

A Plan of Metadata Construction for Activating Archives of Old Documents in Korea

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Abstract

Old documents are 1) a valuable asset for research on historical cultures of traditional eras and 2) material for creative work in cultural contents. But the current archives contain only rough and basic metadata, and for precisely that reason, they are practically lacking of utility. To overcome this issue, an understanding of the characteristics of archives—and that of users' information needs—is prerequisite to all else. Also, there is a need to put forward analysis of the present status metadata, and a problems study-based improvement plan. An archive takes the form of documental exchanges between issuers and recipients. And its contents are vast in their scope and substance that they cannot help but differ from the standard patterns of an archive of general documents. Once this complexity is factored into the metadata equation, issuers and recipients, summarized headings of the archeve contents, commentaries on various historical jargons, let alone historical-cultural background for the content's inclusion must all be implicated in detail. Remedial measures for metadata will allow for inter-agency linkage, which in turn will activate the archive in use.

Keywords: *Old documents, Archive, Metadata, Characteristics of Old Documents, Material for Creative Work in Cultural Content*

1. Introduction

Old documents are entities of the pre-modern era with written letters and signs from a specific author, whose matter and message were meant to be delivered to another specific person.¹ Old documents are both personal documents in our everyday lives and official documents of business. Examples include, but are not limited to normal letters, official state documents between authorities, between individuals and state authorities, contracts and receipts between individuals, and lists of items and funds gathered at events.

Old documents have a number of characteristics. First, they make clear the issuer and the recipient; there must always be an author and a person for whom the document is intended. Second, depending on the content and purpose of the document at hand, there are different types of Old documents. Any and all documents that make clear the issuer and recipient belong in the category of an archive hence the diversity of it. Third, archives are so variegated that their scope of preservation has been naturally just as extensive. This means that not only are archives clustered sets of data, their preserved contents may be scattered everywhere from persons and households to institutions and offices of government. Fourth, Old documents are spontaneously formed in the everyday lives of people, and hence they are important records of our historical and cultural matters.

In truth, the value of archives is based on the fourth characteristic mentioned above. Since archives are various records of daily lives, they are deemed unbiased and are

¹ Kim Hyun-Young, The Acceptance of `Gomunseo(Old Documents)` and the Problems of Arranging the Documents of Pre-Modern Archives, *The Review of Korean History*, 95, (2009.9), pp.128-129.

considered a natural reflection of our history and culture. For this reason, archives have long been in the spotlight for many a historian. Historians pay attention to the archives as for their value in research case studies. Including person to person and office to office, the documents formed in these various relationships become the basis for studies into specific times and eras—historical and cultural. Especially the value of studying people, daily life from archives is totally different from that of looking into a state-authored official documents.²

The value of archives does not end there. It translates to immense value as material for the creative industry of cultural contents. Ever since the cultural content industry has started growing, countries have begun to actively utilize their historical and cultural materials for that objective. The Harry Potter series, or Lord of the Rings, let alone Walt Disney's numerous productions are all examples of success in using archives. Archives are attracting a lot of attention as a source of novelty and creativity. This means that the information needs surrounding archives is sufficient. But because archives are so diverse in terms of who the authors and preserves them, there are issues of preservation and management. And since they are created on paper the more antique the documents, the more fragile they are; therefore, digitalisation becomes an absolute necessity. For all the above reasons, there is a complete archive available which fails to be fully operable.

This paper analyses what it takes to activate archival services—and how to construct metadata upon which fundamental archival structure can be built. To this effect, this paper will conduct studies on, first, the characteristics of archives; second, breakdown of the status quo and its problems for analysis; third, an examination of the most desirable scheme of metadata construction that is conceivable.

2. The Need for Old Documents in Korea

As have discussed in the preface, let us look further into the traits of archives which are as follows. First, Old documents are exchanged between and among individuals and institutions. The agents of such an exchange may be people, or institutions alike. Therefore, the number of agents holding onto any such archival materials can only be so diverse. Especially personal Old documents tend to be passed on from one generation to the next—kept and preserved at the family level.³ This being the case, we often discover these documents not in the hands of public authorities or institutions but in those of civilians. And civilian documents lacking in preservation facilities tend to suffer greater risks of damage. Again, the need for digitalisation follows.

