

Talk 2: Manuscript Description

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Manuscript Description

This talk introduces the TEI's module on manuscript description, briefly surveying the nature of manuscript description and the structural components of a TEI `<msDesc>` element.

Why are manuscript descriptions special?

- Manuscripts are *unique objects*, sometimes (though not always) of great cultural or political value
- Books, by contrast, exist in multiple copies, and can be described adequately by well-established and formalized bibliographic conventions.
- For manuscripts, there are several traditions, often descriptive or **belle lettriste**, and little consensus.

Similar concerns apply to other text-bearing objects.

Objectives

The TEI `<msDesc>` element is intended for several different kinds of applications:

- standalone database of library records (finding aid)
- discursive text collecting many records (catalogue raisonné)
- metadata component within a digital surrogate (electronic edition)
- tool for 'quantitative codicology'

Catalogue Raisonné

An `<msDesc>` can appear anywhere a `<p>` paragraph can

```

<div>
  <head>The Lithuanian National Martynas Mazvydas
    Library and its records</head>
  <p>Probably the finest collection of .....</p>
  <p>For example:
  <msDesc xml:id="F101-19" xml:lang="en">
<!-- ...-->
  </msDesc>
  </p>
  <p>In the following manuscript...
  <msDesc xml:id="F101-21" xml:lang="en">
<!-- ...-->
  </msDesc>
  </p>
</div>

```

Quantitative Codicology: is it possible?

Two conflicting desires:

- preserve (or perpetuate) existing descriptive prose
- reliable search, retrieval, and analysis of data

The `<msDesc>` tries, wherever possible, to have its cake and eat it.

Components of a manuscript description

We separate, and tag differently, aspects concerned with...

- identification (`<msIdentifier>`)
- intellectual content (`<msItem>`)
- physical description (`<physDesc>`)
- history (`<history>`)
- additional curation information (`<additional>`)
- and descriptions of parts of a composite manuscript (`<msPart>`)

msDesc structure

```
<msDesc xml:id="ex2" xml:lang="en">
  <msIdentifier>
    <!-- Repository location, shelfmarks, etc. -->
  </msIdentifier>
  <msContents>
    <!-- Structured description of MS contents -->
  </msContents>
  <physDesc>
    <!-- Physical and codicological description -->
  </physDesc>
  <history>
    <!-- Origin, provenance, acquisition, etc. -->
  </history>
  <additional>
    <!-- Additional bibliographic and curatorial information, and
    associated materials etc. -->
  </additional>
  <msPart>
    <!-- Composite manuscript details -->
  </msPart>
</msDesc>
```

`<msIdentifier>` is the only one that is required.

A basic <msDesc>

```

<msDesc xml:id="F101-21" xml:lang="en">
  <msIdentifier>
    <repository>Lithuanian National M. Mazvydas Library, Rare Book and Manuscript
      Department</repository>
  </msIdentifier>
  <p> F101-21: [August 24], 1522. Ciuitatus Grodnensis (Grodno). Stored in Lithuania, Vilnius,
    Lithuanian National M. Mazvydas Library, Rare Book and Manuscript Department. "In nomine Domini
    amen. Ad perpetuam rei memoriam...". Latin. There are postscripts in Polish. Parchment. Single
    sheet format: 515mm x 354mm with 115mm fold-up. Text: single column, 415mm x 221mm, 33 ruled
    lines. The ornamented initial "I" takes up 30 lines, 15 cm. The attached seal has not remained
    (parchment fold-up is 11.5 cm, two slits for the string are spaced 12 cm apart). Signed by
    Sigismundus rex - Sigismund the Old, King of Poland and Grand Duke of Lithuania. Summary: An
    original copy of a charter where Sigismund the Old (Sigismundus), King of Poland and Grand Duke
    of Lithuania, transumes and confirms two deeds of purchase of the Raščiai (Roffcze) domain in
    Veliuona (Vyelona) district by the Kėdainiai prefect Georgij Andrichovich (Georgius
    Andrichowicz): the deed of purchase of December 13, 1518 from Kachna (Kachna) etc. in Kėdainiai
    (Kyejdaniij) and the deed of purchase of April, 1518 from the Praczewicz (Praczewicz) family.
  </p>
</msDesc>

