

Names, dates, people and places

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Marking up information about people and places

The TEI Guidelines provide extensive facilities for the encoding of data pertaining to people. Although developed first and foremost with the needs of prosopographers in mind, these facilities should be useful for anyone dealing with any kind of data relating to individuals, whether actors in history or those living today.

Such data include

- physical characteristics such as hair and eye colour,
- cultural characteristics such as social status and religion,
- information on occupation and education, and the events in people's lives such as birth, marriage or appointment to office.

Enhanced facilities are also available for encoding data about places of any kind — whether regions, cities, buildings, battlefields, rivers or standing stones.

Basic principles

Information about people essentially comprises a series of statements relating to:

- Traits** the characteristics or qualities of an individual, whether physical, such as sex or eye colour, or cultural, such as ethnicity or religion. While some traits are more likely than others to change over time, none, in principle, is immutable.
- States** these include, for example, marital status, place of residence and position or occupation. Such states normally have a definite duration, i.e. a beginning and an end.
- Events** changes in state, the events in a person's life such as birth, marriage or appointment to office. Such events will normally be associated with a specific date or fairly narrow date-range.

Any statement needs to be able to be documented and be relatable to other statements of the same or any of the other types.

Traits, states and events

Three classes of elements are available, in keeping with the tripartite division outlined: one for *traits*, one for *states* and one for *events*. Each of these classes contains a small number of specific elements for the most common types of information, and a more general element for other, user-defined, types of information.

All the elements in these three classes belong to the attribute class *datable*, which means they can carry the attributes

- *@when* for a specific single date,
- *@from* and *@to*, to indicate a specific date range, and
- *@notBefore* and *@notAfter*, to indicate the earliest and latest possible dates (the *terminus post quem* and *terminus ante quem*) for a trait, state or event.

Date attributes for traits, states and events

These attributes can be combined in various ways, as in the following examples:

- `<date when="1857-03-15">15 March 1857.</date>`
- `<date notBefore="1857-03-01" notAfter="1857-04-30">Sometime in March or April of 1857.</date>`
- `<date from="1857-03-01" to="1857-04-30">In March and April of 1857.</date>`
- `<date from="1857-03-01" notAfter="1857-04-30">From the 1st of March to sometime in April of 1857.</date>`

Traits

The following specific elements are available for dealing with traits or characteristics:

- `<langKnowledge>`,
- `<faith>`,
- `<nationality>`,
- `<socecStatus>` ('socio-economic status') and
- `<sex>`

`<langKnowledge>` permits either paragraphs or a number of `<langKnown>` elements; both take a `@tag` (or `@tags`) attribute, which provides the standard code for the language, while `<langKnown>` also has a `@level` attribute to indicate the level of the person's competence in the language.

Ways of using <langKnowledge>

You can say:

```
<langKnowledge tags="fr wo en">  
  <p>Speaks fluent Wolof and French. Some knowledge of  
    English.</p>  
</langKnowledge>
```

or

```
<langKnowledge>  
  <langKnown level="fluent" tag="wo">Wolof</langKnown>  
  <langKnown level="fluent" tag="fr">French</langKnown>  
  <langKnown level="basic" tag="en">English</langKnown>  
</langKnowledge>
```

Sex

The `<sex>` element carries a `@value` attribute to give the ISO 5218:1977 values, i.e. 1 for male, 2 for female, 9 for non-applicable and 0 for unknown.

```
<sex value="2">female</sex>
```

A generic element for traits

The generic `<trait>` element has a `@type` attribute and can contain an optional `<label>` element, which can be used to provide a human-readable specification for the category of feature concerned, followed by a `<desc>` element; alternatively, the description of the feature is supplied within one or more `<p>` elements.

```
<trait type="ethnicity">  
  <label>Ethnicity</label>  
  <desc>Ethnic Albanian.</desc>  
</trait>
```

States

The class of elements for dealing with states contains the TEI elements

- <persName>,
- <relation>,
- <occupation>,
- <residence>,
- <affiliation>,
- <education> and
- <floruit>, for indicating the period during which a person is known to have been active, in cases where exact dates of birth and death are unknown

<floruit notBefore="1766" notAfter="1790">fl. 1766-1790</floruit>



Personal names

The `<persName>` element is repeatable and can, like all TEI elements, take the attribute `@xml:lang` to indicate the language of the content of the element, thus making it possible to supply name forms in different languages:

```
<person xml:id="AdMic">  
  <persName xml:lang="lt">Adomas Mickevičius</persName>  
  <persName xml:lang="be">Адам Міцкевіч</persName>  
  <persName xml:lang="pl">Adam Mickiewicz</persName>  
</person>
```

Sub-elements of <persName>

A large number of sub-elements is available within <persName> for the various parts of a name; here is an example using some of them, each with attendant attributes such as *@type* and *@sort*.

```
<persName xml:lang="bg">
  <forename type="first" sort="2">Татяна</forename>
  <forename type="middle" sort="3">Александра</forename>
  <forename type="patronym" sort="4">Василева</forename>
  <surname sort="1">Тодорова</surname>
  <addName type="nick" xml:lang="bg">Сани</addName>
  <addName type="nick" xml:lang="en">Alex</addName>
</persName>
```