On the one hand, documents which used to belong to the offices of government are normally preserved in public institutions. But their volumes are so vast that their content and importance are often overlooked. There was a time when the business of Old Document fell under the purview of national undertaking, and huge volumes were digitalised; and still to this day a considerable portion of the archives is yet to be recognized and are stored away unattended. On the other hand, the substance and scope of archives tend to be highly extensible. This is because the archive contents range from certificate of appointment to order for a command, and inter-agency coordination sheet—including both public and private records such as letters of correspondence, contract for sales and purchases, as well as personal receipts. Archives include also the exchanges between individuals and institutions such as a petition filed with authorities regarding one's complaint of injustice, the subsequent documents on its administrative proceedings, then triennially conducted census of the population, and certified copies of family registration.

² Yang Jinseok, The History and Current Status of Korean Studies of Age-old Documents, *KYUJANGGAK*, 34, (2009.6), pp.4-5.

³ Kim Hyun-Young, The Acceptance of `Gomunseo(Old Documents)` and the Problems of Arranging the Documents of Pre-Modern Archives, *The Review of Korean History*, 95, (2009.9), pp.119-128.

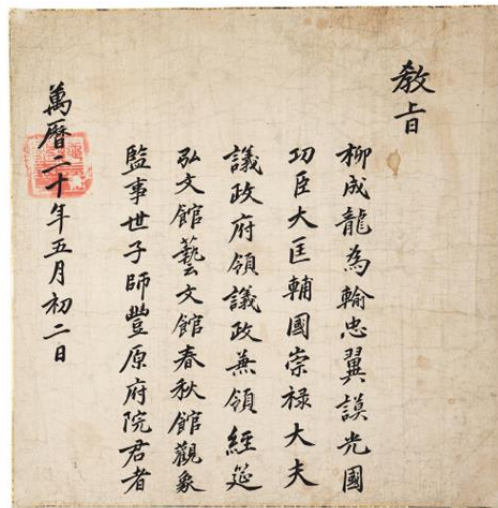


Figure 1. Ryu Seong Ryong's Appointment

This being the case, the documentation, classification for archives are colossal. The classifying methods as according to Korean palaeography are as follows: manual for personnel and administrative orders, official document of public office, trade documents, letters and notifications documents, judicial administration documents, record of events (records services) etc. The sub-class index consists of 410 or more types at most. There is even a document with a class of its own, implying how diverse Old Document archives really are.

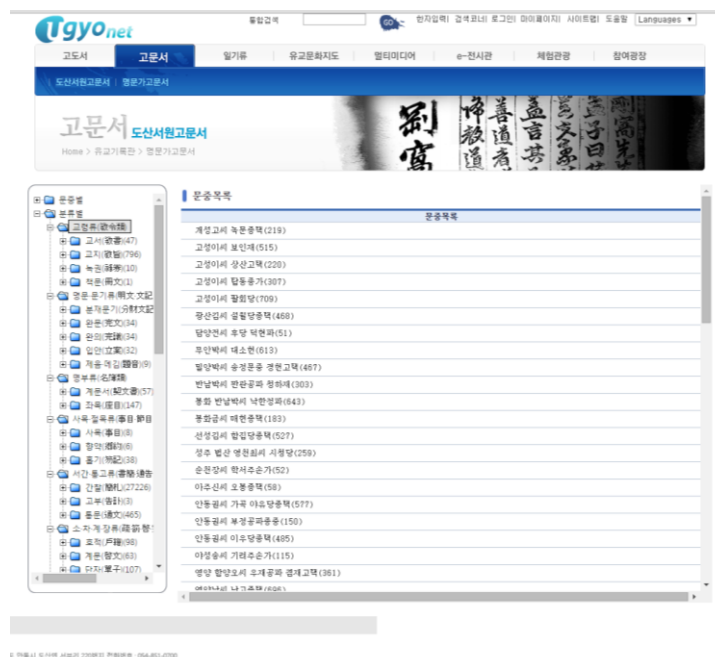


Figure 2. KSAC's Confucianism Network Archives Classification Screen

It is precisely this sort of multitudinous classification and complex jargons that make it virtually impossible for the general public to access these archives. To overcome this issue, the Old Document archives have adopted the general classification methodology in the past. In short, they have used a simpler and more comprehensible classification tools and terms for the general public—such as