```

A structured <msDesc> (1)

```

<msDesc xml:id="F101-21" xml:lang="en">
  <msIdentifier>
    <country>Lithuania</country>
    <settlement>Vilnius</settlement>
    <institution>Lithuanian National M. Mazvydas Library</institution>
    <repository>Rare Book and Manuscript Department</repository>
    <idno>F101-21</idno>
  </msIdentifier>
  <msContents>
    <summary>Sigismund the Old (Sigifmundus), King of Poland and Grand Duke of Lithuania, transumes
      and confirms two deeds of purchase of the Raščiai (Roffcze) domain in Veliuona (Vyelona)
      district by the Kėdainiai prefect Georgij Andrichovich (Georgius Andrichowicz): the deed of
      purchase of December 13, 1518 from Kachna (Kachna) etc. in Kėdainiai (Kyeydanij) and the
      deed of purchase of April, 1518 from the Praczewicz (Praczewicz) family.</summary>
    <textLang xml:lang="lat" mainLang="lat" otherLangs="pol">Latin. Postscripts on the reverse are
      in Polish.</textLang>
    <msItem>
      <incipit>In nomine Domini amen. Ad perpetuam rei memoriam...</incipit>
    </msItem>
  </msContents>

```

A structured <msDesc> (2)

```

<physDesc>
  <objectDesc form="leaf">
    <supportDesc material="perg">
      <support>Parchment. Single sheet format: 515 x 354 + 115 mm.</support>
    </supportDesc>
    <layoutDesc>
      <layout columns="1" ruledLines="33">Text: 415 x 221 mm.</layout>
    </layoutDesc>
  </objectDesc>
  <decoDesc>
    <decoNote>The ornamented initial "I" takes up 30 lines, 15 cm.</decoNote>
  </decoDesc>
  <sealDesc>
    <seal type="attached">
      <p>The seal has not remained (parchment fold-up is 11.5 cm, two slits for the string are spaced 12 cm apart). </p>
    </seal>
  </sealDesc>
</physDesc>

```

A structured <msDesc> (3)

```
<history>
  <origin>
    <origDate when="1502-06-24">[August 24], 1522. </origDate>
    <origPlace xml:lang="lat">ciuitatus Grodnenfis</origPlace>
    <origPlace xml:lang="en">Grodno</origPlace>
    <p>Authenticity – original.</p>
    <p>Signed by Sigifmundus rex – Sigismund the Old, King of Poland and Grand Duke of
      Lithuania. </p>
  </origin>
</history>
</msDesc>
```

Identification (1)

The `<msIdentifier>`

Traditional three part specification:

- place (`<country>`, `<region>`, `<settlement>`)
- repository (`<institution>`, `<repository>`)
- identifier (`<collection>`, `<idno>`)

```
<msIdentifier>  
  <country>France</country>  
  <settlement>Troyes</settlement>  
  <repository>Bibliothèque Municipale</repository>  
  <idno>50</idno>  
</msIdentifier>
```

Identification (2)

Alternative or additional names can also be included:

```
<msIdentifier>  
  <country>Danmark</country>  
  <settlement>København</settlement>  
  <repository> Det ArnamagnæanskeInstitut </repository>  
  <idno>AM 45 fol. </idno>  
  <msName xml:lang="la">Codex Frisianus</msName>  
  <msName xml:lang="is">Frísbók</msName>  
</msIdentifier>
```

Intellectual Content

- May simply use paragraphs of text...
- ... or a tree of `<msItem>` elements
- ... optionally preceded by a prose summary

We can describe the content in general terms:

```
<msContents>
  <p>An extraordinary charivari of heroic deeds and improving tales, including
  an early version of
  <title>Guy of Warwick</title> and several hymns. </p>
</msContents>
```

or we can provide detail about each distinct item:

```
<msContents>
  <summary>An extraordinary charivari of heroic deeds, improving tales, and
  hymns</summary>
  <msItem>
<!-- details of Guy of Warwick here -->
  </msItem>
  <msItem>
<!-- other items here -->
  </msItem>
</msContents>
```

The <msItem> element

Manuscripts contain identifiable items, usually physically tied to a locus.

