t}
ex. | Ariston. (?) ἣ μυρία: ῥητορικὴ ἡ μετάληψις· παρὸν γὰρ ἦν φάναι·
"ὃς μυρι'' Ἀχαιοῖς ἄλγε' ἔθηκεν"· ἀλλ' ὡς φιλέλλην οὐ τῷ ἥρωϊ ἐπάγει
τὴν βλασφημίαν, ἀλλὰ τῷ πάθει. | τὸ δὲ ἣ κατὰ δοτικὴν τινες ἤκουσαν,
οὐκ ὀρθῶς. **b** (BCE^4) **T**

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- Moral: an application should do one thing well.

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- Moral: adding core functionality is good, and so is documentation.

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- Moral: someone else's optimization might not be your own.
- Moral: it's better to be fast and 98% correct than slow and 99% correct.

New features

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- Coptic support.
- Added a dedicated HTTP server. initially to allow running on Windows, but was a faster and cleaner solution all around.

2002 – Version 1.0

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- Hard to install.

2005 – OS X

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- First step in that direction. Moving away from a Unix mentality.
- Still, many users could not fathom starting the server then the client.
- Moral: for non-technical users a big, simple bundle is better than having to install many tools.

2006 – Version 2.0

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- Moral: lots of platform-specific code is not the same as cross-platform code.

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- Moral: Unless you have slaves, make sure you can cut a release on one machine.

2007 – Version 3.0

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- Moral: let someone else do the porting work!

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- Moral: it's easier to distribute data than binaries.

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- Moral: do fig-leaf publications and get grants.

Future – Problems

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