politics, economy, society and culture. But these revisions only dealt with higher systems of classification. Once you zoom into the sub-classes, the system is still complex and filled with incomprehensible terms. The importance of archiving has long since been in the spotlight, but it is precisely for this reason that archives have been so highly inaccessible to most people. Old documents require expertise in two areas. One is linguistic, and the other is historical-cultural. Linguistic expertise is pertinent in that most Korean Old documents are written in Chinese characters. Moreover, the archives don't write in block letters, but in cursive script. Not many Koreans today read the cursive Chinese script; it is a skill-set that requires both much time and systematic effort. It is true that some parts are written in Hangeul (Korean alphabets) but they are ancient Hangeul which also requires linguistic expertise.

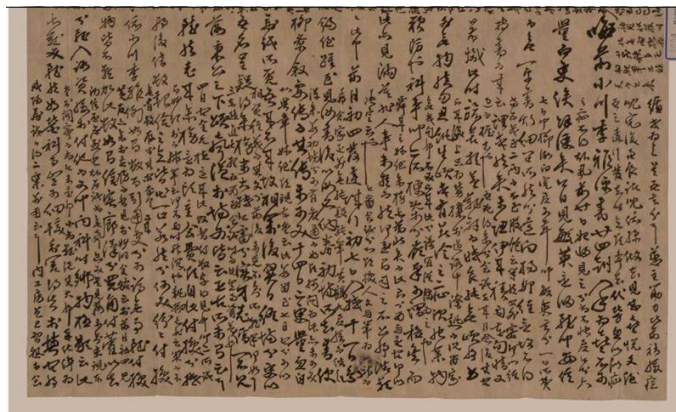


Figure 3. Letter in the Chosun Dynasty

In order to enlighten today's general public of Old Documents and their respective archives, the cursive Chinese script of the archives must first be converted into block letters—a process known as tahlcho. Tahlcho is the process by which cursive script is converted into letters in print. With this process in motion, there are still problems, since not many Koreans read Chinese characters—cursive or block. Therefore, there needs to follow another process involving the translation of Chinese characters into Korean. In short, a two-step process is required; first, regularizing the Old documents, and second, translating the converted script into the language of modernity. This process is currently taking place by the hands of specialists, but is too slow in progress. Translation must take place in the form that is comprehensible to the moderns.

For example, in traditional families of the Chosun Dynasty, people conformed to the custom of conducting commemorative rites for ancestors, and the important matters of family would be reported to in each household's ancestral shrine. This was referred to as the Koyujae. But most people do not know the meaning of this term. Therefore, there is a need to convert this term into easier expressions like “reporting ritual” or “ceremony of the report.” Another thing the modern people need in order to understand the archives is historical-cultural expertise. Why the authors wrote what they wrote, and why they used the expressions they used are key to understanding the archives. For this, there has to be a clear understanding of the cultural and historical background of the era in discussion. For example, often we will find in the property and land contracts the name and signature of the slave. But this is not to be understood as the slave's ownership of the property by any chance. This is in fact a result of the property owner using the slave as proxy and legal agent of the transaction only. This is easily misinterpreted by modern people.

