

Institution: De Montfort University		
Unit of Assessment: 27		
Title of case study: A New International Standard for Editing Literary-Historical Manuscripts		
Period when the underpinning research was undertaken: 2000–2004		
Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:		
Name(s):	Role(s) (e.g. job title):	Period(s) employed by submitting HEI:
Dr Peter Robinson	Professor	1996–2005
Period when the claimed impact occurred: 1 August 2013–31 July 2020		
Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014? Y		
1. Summary of the impact <p>Peter Robinson's research created revolutionary digital standards in two areas: first, the creation of machine-readable descriptions of internationally significant literary-historical manuscripts, thereby contributing to their preservation through innovative use of technology; and second, the making of digital editions of primary texts. Both standards have been adopted by the international Text Encoding Initiative, itself contributing to multiple International Organization for Standardization (ISO) standards, and used across the world, benefiting international research libraries, commercial publishers, editors and book readers. These standards have transformed scholarly practice in creating new editions based on manuscripts, enabled libraries to catalogue them uniformly, and substantially lowered the costs for commercial publishers to make modern editions of them, facilitating public access to these culturally enriching, historically significant texts.</p>		
2. Underpinning research <p>Peter Robinson's research into both areas (manuscript descriptions and digital editions of primary texts) was developed at DMU's Centre for Technology and the Arts (CTA) during 2000–2004. One of the CTA's first major projects involved Robinson working with Norman Blake (DMU 1998–2004) to create new editions of Chaucer's <i>Canterbury Tales</i> based on fresh analysis of all the early manuscripts (Arts and Humanities Research Board (now AHRC), funded GBP394,000 in 1999–2004). Created by two leading medievalists, their cutting-edge digital editions of Chaucer were at the forefront of research in the digital humanities. They also highlighted the fact that the prevailing digital document encoding standard at the time – the Text Encoding Initiative (TEI) P3 standard – could not cope with the problems of encoding 400- to 600-year-old English manuscripts.</p> <p>From examining hundreds of relevant manuscripts, Robinson derived, in 2000, a new taxonomy for contextualising information that could be extended by repetition within elements to produce manuscript descriptions of unprecedented length and sophistication. This new standard for manuscript description was formally defined via the newly created Extensible Markup Language (XML), the advanced features of which it was among the first to exploit [R1, R3].</p> <p>Robinson recognised that were his standard to be adopted by libraries worldwide, it would enable the creation of an online union catalogue of all their manuscript holdings, and that it could go on to provide a means for editors to create more consistently edited modern editions of manuscripts and give publishers a streamlined workflow for the more efficient and cost-effective publication of those editions in print and digital form [R2, R4, R5].</p> <p>Robinson's new standard had two paths for dissemination: (1) through the worldwide acceptance of the TEI guidelines embodying his standard for use by anyone wishing to create a new scholarly edition based on manuscript materials, and (2) through a specific project to improve access to manuscript materials by unifying existing catalogues of them. Robinson had already initiated the 'Manuscript Access Through Standards for Electronic Records' (MASTER) project,</p>		

funded by the European Union Framework IV (EUR376,000, 1999–2003). Because of the invention of Robinson's standard (2000), DMU became in 2001 the lead partner of six collaborating European universities in MASTER as it settled on Robinson's standard as its primary technical means for accomplishing its ends and began to promulgate the standard and distribute the necessary software for its adoption.

When Robinson invented his new standard, the CTA (Centre for Textual Studies from 2004) was already engaged in the creation of scholarly digital editions that immediately benefited by adopting it, including Julia Briggs's (DMU 1994–2008) and Peter Shillingsburg's (DMU 2002–2010) *Woolf 'Time Passes' project* (Leverhulme Trust, GBP52,780; 2006).

