

From Document to Data: Prosopography and Topography in the Tax Rolls of Medieval Paris

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This poster presents on the experimental stages of a project to create a digital edition of the tax rolls of medieval Paris. Levied on the city by King Philip IV between 1292-1300, and again in 1313, these documents provide a wealth of information about the individual people, demographics, and topography of the city. However, despite their importance, they have never been systematically published or digitized, and all analysis between them must currently be done by hand. This project, inspired by the [Henry III Fine Rolls Project](http://finerollshenry3.org.uk) (finerollshenry3.org.uk) and the [Map of Early Modern London](http://mapoflondon.uvic.ca) (mapoflondon.uvic.ca), proposes to render the seven extant rolls in TEI/XML, where personal, occupational, topographical, and financial data are dynamically brought together and opened up for searching, cross-referencing, mapping, tabulating, and exporting. Although the entries in the rolls themselves seem simple at first glance—organized by parish and consisting at most of a name, occupation, and amount of tax owed—actually encoding them prompts a variety of questions for the inexperienced editor. Many of these relate to the conventions of digital editions: whether the edition should reflect the layout of the manuscript; how to handle corrections, errors, and abbreviations; and how to approach uncertainty—especially when identifying individuals between multiple tax rolls. Others relate to underlying technologies and frameworks: including detailed relationships (familial, occupational, geographical) is desirable and adds interoperability within the semantic web, but also means working with complex ontologies and data models. This poster explores these questions and others, and engages with the early concerns and pitfalls of creating a digital edition.