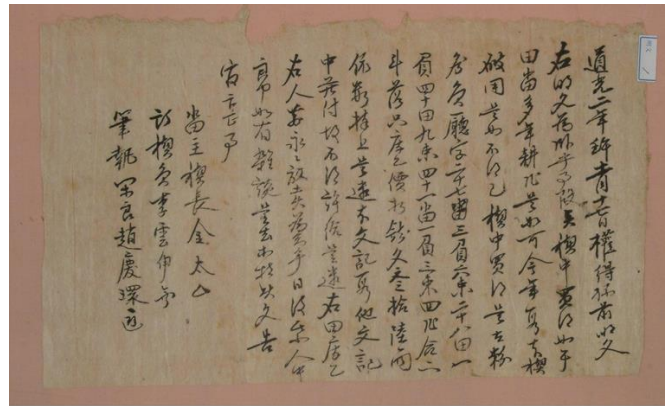


Figure 4. Land Sale Document in the Chosun Dynasty

Even with feasible archives in possession, the special characteristics of archives and the elements that hinder the modern people's understanding of them make it extremely difficult for archives to be fully capitalized upon. Moreover, when archive users experience these documents for the first time the primary information in them—the metadata—are so convoluted and complicated that access becomes even more difficult. For this reason, the construction of a structural and detailed metadata is key to archive accessibility.

3. Current Conditions and Problems of Building Old Documents Archives in Korea

Korean archives of Old Documents were first established in 1999 as a byproduct of the National Information Knowledge Resource Management Project. In the face of an IMF crisis and the educated unemployment, which followed, the Korean government pushed for DB construction efforts as a means to resolve this problem. This was the beginning of digitalisation of historical information in Korea.⁴ The business infrastructures formed in the process are as follows.⁵ Among the history-related DB has shown above, services that include archives fall into 4 main categories. Kyujanggak of Seoul National University, the Academy of Korean Studies, Korean Studies Advancement Center, and Chonbuk National University Museum. Kyujanggak was built around the Family Registration Act of the Chosun Dynasty and the land reservoirs of the time. The Academy of Korean Studies was grounded in the ancient royal documents and those of the nobility and prestigious. The Korean Studies Advancement Center focused on the Yeongnam districts and their principal families and clans. Chonbuk National University Museum, built a digitized archive based on the Old Documents of the North and South Jeolla Provinces.

These archives help publicize Old Documents, but they also contain serious limitations with regard to accessibility. These limitations of course include the numerous aforementioned problems, but are mainly due to an absence of the necessary elements for internet services. Among them the most conspicuous of problems is the issue of metadata. The most important element of metadata is the bibliography. But the status quo bibliographic database contains only the title, issuer, recipient, date of publication, volume of document, the present address of the holding institution, the original location of holding institution, and archives classification. These are the most basic of bibliographical information available because in the process of inter-agency cooperation efforts in

⁴ Lee Nam-Hee, Humanity Sciences and Knowledge Information - Focusing on the Law Concerned with Knowledge Information Resources and the Korean History Information Unification System -, *Humanities Contents*, 1, (2003.6), pp. 117-130.

⁵ National Information Society Agency, *Strategies to Realize a SMART KI*, (2010.7). Seoul, p. 95.

building the Database the standard metadata was to be kept minimalistic. Most DB follows the Dublin Core as guidelines for standard metadata.⁶

Table 1. Status of History DB Construction

Organization	Service
Kyungsang Univ.	Nammyunghak-Old Books Service
Ministry of Patriots and Veterans Affairs	Original Documents Web Service
National Research Institute of Cultural Heritage	Korean Heritage Knowledge Portal
National Institute of Korean History	Korean History Database
The Independence Hall of Korea	Korean Independence Movement Information Service
Dongkuk Univ. Library	Korean Buddhism Culture Information Service
Donghak Peasant Revolution Foundation	Donghak Peasant Revolution Information Service
Myungji Univ. Library	Western Old Books about Modern Korea
Korea Democracy Foundation	Korea Democracy Movement Archives
Busan Metropolitan Library	Korea - Japan diplomatic document DB
Seoul National Univ.	e-Kyujangkak
Seonggyungwan Univ.	Korean Confucianism Scripture DB
Chonbuk Univ. Museum	Honam Record Culture DB
The War Memorial of Korea	Information Service of the war of Korea
Searching Japanophilia Committee	The Gazette of Japan Governor in Imperial Period
Jongno Library	Old Books DB Service
Damyang Province	Korean Literary lyrics DB
Institute for the translation of the Korean Classics	DB of the Korean Classics
National Library	Old Books DB Service
Korean Studies Advancement Center	Korean Confucianism DB Service
Korea Press Foundation	Old Newspaper DB Service
Korean Women's Development Institute	Korean Women's History Information Service
National Research Foundation of Korea	Basic academy resource center
The Academy of Korean Studies	Janseogak Royal Archives
24 Institutes	29 Sites