3. References to the research

SCHOLARLY CRITICAL EDITION OF A LITERARY WORK

- [R1] Robinson, P. (ed.) (2001) *Geoffrey Chaucer's 'The Miller's Tale' on CD-ROM*. Oxford. Scholarly Digital Editions; <http://www.sd-editions.com/miller/index.html>

ARTICLES IN INTERNATIONAL PEER-REVIEWED JOURNALS

- [R2] Robinson, P. (2000) 'The one text and the many texts', *Literary and Linguistic Computing*, 15(1): 5–14; <https://doi.org/10.1093/lc/15.1.5>
Since renamed *Digital Scholarship in the Humanities*, *Literary and Linguistic Computing* is Oxford University Press's flagship journal on the use of digital methods in literary scholarship.
- [R3] Robinson, P. (2003) 'The history, discoveries, and aims of the *Canterbury Tales* project', *Chaucer Review*, 38(2): 126–139; <https://www.jstor.org/stable/25094241>
Published by the Pennsylvania University Press, *Chaucer Review* is an international peer-reviewed scholarly journal with an editorial board comprising the most senior Chaucerians from across the world.
- [R4] Robinson, P. (2004) 'Where we are with electronic scholarly editions, and where we want to be?', *Jahrbuch für Computerphilologie*, 5: 125–146; <http://computerphilologie.digital-humanities.de/jg03/robinson.html>
This is the leading German- and English-language journal in this field, published by Dutch scholarly press Brill.

CHAPTER IN PEER-REVIEWED COLLECTION OF ESSAYS

- [R5] Robinson, P. (2004) 'Making electronic editions and the fascination of what is difficult', in A. Bozzi, L. Cignoni and J.-L. Lebrave (eds) *Digital Technologies and Philological Disciplines*, vol. 20/21, Pisa: Istituti Editoriali e Poligrafici Internazionali, pp 415–438; ISBN 9788881473182
This peer-reviewed collection of essays in an annual book forms part of a distinguished series of books from Italy's leading publisher of scholarly journals and annual books.

4. Details of the impact

Over the census period, the reach, significance and impact of Robinson's new standards for describing and editing literary-historical manuscripts has been sustained and global: it has contributed to the cultural preservation of internationally significant manuscripts and it has benefited libraries and archives managing world-class manuscript collections, editors, commercial publishers and readers, through positive changes in the way books based on manuscript sources are created, published and catalogued.

(1) LIBRARIES AND ARCHIVES: ENHANCING THE PRESERVATION AND CATALOGUING OF LITERARY-CULTURAL HERITAGE

The impact of Robinson's research has been felt by libraries and archives managing manuscript collections, via the MASTER and ENRICH projects. In this REF census period, Robinson's standard has been used within the MASTER project to achieve catalogue integration across the

holdings of the Royal Library in the Hague; the Arnamagnæan Institute, Copenhagen; L'Institut de recherche et d'histoire des textes, Paris; the National Library of the Czech Republic, Prague; the Bodleian Library, Oxford; the British Library; the Vatican Library; and the Biblioteca Ambrosiana, Milan. This amounts to 61,000 manuscripts – the core of Europe's rare manuscript holdings – being more discoverable by readers than would have been possible without Robinson's standard [C2].

The EU-funded EUR45,570,000 ENRICH project (2007–2009) built upon Robinson's achievement with MASTER and adopted his standard [C3]. It created a base for a digital library of European cultural heritage, which now makes available more than 5,000,000 digitised pages for a wide range of non-academic users, including libraries, museums and archives, policymakers and lay readers. Examples include the National Library of the Czech Republic, Prague; Centro per comunicazione e l'integrazione dei media, Florence; SYSTRAN SA, Paris; and Biblioteca Nacional de España, Madrid. This digital library, enabled by Robinson's standard, puts Europe's manuscript collection before the eyes of thousands of lay and scholarly readers each year every year in the current census period.