A generic element for states

The <state> element has the same content model as <trait>. The example given here describes the first living held by the Icelandic clergyman and poet Jón Oddsson Hjaltalín:

```
<state type="office" from="1777-04-07" to="1780-07-12">
  <p>Jón's first living, which he apparently
    accepted rather reluctantly, was at <name type="place">Háls í
    Hamarsfirði</name>, <name type="place">Múlasýsla</name>, to which he
    was presented on 7 April 1777. He was ordained
    the following month and spent three years at
    Háls, but was never happy there, due largely
    to the general penury in which he was forced
    to live. In June of 1780 the bishop
    recommended that Jón should <q xml:lang="da">promoveres
    til andet bedre kald, end det hand hidindtil
    har havt</q>, and on 12
    July it was agreed that he should exchange
    livings with <name type="person" key="#ThorJon">sr. Þórður
    Jónsson</name> at
    <name type="place">Kálfafell á Síðu</name>,
    <name type="place">Skaftafellssýsla</name>. <bibl>ÞÍ,
    Stms I.15, p. 733.</bibl>
    <bibl>ÞÍ, Stms
    I.17, p. 102.</bibl>
  </p>
</state>
```

Elements for events

The class of elements for events contains specific elements for <birth> and <death> and the generic <event> element; it has the same content model as <state> and <trait> and can be used to describe any event in the life of an individual. In the example the event is the wedding of Jane Burdon to the English writer, designer and socialist William Morris.

Example of <event>

```
<event type="marriage">
  <label>Marriage</label>
  <desc>
    <date when="1859-04-26">26 April 1859</date>
    <name type="person" ref="#WM">William Morris</name>
    and Jane Burden were married at <name type="place">St Michael's Church, Ship
      Street, Oxford</name> on <date when="1859-04-26">26
      April 1859</date>. The wedding was conducted by
    Morris's friend <name type="person" ref="#RWD">R. W. Dixon</name>
    with <name type="person" ref="#CF">Charles Faulkner</name> as the
    best man. The bride was given away by her father,
    <name type="person" ref="#RB">Robert Burden</name>. According to the
    account that <name type="person" ref="#EBJ">Burne-Jones</name> gave
    <name type="person" ref="#JWM">Mackail</name>
    <q>M. said to Dixon beforehand <q>Mind you don't
      call her Mary</q> but he did</q>. The entry in the
    Register reads: <q>William Morris, 25, Bachelor
      Gentleman, 13 George Street, son of William Morris
      decd. Gentleman. Jane Burden, minor, spinster, 65
      Holywell Street, d. of Robert Burden, Groom.</q> The
    witnesses were Jane's parents and Faulkner. None of
    Morris's family attended the ceremony. Morris
    presented Jane with a plain gold ring bearing the
    London hallmark for 1858. She gave her husband a
    double-handled antique silver cup.</desc>
    <bibl>J. W. Mackail, <title>The Life of William
      Morris</title>,
      1899.</bibl>
  </event>
```

Use of @key attribute

In the example the keys on the various <persName> elements point to the <person> elements for the other people named. The <relation> element can then be used to link them in a more meaningful way:

```
<relation name="spouse" mutual="#WM #JBM"/>  
<relation name="friend" mutual="#WM #RWD"/>  
<relation name="parent" active="#RB" passive="#JBM"/>
```

Assigning dates and date ranges

As mentioned, all these elements, both the specific and the generic, are members of the *datable* attribute class, which means they can be limited in terms of time, as in the following example, where the person originally named David Jones has changed his name in 1966 to David Bowie:

```
<person xml:id="DB">  
  <persName notAfter="1966">David Jones</persName>  
  <persName notBefore="1966">David Bowie</persName>  
</person>
```

Assigning certainty and responsibility

All the generic elements are also members of the *editLike* class, which, as its name implies, was originally intended to provide attributes 'describing the nature of an encoded scholarly intervention or interpretation of any kind' and which makes available the attributes *@cert*, to indicate the degree of certainty, *@resp*, the agency responsible, and *@evidence*, the nature of the evidence used. In this way it is possible, in the case of multiple and conflicting sources, to provide more than one view of what happened, as in the following example, where a different place and date of birth for an individual has been claimed by two scholars, one thought to be more reliable than the other:

```
<event type="birth" resp="#Smith2005" cert="high">
  <p>Born in <name type="place">Brixton</name> on 8 January
  1947.</p>
</event>
<event type="birth" resp="#Watson1996" cert="low">
  <p>Born in <name type="place">Berkhamsted</name> on 9 January
  1947.</p>
</event>
```

