

A Stack of Services for a Distributed Digital Library

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This talk will demonstrate some tools and procedures, developed by the Center for Hellenic Studies, that let machines find, share, and publish texts, translations, and additional information easily and openly across a distributed digital library.

As a working title, we are calling this project the “TICI Stack”, for “Texts, Images, Collections, and Indices”. TICI allows us to extend and expand digital libraries distributively, bringing together electronic resources that may reside in various locations. End users will not notice this, as TICI will “discover” online texts – editions and translations – images, and other resources and make them available for use as though they resided on a single server.

This presentation will feature two kinds of tools, with their underlying networked services, one having to do mainly with texts, and one having to do mainly with images.

The Text Services of TICI allow users to discover online texts from their canonical abbreviations and browse editions and translations of those texts. Texts can be linked to one or more indices – morphology, geographical terms, alternate schemes of citation – and these indices can in turn link to other services such as other texts, lexica or the Google maps service.

TICI Image services allow users to browse online collections of images, searching for terms in their metadata. They can construct portable web-based slideshows of images from any online services, and can include in those slideshows manipulations of the online images – cropping, zooming, and other adjustments such as lightening or darkening.

The technologies used for these tools are open standards – XML and HTTP for communication, AJAX (Asynchronous Javascript and XML), for rendering in browsers across platforms, open-source databases for indexing. Installation of services is relatively simple, and installation of tools for users is very simple. All the software and tools is freely available under the GPL.