(2) COMMERCIAL PUBLISHING: ENHANCING MANUSCRIPT EDITING AND PUBLISHING PRACTICES

The impact of Robinson's research has been felt by publishers of books based on manuscripts, via the TEI P5 Guidelines [C1]. Since 2014, large-scale digital projects have continued to adopt the TEI P5 standard incorporating Robinson's work [C4] and so have commercial publishers [C5]. When publishing materials based on manuscript sources, publishers' use of Robinson's standard provides a simpler, more efficient means of encoding manuscripts than was previously available and thereby enables the production of trade and scholarly editions of those manuscripts at lower costs.

(3) READERS: ENHANCED PUBLIC ACCESS TO CULTURALLY ENRICHING LITERARY-HISTORICAL SOURCES

Since 2014, trade and academic publishers have used the Robinson manuscript-encoding standard to create editions of works by a range of public figures and canonical and non-canonical authors. This includes 77 editions of writers' personal correspondence [C5], such as *The Letters of John F. Kennedy* (2013), *The Letters of Noël Coward* (2014), *The Correspondence of Charles Darwin* (2014), *The Letters of Samuel Beckett* (2014), *The Correspondence of Sigmund and Anne Freud* (2014), *Jane Austen's Letters* (2014), *The Correspondence of Elizabeth Stuart, Queen of Bohemia* (2015), *The Letters of Ernest Hemingway* (2015) and *The Letters of Oliver Goldsmith* (2018).

Other editions made from manuscript sources using Robinson's digital edition standards [C5] include works by well-known authors, such as *Ben Jonson's Walk to Scotland: An Annotated Edition of the 'Foot Voyage'* (2014), *The Works of Robert Burns* (2014), *The Collected Works of Gerard Manley Hopkins* (2014), *Georg Wilhelm Friedrich Hegel: Heidelberg Writings* (2015) and *The Sermons of John Donne* (2015), as well as historically significant texts such as *The Complete Bill of Rights: The Drafts, Debates, Sources, and Origins* (2015).

Commercial publishers of books based on manuscript sources are under no obligation to adopt any particular standards and have chosen Robinson's as it simplifies manuscript-encoding protocols, lowering their costs and enabling them to produce editions that otherwise might not have been commercially viable. Non-canonical manuscript editions that have benefited this way and been made publicly available, include: *The Household Account Book of Sarah Fell of Swarthmoor Hall* (2014), *Every Day Lasts a Year: A Jewish Family's Correspondence from Poland* (2014), *The Letters of Lady Anne Bacon* (2014), *In Defence of the Slave Trade: Stephen Fuller, Jamaica and the West India Parliamentary Lobby at Westminster, 1788–1795* (2014), *The Correspondence of John Campbell MP with His Family, Henry Fox, Sir Robert Walpole and the Duke of Newcastle, 1734–1771* (2014), *The Egyptian Historian 'Abd al-Rahmān al-Jabartī: His Life, Works, Autographs, Manuscripts and the Historical Sources of 'Ajā'ib al-Āthār* (2014) and *Lady Nugent's East India Journal* (2016) [C5].

5. Sources to corroborate the impact

- [C1] The Text Encoding Initiative (TEI) P5 Guidelines incorporating the Robinson/CTA Standard: <https://tei-c.org/guidelines/p5> [accessed 12 January 2020]. "Chapter 10 Manuscript Description", occupying pages 330-373 of the Guidelines, is based on Robinson's DMU work, as acknowledged in page 330's footnote 74.
- [C2] The MASTER Project for Pan-European Catalogue Integration: <http://master.dmu.ac.uk> [accessed 12 January 2020]
- [C3] The EU ENRICH project, now part of Manuscriptorium: <http://enrich.manuscriptorium.eu/> [accessed 12 January 2020]
- [C4] Full list of projects using the TEI P5 Guidelines: <http://www.tei-c.org/Activities/Projects> [accessed 12 January 2020]
- [C5] Full list of 81 books published using the Robinson/CTA Manuscript-Encoding Standard: <http://cts.dmu.ac.uk/repository/Robinson-standard-used.pdf> [accessed 12 January 2020]