Assigning certainty and responsibility

The *@resp* attribute can also be used to distinguish between things which are explicitly stated in the source and those which, though not explicitly stated, can be inferred from the information available, as in the following example, from a collection of data assembled by Sebastian Rahtz on the people buried in the Protestant Cemetery in Rome based on the information on their tombstones:

```
<person xml:id="WHH">
  <persName>
    <forename>Winchcombe</forename>
    <forename>Henry</forename>
    <surname>Hartley</surname>
  </persName>
  <sex value="1" resp="#SPQR"/>
  <birth notBefore="1773-02-22" notAfter="1774-02-21" resp="#SPQR"/>
  <death when="1847-02-21">21 February 1847</death>
  <residence>
    <placeName>Belvedere</placeName>, near <placeName>Bath</placeName>, <placeName>
      <region>Somersetshire</region>
    </placeName>
  </residence>
  <nationality resp="#SPQR">British</nationality>
  <occupation>Judge of the Admiralty Court at the Cape of Good
    Hope</occupation>
  <occupation>Fellow of Merton College, Oxford</occupation>
</person>
```

Encoding information about places

There are similar facilities for dealing with geographical locations, to be used as a way of normalising or standardising references to places, for example as the raw material for a gazetteer or similar reference document associated with a set of marked-up texts such as a collection of historical documents.

Much the same as with persons, information about places consists of a series of statements relating to:

- **Traits** such as climate, geographical type and so on.
- **States** for example, population, physical area or administrative status.
- **Events** such as circumstances of founding, natural and man-made disasters.

And as with statements about persons, each of these statements needs to be able to be documented, put into a time frame and be relatable to other statements of the same or any of the other types.



The <place> element

The <place> element carries a *@type* attribute to supply a brief characterisation of the place, for example to state that it is a city, a street or a building, a natural feature such as a lake or mountain, or a landmark of some kind such as a battlefield. The <place> element then contains:

- one or more <placeName> elements, giving the name(s) by which the place is or has been known (the standard TEI elements <country>, <bloc>, <region> and <settlement> are all specialisations of the generic <placeName> element, and can be used instead of, or within, it).
- one or more <location> elements, giving the physical location of the place as a set of geographical co-ordinates, in terms of other named geo-political entities, or as an address.

Where to put a <place>

<place> elements are wrapped inside <listPlace>, which, like <listPerson>, typically goes in the document header (in <sourceDescription>) but can also appear anywhere an ordinary <list> can.

```
<place type="lake" xml:id="Skadar">
  <placeName xml:lang="sr-Latn">Skadarsko jezero</placeName>
  <placeName xml:lang="sr-Cyrl">Скадарско језеро</placeName>
  <placeName xml:lang="sq">Liqeni i Shkodrës</placeName>
  <placeName xml:lang="en">Skadar Lake</placeName>
  <location>
    <geo>42.166389 -19.325833</geo>
  </location>
  <location>
    <desc>The lake is on the border between
    <name type="place" key="ME">Montenegro</name> and
    <name type="place" key="AL">Albania</name>, with about
      two-thirds of it lying in the territory of the former,
      one-third in the latter.</desc>
  </location>
</place>
```

Traits for places

There are, in addition to a generic `<trait>` element, specialised elements for `<population>`, `<climate>` and `<terrain>`.

```
<population when="2003">  
  <desc>788,482</desc>  
</population>  
<climate>  
  <p>Mediterranean climate, hot dry summers  
    and autumns and relatively cold winters  
    with heavy snowfalls inland.</p>  
</climate>  
<terrain>  
  <p>Highly indented coastline with narrow  
    coastal plain backed by rugged high  
    limestone mountains and plateaux.</p>  
</terrain>
```

States for places

States are dealt with using the generic <state> element.

```
<state type="legal" from="1983">  
  <p>The Montenegrin part of the lake and  
    its surrounding area were declared a  
    national park in 1983. The park is one of  
    the largest bird reserves in Europe,  
    having 270 bird species, among which are  
    some of the last pelicans in Europe.</p>  
</state>
```

Events

There are no specialised elements for events; instead, the generic `<event>` element can be used with the `@type` attribute:

```
<event type="political" when="2006-06-03">
  <head>Independence</head>
  <p>On <date when="2006-05-21">21 May
    2006</date> a referendum was held in
    Montenegro on whether the state union with
    <name type="place" key="RS">Serbia</name>
    should be dissolved. A total of 419,240
    votes were cast, of which 230,661 were for
    independence.</p>
  <p>Montenegro's referendum commission
    officially confirmed the results of the
    referendum on <date when="2006-05-31">31
    May</date>, verifying that 55.5% of the
    population had voted in favour of
    independence, narrowly surpassing the
    threshold requirement of 55% set by the
    <name type="org" key="EU">European
    Union</name>. The Montenegrin <name type="org" key="USRCG">Parliament</name>
    made a formal declaration of independence
    on <date when="2006-06-03">Saturday, 3
    June</date>.</p>
</event>
```

The values of the `@key` attributes on `<name>` point to other `<place>` elements, or to `<org>` or `<person>` elements.