

Emending and databasing historical earthquake documents in the Japanese Ancient and Medieval ages

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<http://historical.seismology.jp/erice/>

We have started a research project of constructing a full-text digital database of all historical earthquake documents in the Ancient and Medieval ages in Japan under the Grants-in-Aid for Scientific Research by MEXT (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology). Although the project term is limited in four years from 2003 through 2006 JFY, we plan to critically examine all the historical documents in the existing collections, select them, carefully emend every text and compose a re-edited collection of all historical documents in digital form.

We also aim at interdisciplinary collaboration among seismologists, volcanologists, historians and information scientists. Furthermore we intend to compose a seismic intensity database compatible with the so-called Intensity Data Points (IDP; e.g., Stucchi, 1994) and containing some additional elements such as the characteristics of ground motion.

So far, about a half of the target contents has been digitized. The XML is introduced for markapping documents, and the alpha-version of a full-text database of historical earthquake documents has been constructed. The system has an engine which can convert XML data to HTML, thus users can access by general purpose browser, and can see vertical writing documents look like original documents. At the same time, careful emendation of all texts is being carried out by historians. Owing to the alpha-version database, which is yet an internal material, various problems have been clarified concerning existing collections of historical earthquake documents.

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