Table 2. Present History DB Metadata

Basic	Detail	Expand
DC.Title		
	alternative	
DC.Creator		
		alternative
		affiliation
DC.Subject		
DC.Description	tableOfContents	
	Abstract	
		Abstract.alternative
DC.Publisher		
		alternative
		place
DC.Date	Created	
		metadataCreated
		metadataModified
DC.Type		DCObject
DC.Format		

⁶ Kwon Hyung-Jin, Metadata of Knowledge Information Resources, *The Journal of Telecommunication Technology Association*, 78, (2001.11), pp. 65-66.

	medium	
		pages
DC.Source		
		alternative
		type
		volume
DC.language		
DC.Relation	Reference	

But these standardization efforts are a means to make Unified Search among different DB possible. And it also allows for efficient management of DB metadata, but it is certainly insufficient when it comes to fully understanding the contents of these archives. For example, author information is one in which issuer and recipient information are necessary, but the standard metadata collects only information on the publisher or the issuer as part of author information. This is a structural problem yet to be resolved. In addition, Old Documents that capture the bidirectional communications of an issuer and its recipient have different date of preparation from date of replies made. But standard metadata structure cannot help but process these items unilaterally despite their differences. Metadata is a mirror reflection of the basic data of documents. Therefore, metadata should be constructed in a way such that examining it is sufficient for an all-round understanding of the archive. But status quo metadata still falls short to fully capture all essential information about Old documents. Hence, this is an area that needs to be amended. Also completed metadata has other problems, too. Especially in that the document titles or headings are not based on the actual contents, but rather on their superficial appearance. There are constant efforts trying to amend and complement these failings of metadata today.

A closer examination of the titles and headings will display that only the recent items of the archives are actually titled. The earlier contents of archives are often omitted from this naming process altogether. Instead, they are provided with storage codes or serial numbers such as 1, 2, and 3. Titles such as these not only fail to reflect the contents of the documents but also fail to differentiate the items of archives or provide the list of classifications. In 2006, Chonbuk National University Museum, tackled this fallibility by implementing for the first time effective headings and titles in their DB building projects. And almost simultaneously Korean Studies Advancement Center followed in their footsteps.

There are many shortcomings surrounding issuer-and-recipient data, too. This is because Old Documents often do not make clear the persons involved. Of course, in the case of personnel orders or trade documents, you get an unequivocal pair of ordered and referent involved. But the authors of letters often use appellations like “brother,” “uncle,” or “father” and this makes it more difficult to keep track of names. But still, there are measures to take these uncertainties into account because some archives can be managed and preserved in the family or clan units. Hence, the documents in the same category most likely should contain similar names and appellations for that matter. Documents including the name of the era or ruler of the time easy to study, but often they are not. In order to look into this information, you would have to go through countless details ranging from personal background, or even study the use of the word through examples, thereby speculating the content’s date of origin. To simplify all of this, more of the DB’s personal information needs to be systematically interconnected. Aside from the above-mentioned complementary measures, there also needs to be more items and information to be included in the DB. Many archives lack locational data; where these individuals were

located or inhabiting. This is important to understanding the routes of document exchange and retrieval.⁷

