

Metadata for Humanities' Studies

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The Humanities GIS Research Group (H-GIS Group, <http://www.h-gis.org>) is the leading interdisciplinary research group in Japan applying information technologies to the humanities. It has developed various kinds of databases, Resource Sharing Systems seamlessly to integrate various databases on the Internet, Spatiotemporal tools to analyze data stored in databases, and digital gazetteers to support spatiotemporal data processing. This paper will describe metadata for Resource Sharing Systems and Map Sharing Systems to support humanities' studies.

A "Resource Sharing System" is an information system to integrate heterogeneous humanity's databases on the Internet and to provide users with a uniform interface to retrieve databases seamlessly in one operation. The CIAS (Center for Integrated Area Studies, Kyoto University, Japan) has developed Resource Sharing System to organize various resources collected by researchers. Since these resources are collections of field notes, photographs, maps, and so on, minimum element sets such as Dublin Core Metadata Element Set are not enough for the purpose. The CIAS Resource Sharing System needs a larger metadata set, and then it introduces combinations of EAD (Encoded Archival Description), METS (Metadata Encoding & Transmission Standard) and MODS (Metadata Object Description Schema).

Map Collections are crucial resources for humanities' studies. However, as it is difficult for an institute to collect whole maps of a collection, and then maps are collected by several institutes and are organized different ways. The Resource Sharing mechanism can be applicable virtually to integrate these distributed maps. AEI (Area, Environment and Information) is the new metadata to share maps on the Internet. AEI metadata is designed to organize digital and paper maps and to keep records about their derivational histories. AEI is the combination of JMP (Japan Metadata Profile that is defined according to ISO19115) , MARC21 and EAD. At present, map databases (the first trial version) based on AEI metadata have developed and opened on the Web.