



Text Encoding

Introduction to Digital Scholarly Editing

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January 2019

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What is TEXT?

For a computer all information must be encoded as binary bits (0-1).

The minimal unit of textual information is a *character*.

ASCII

The American Standard Code for Information Interchange (ASCII) was developed in the 1960's based on telegraphic communication.

It used 7 bit-integers for each characters, which amounts to 128 possible combinations (2^7).

32 characters were command characters (not printable). All uppercase characters came before lowercase.

Examples:

- 100 0001 = A (dec. 65, hex. 41)
- 110 0001 = a (dec. 97, hex. 61)
- 010 0000 = space (dec. 32, hex. 20)
- 000 1010 = line feed (dec. 10, hex A)
- 000 1101 = carriage return (dec. 13, hex. D)

8 bits then allowed to place one more, expanding from 128 to 256 (2^8).

Many (mutually incompatible) Extended Encodings were implemented.

Unicode

Since 1991. Each Character is defined by a **code point**, ie. a number (usually expressed in hexadecimal: U+004A = J). Can encode up to 1,111,998, currently 137,439 are used. Multiple encodings of code points are possible (UTF-8, UTF-16, UTF-32). Most common is **UTF-8**¹:

- encodes code points in 1 to 4 bytes.
- backwards compatible with ASCII
- ASCII compatible 1 byte= 0x xx xx xx
- 2 bytes = 11 0x xx xx 10 xx xx xx
- 3 bytes = 11 10 xx xx 10 xx xx xx 10 xx xx xx

¹Always use UTF-8!!!!

TEXTUAL DATA ONLY

Text Editors:

- **Basic:** Microsoft Notepad, Apple TextEdit, etc.
- **Advanced** (include XML, Python, etc.): Sublime, BBEdit, Emacs, Atom, etc.

Text Formats:

- .txt, .md, .csv, .py, .tex, etc

TEXT AND FORMAT

Text Processors:

- Microsoft Office - Word
- LibreOffice - Writer

Not Text Formats:

- .doc, .docx, .epub, .pdf, .odt, .jpeg

Exercise

Transcribe into a plain text format:

- <https://archive.org/details/camoes00alme/page/n11>
- <https://archive.org/details/camoes00alme/page/n17>
- https://archive.org/details/bub_gb_h1qUMLaMp3wC/page/n11