Another element that needs to be added is a Related Documents DB. Archives are essentially individual items, but there are plenty of cases in which a set of documents must be put together for us. This is especially true of contents from the Chosun Dynasty's triennial population census among other things. A census usually includes multiple documents that show the fluctuations of population, of the number of slaves, of fertility and mortality rates, and even various socioeconomic conditions and circumstances. And with regard to Records of Property Inheritance, one way to cross-reference the veracity of the data is by collecting individual financial data of the children receiving an inheritance. This gives an overall picture of the family's assets and finances. Furthermore, in case of general or mass letters that are sent out to multiple recipients, Related Documents help identify the true meaning these letters. In short, the context must always be established and understood before we can understand the true value of Old Documents.⁸

Finally, what is indispensable to the interpretation of archive documents is historical and cultural background information. Expressions and terms are often used without explanations in these documents because they are so familiar to the users of the time. For example the term Jeongjadap (meaning T-shaped farm, land) is no longer in use these days, but they appear every so often in contracts for the sale of land and property. Hence, users need to be supplied with the cultural background of this term for it be of any use. Therefore, events and terms used in the archives must be contextualized and explained in more minute details.

Even then the current archives do not function properly as an information service provider. This is among other things a result of a complete lack of archive specialists who can contribute to the development of archives. Given the meticulous nature of the work that involves examining an enormous volume of documents one by one and studying them in detail, building a Related Documents DB is proving to be highly difficult at the moment. However, in order for archives of Old Documents to truly mean something, these aforementioned measures are in desperate need.

4. Scheme of Metadata Construction for Contents Application

Archives are an important source of historical and cultural studies at face value. But in recent years, the potential for its application in the field of creative work for cultural contents is on the rise. A Story Theme Park was recently created which was based on the contents of diaries from the Chosun Dynasty. This is a perfect example that shows the potential of archives in this field. Extracting stories from antique archives translates into enormous potential in all areas of cultural contents, including film, soap opera, novel, game, animation, and educational content. Diaries and antique archives are different in their style and content specificity, but both of them possess potential for cultural content production.

Antique archives, or the contents of such archives, must be fully understood in order for new services to be designed and built from them. This section examines how we can better structuralized metadata given the unique characteristics of archives. There are various standard technological methods with respect to archives. For starters, there is ISAD(G) by the International Council on Archives and KORMAC of the National Library of Korea. There are also Description Regulations of Korean Old Documents List by the Korean Archives Society. But the actual documents in the archives were based on the

⁷ Hong Seong-duk, The Present Status and Tasks of the DB Construction at University Museums -With 'Honam Documentary Culture System' at Chonbuk National University Museum-, *Korean Antiquity*, 71, (2008.6), p. 128.

⁸ Shin Moon-soo, A Study on the Description Elements of Historical Manuscripts, *Study on Chungchong Culture*, 8, (2012.6), pp. 167-168.

Dublin Core standard; this is all due to the need for an all-inclusive standard metadata of both typical and atypical data as well as historical, cultural, educational, and industrial data.

Table 3. ISAD(G) Description List

AREA	ELEMENTS
IDENTITY STATEMENT AREA	Reference code Title Dates of Creation Level of description Extent and medium of the Unit of Description
CONTEXT AREA	Name of Creator Administrative / Biographical history Archival history Immediate source of acquisition or transfer
CONTENT AND STRUCTURE AREA	Scope and content Appraisal, destruction and scheduling information Accruals System of arrangement
CONDITIONS OF ACCESS AND USE AREA	Conditions governing access Conditions governing reproduction Language/scripts of material Physical characteristics and technical requirements Finding aids
ALLIED MATERIALS AREA	Existence and location of originals Existence and location of copies Related units of description Publication note
NOTES AREA	Note
DESCRIPTION CONTROL AREA	Archivist's Note Rules or Conventions Date(s) of descriptions

Table 4. KORMAC-Old Documents Description Elements

AREA	ELEMENTS
Title & Author	Title, Sub Title Identified No. Nickname Title Volume Author
Publishing	Publisher Publication Author
Producing	Place Producer Year
Physical Description	Cover Page Illustration Size Attachments
Edition	Original Title Nickname Title Volume Author <i>etc.</i>
Commentary	General Title Author
International standard material number	Number Get number

