

IASPEI Working Group "Historical Seismology"
Commission on Seismological Observation and Interpretation (CoSOI)
Activity Report (July 2011-June 2013)

Foreword

Established in October 2005, the WG "Historical Seismology" aims at building up an Open Access Archive of Worldwide Historical Earthquake Studies. The relevance of such an archive for the seismological community has been acknowledged as an important basis for improving the knowledge of the seismicity of the past centuries. Three activity reports were delivered, the first on July 2007 (Albini and Ishibashi, 2007), the second on December 2008 (Albini and Ishibashi, 2008), and the third on June 2011 (Albini and Ishibashi, 2011).

Activity

Since this IASPEI WG is active on a voluntary basis, a support was searched for and found in the Global Earthquake Model (GEM), an initiative supported by IASPEI also. Since its beginning on November 2010, the GEM funded project "Tools for compiling the Global Earthquake History-GEH" completely absorbed all the energies of the scientific community involved in the study of the seismicity of the past centuries.

The project was due to end in November 2012, and was extended to March 2013, when the final version of the report was officially submitted.

The activity resulted in the preparation of a Global Historical Earthquake Catalogue – GHEC v1, and the relative archive, made available to the public by means of an ad hoc website (<http://emidius.eu/GEH/>, opening on 25 June 2013).

The results will be presented at the GEM Reveal Meeting (Pavia, 25-26 June 2013),

The topic of historical earthquake data and their archiving was part of the activity of the EU funded project SHARE (2009-2012) also, for what the European Archive of Historical Earthquake Data-AHEAD is concerned.

Concluding remarks

Collaborating with the researchers working in the above mentioned European and Global projects was a chance to improve the methodological approach proposed by this WG in 2005 and at the same time positively affected the relationships with scientists active in this field all around the world. We still believe that the success of this WG initiative within IASPEI depends very much on the chance that it offers to make the scientific community more and more aware of the importance of this field of research and to find concrete ways to cooperate.

The results obtained in the GEM "Global Earthquake History" project will be presented at the next General Assembly in Gothenburg (Albini et al., 2013), in a dedicated Symposium S106b, "Investigating historical earthquakes from documentary sources".

On the occasion of the General Assembly it is proposed to the members of the CoSOI to discuss whether to maintain the WG alive for the next two years.

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24 June 2013

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