- <locus>, if present, must be given first
- then any of the following, in a specified order:
 - <author>, <respStmt>
 - <title>, <rubric>, <incipit>, <explicit>, <colophon>, <finalRubric>
 - <quote>, <textLang>, <decoNote>, <bibl>, <listBibl>, <note> ...
 - ... or nested <msItem>s

<msContents> with multiple <msItem>s

```

<msContents>
  <msItem n="1">
    <locus>fols. 5r-7v</locus>
    <title>An ABC</title>
    <bibl>
      <title>IMEV</title>
      <biblScope type="pages">239</biblScope>
    </bibl>
  </msItem>
  <msItem n="2">
    <locus>fols. 7v-8v</locus>
    <title xml:lang="fr">Lenvoy de Chaucer a Scogan</title>
  </msItem>
  <!-- ... -->
  <msItem n="6">
    <locus>fols. 14r-126v</locus>
    <title>Troilus and Criseyde</title>
    <note>Bk. 1:71-Bk. 5:1701, with additional losses due to mutilation
  throughout</note>
  </msItem>
</msContents>

```

Physical Description

An artificial (but helpful) grouping of many distinct items.
You can simply supply paragraphs of prose, covering such topics as

- `<objectDesc>`: the physical carrier
- `<handDesc>`: what is carried on it
- `<musicNotation>`, `<decoDesc>`, `<additions>`
- `<bindingDesc>` and `<sealDesc>`
- `<accMat>`: accompanying material

Or, group your discussion within the specific elements mentioned above.

Similarly, within the specific elements, you can supply paragraphs of prose, or further specific elements.

The carrier 1

The `<objectDesc>` contains just paragraphs, or `<supportDesc>` and `<layoutDesc>`

```
<objectDesc form="codex">
  <supportDesc material="mixed">
    <p>Early modern <material>parchment</material> and
    <material>paper</material>. </p>
  </supportDesc>
  <layoutDesc>
    <layout columns="1" ruledLines="25 32"/>
  </layoutDesc>
</objectDesc>
```

The carrier 2

A more complex substructure with specific elements for `<support>`, `<extent>`, `<foliation>`, `<collation>`, `<condition>`.

Multiple layouts may also be specified:

```
<layoutDesc>
  <layout ruledLines="25" columns="1">
    <p>
      <locus from="1r-202v"/>
      <locus from="210r-212v"/>
      Between 25 and 32 ruled lines. </p>
    </layout>
  <layout ruledLines="34 50" columns="1">
    <p>
      <locus from="203r-209v"/>Between 34 and 50 ruled lines. </p>
    </layout>
  </layoutDesc>
```

<handDesc> and <decoDesc>

- <handNote> (note on hand) describes a particular style or hand distinguished within a manuscript.
- <decoNote> contains a note describing either a decorative component of a manuscript, or a fairly homogenous class of such components.

<handDesc> examples

```
<handDesc hands="2">
```

```
<p>The manuscript is written in two contemporary hands, otherwise unknown, but clearly those of practised scribes. Hand I writes ff. 1r-22v and hand II ff. 23 and 24. Some scholars, notably Verner Dahlerup and Hreinn Benediktsson, have argued for a third hand on f. 24, but the evidence for this is insubstantial.</p>
```

```
</handDesc>
```

```
<handDesc hands="2">
```

```
<handNote xml:id="Eirsp-1" scope="minor" script="other">
```

```
<p>The first part of the manuscript, <locus from="1v" to="72v:4">fols 1v-72v:4</locus>, is written in a practised Icelandic Gothic bookhand. This hand is not found elsewhere.</p>
```

```
</handNote>
```

```
<handNote xml:id="Eirsp-2" scope="major" script="other">
```

```
<p>The second part of the manuscript, <locus from="72v:4" to="194v">fols 72v:4-194</locus>, is written in a hand contemporary with the first; it can also be found in a fragment of <title>Knýtlinga saga</title>, <ref>AM 20b II fol.</ref>.</p>
```

```
</handNote>
```

```
</handDesc>
```

<additions>

The <additions> element can be used to list or describe any additions to the manuscript, such as marginalia, scribblings, doodles, etc., which are considered to be of interest or importance.