Table 5. Description Regulations of Korean Old Documents List

AREA	ELEMENTS
Title & Subject	Title Discrimination Material Type Issuer Recipients Watcher
Producing	-
Material properties	-
Producing	Place Producer Year
Physical Description	Cover Page illustration Size
Edition	-
Commentary	Document Structure Character Structure Language Summary Storage location <i>etc.</i>

The above-mentioned ISAD(G) is a technological standard proposal, which is applicable across all mediums. But it only applies minimal technical elements and therefore lacks connectivity and the details to function fully. KORMAC-Old Documents is a type that deals with manuscripts, and is therefore a mismatch for antique Old documents in some ways. Issuer and recipient data ought to be imperfect and contextualization of individual papers and documents are hard to come by. In the case of the regulations of Korean Old documents List, it reflects certain technical elements based on KORMAC, but also brings together the necessary rules of ISAD(G). It is a holistic and all-round congregation of essentials, but still lacks the holding location, and information on hierarchical structure as well as context. The above reasons make it absolutely necessary that a scheme for metadata construction which can satisfy both the standard metadata for archives and can capture all the essential characteristics of antique Old documents. If you were to classify the items by functionality, there should be descriptive, information to help discriminate basic information from other kinds of information resources. There is also a separate administrative information segment allowing for swifter preservation and management of archives. Author information and cadastral technology-related information must include bibliographies. This is physical information reflecting the characteristics of digital archives.

The key here is descriptive info. The core of archive metadata today is consisted of title, producer, topic, publication, published date, and type of data, and identifier— seven elements in total. This is still insufficient to capture the entirety of archival uniqueness. For example, archives have issuers and recipients. And some documents are a two-way communicate between the issuer and recipient, who interchange roles. This element of bilateral communication of Old documents has to be reflected in the metadata and its overall structure. As can the roles of issuer and recipient interchange in a complicated manner, so can exchanges between organizations and institutions fashion shape of a more complex relationship. And the need to reflect all this information is paramount. A list of technical elements comprising Old document archives would be as follows.

First, there needs to be an area of identification; this has to include identification code, title, date of production, classification, unit of categorization, the volume of documents and so on. For instance, the title could be a name of its own, or a name bestowed upon by

the administrator of the archives after analysing the contents of the document. The published date can be individual dates for individual contents, but also an overall date for the whole of the contents. The classification should be multi-faceted not unilateral.

Second is background. This must include the producer or author, the history of documentation, the original holder and so on. The author could be a person or an institution; it could single or multiple individuals. The history of documentation includes the first authorship of the content as well as the process of delivery and exchanges that took place. For example, a document history of a filed petition would include also the result of measures taken by authorities after the submission of a petition to its respective office of government. This creates a more extensive and detailed documentary history that is more than the sum of its parts. Information on the holder could also be multiple individuals or agencies for that matter. This could provide important locational knowledge about the documents.

Third, there must be a contents section. This includes a table of contents, a preface, publication, published date, and the default language. This is the crown-jewel of all archives, especially because some Old Documents do not possess a table of contents, this information must be organized and recreated by the interpreters. Publication and published date are almost always the same as the author and authored date. Moreover, an archive must include without mistake the recipient information. This is because the recipient is key to an archival document. Language could be both Chinese characters and the older version of Hangeul. One thing that must be complemented here is that cursive and block letter writings should both be provided in the archive. Word count is also another important piece of information.

To add one more, there is the Related Documents section. Since there can be many, enough space should be allocated in advance. For example a census of the Jeolla Province has 11 papers preserved in total; this is research spanning across 33 years and individual papers matter, too, but their true value lies in them kept together as a set. Hence, the 11 documents must all be listed as “related documents” of one another.

Fourth, there is a physical element to all this. This includes the volume, format and page number of the archival document. Type of document could include what material the paper was made out of and such. Because paper was rare back then, most of them were recycled over and over, which is also important. The file format should also be key because in adding the Chinese characters the coding of text matters a lot, which is why all of the above-mentioned information and data must be included without omission.

