

PRACTICAL EXERCISE 5: MANUSCRIPT DESCRIPTION

By the end of this session you should be able to:

- create a TEI description based on an existing published description of a primary source
- reflect on the decisions involved in the encoding process and their ramifications
- reflect on the strengths and limitations of the <msDesc> module for describing different types of primary source material

In this exercise you will use an existing printed description to create an encoded <msDesc> of either (a) Bodleian Library Arch. G d. 41(2), a copy of the 1609 edition of Shakespeare's Sonnets or (b) MS. Lat. misc. e. 111, a medieval manuscript from the Bodleian's collections. For (a) you may want to continue working in the file you have been using earlier in the course, or use one of the spoiler files. For (b) you may create a new file or use the dummy file "msDesc" which has a TEI header in place.

I suggest you begin by creating a shortish description that covers all the principle elements of <msDesc>: <msIdentifier>, <msContents>, <physDesc>, and <history>. If time allows, feel free to include as much detail as possible.

Begin then by creating <msDesc> inside <sourceDesc>. The editor may automatically generate <msIdentifier>, otherwise add it yourself. Enter, at a minimum, details of <settlement>, <repository> and <idNo>.

Next create <msContents>. If you are working on the manuscript description, you have one <msItem> to create: mark up its <author>, <title>, and <textLang>. If you are working on the Sonnets, you will need to put the <titlePage> element inside <msContents>; <titlePage> will then contain <docTitle> then <titlePart> (the 'Title' of the description). After <docTitle> should come <docImprint> [the 'Imprint' of the description]. You may wish to mark up the names of printer, publisher and bookseller in the relevant <bibl> section, earlier in <sourceDesc>, using <respStmt>, <persName>, and <resp>.

Next create <physDesc>: mark up the nature of the physical object being described (remember this is an attribute @form on the element <objectDesc>). Within <objectDesc> add <supportDesc> and <extent>, and record the <dimensions> of the manuscript, using <height> (and <width> ... for the manuscript at least...) and remembering to specify the units you are using. Inside <bindingDesc> using <binding> then <p> to describe the binding of your volume, using date attributes on <binding> if you like.

Finally <history>. Use <origPlace> and <origDate>, with any relevant attributes, to encode the origin of your source. If you are working on the Sonnets you have the choice of doing this within the <origin> section, inside <history>; or within <docImprint> in the <titlePage> section of <msContents>

Still have time left?

Fill out the <physDesc> with details of <collation> and if relevant <watermark>, <layout>, <decoDesc>, <support> and so on

Fill out the <history> section with details of the relevant <provenance> events recorded in your description.

What remains to be encoded? How would you encode a source relevant to your own work?

Don't forget to **save your work**. For the manuscript description you can compare my own version...