<additions>

<p>The text of this manuscript is not interpolated with sentences from Royal decrees promulgated in 1294, 1305 and 1314. In the margins, however, another somewhat later scribe has added the relevant paragraphs of these decrees, see pp. 8, 24, 44, 47 etc. </p>

<p>As a humorous gesture the scribe in one opening of the manuscript, pp. 36 and 37, has prolonged the lower stems of one letter f and five letters p and has them drizzle down the margin. </p>

</additions>

<accMat>

<accMat> (accompanying material) contains details of any significant additional material which may be closely associated with the manuscript being described, such as non-contemporaneous documents or fragments bound in with the manuscript at some earlier historical period.

<accMat> A copy of a tax form from 1947 is included in the envelope with the letter. It is not catalogued separately. </accMat>

<history>

- <origin>: where it all began
- <provenance>: everything in between
- <acquisition>: how you acquired it

<origin> is datable element and thus has attributes notBefore and notAfter

Example

```

<history>
  <origin>
    <p>Written in <origPlace>England</origPlace> in the
    <origDate notAfter="1300" notBefore="1200">13th cent. </origDate>
    </p>
  </origin>
  <provenance>
    <p>On fol. 54v very faint is <q>Iste liber est fratris guillelmi de buria de
    <gap reason="illegible"/> Roberti ordinis fratrum Pred<expan>icatorum</expan>
    </q>, 14th cent. (?): <q>hanauilla</q> is written at the foot of the page
    (15th cent.). </p>
  </provenance>
  <acquisition>
    <p>Bought from the rev. <name type="person">W. D. Macray</name> on
    <date when="1863-03-17"> March 17, 1863</date>, for 1pound 10s. </p>
  </acquisition>
</history>

```

<additional> information

- <adminInfo>: administrative information
- <surrogates>: information about other surrogates eg pictures
- <accMat>: accompanying material
- <listBibl>: bibliography

Administrative information

- record history
- availability
- custodial history
- miscellaneous remarks

```
<adminInfo>
  <custodialHist>
    <custEvent type="conservation" notBefore="1961-03" notAfter="1963-02">
      <p>Conserved between March 1961 and February 1963 at Birgitte Dalls
      Konserveringsværksted. </p>
    </custEvent>
    <custEvent type="photography" notBefore="1988-05-01" notAfter="1988-05-
    30">
      <p>Photographed in May 1988 by AMI/FA. </p>
    </custEvent>
  </custodialHist>
</adminInfo>
```

And finally

A `<msDesc>` can contain a nested `<msPart>`, catering for composite MSS, formerly distinct.

```
<msDesc xml:id="ex5" xml:lang="en">
  <msIdentifier>
    <msName xml:lang="la">Codex Suprasliensis</msName>
  </msIdentifier>
  <msPart>
    <altIdentifier type="partial">
      <settlement>Ljubljana</settlement>
      <repository>Narodna in univerzitetna knjižnica</repository>
      <idno>MS Kopitar 2</idno>
      <note>Contains ff. 10 to 42 only</note>
    </altIdentifier>
  </msPart>
  <msPart>
    <altIdentifier type="partial">
      <settlement>Warszawa</settlement>
      <repository>Biblioteka Narodowa</repository>
      <idno>B0 3.201</idno>
    </altIdentifier>
  </msPart>
<!-- More <msPart> elements -->
</msDesc>
```

Exercise 2

You will be provided with a handout which walks you through taking an electronic copy of the prose manuscript description you have seen and encoding it with an ENRICH/TEI `<msDesc>` element. If you have any questions while you are working on it, just raise your hand.