Fifth, there is miscellaneous information. This includes other background information as well as references used in the process. In order to understand fully the aforementioned contents there has be sufficient cultural and historical background knowledge. And this kind of background should also be included.

If you take everything mentioned so far and put it into a scheme of metadata, this is what it should look like in a table.

Table 6. Scheme of Metadata Construction for Old documents Archives

AREA	ELEMENTS
Identifier	Identification Code Title Date/ Year (Created) Category Unit sizes Media Information
Publishing	Author/ Publisher (Issuer) Document History Storage location
Contents	Index, Abstract Place Data/ Year (Published)

	Recipients Language Font Related Documents
Physical Description	Material Type Size Original File Format Processing File Format Page
Additional Information	Background Information References

5. Conclusion

Archives are raw and genuine primary data of government-produced texts and scriptures such as the Annals of the Chosun Dynasty. Annals or anthologies have limitations when it comes to showing the variegated and diversified nature of lives. But archives overcome this weakness. This makes archiving a better material for creative work in the production of cultural contents and so on. Archives are a good fit for cultural contents because they arouse interest in people. Considering how cultural contents are meant to touch upon the conventional sensitivities of man, the innovative and creative nature added on top makes archiving a much more valuable item indeed. Especially given that archives are a unique set of records that keep track of the special occurrences in people's everyday lives, they have a clear advantage as a source and material for inspiration.

This is where we find the value of archives also as a liberal arts contents. Human beings have always tried to prove the existence from birth to death. They create birth certificates, receive social security numbers, and name each and every member of the family with different appellations to prove and confirm everyone's existence. Traditional societies were no different from us today. They reported births, which were included in the subsequent census; the documents would include names and family positions of the newly born and this information would be submitted and kept by the respective offices of government. Upon marriage, they would also leave paper trails and documentation leaving official traces of their marriage.

In the past, people taking civil service exams were asked to submit along with their answer sheets, their certificates, personnel orders, and other official documents. In social life, people used documents such as letters, contracts, Record of Property Inheritance, or will to settle certain conflicts of interest or litigations. In this respect, Old documents are a record of events and happenings showing around which members of traditional society organized their lives. Archives provide a glimpse into not just the individuals and their organizations and families, but also the social organization, public institution, and their unique ways of thought and lifestyle as well as values.

There are a multitude ways to capitalize upon these Old documents. For example, we could go into individual cases such as the litigations back in the Chosun Dynasty and use them as a material for creating new contents. Albeit not a direct source of inspiration, they provide nonetheless genuine motifs. And the contents of archives can also be used as background knowledge for various cultural contents and their productions. For example, these documents can show what would happen to someone bringing an issue to court, and how others would be involved in the process. They can provide a striking display of the linguistic and cultural scenes of the time.

We now know that the archives are an important source and inspiration for creative work. This is precisely why archives have to be better designed to play these roles more rigorously and effectively for the benefit of our society. And this means we must design them grounded in the unique characteristics that archives possess. To build a workable archive, the structuralization and refinement of the metadata are paramount among other

tasks. First, the classification system must be rearranged. The current classification created by specialists is often no use to the general public.⁹ Hence, a more popularized version of classification must be developed. This involves translating archaic language into that of the modern to make it more comprehensible, but this is not easy. The IT resources required to create a dictionary of cursive writings may be essential here. Because cursive writings are different from one author to another, the interpretation can be difficult. This is why there has to be a DB that can process documents with image recognition functions.

Above all, better connections between institutions and agencies are needed among those that preserve and manage archives today. The current state of affairs in archives management is that these archive services are scattered without organization or linkage, making it difficult for users to conduct integrated searches—that cannot go through inter-agency walls. A standard metadata is indispensable to solving this problem. We must rethink our scheme of metadata construction which should be optimized for the purpose of archives from now on. Based on this scheme, we shall connect the archive serves between different systems to formulate a one-stop user service for the better.

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