The proliferation of Web pages and digitized material mounted on Internet servers has become unmanageable. Librarians and users are concerned that documents and information are being lost in cyberspace as a result of few bibliographic controls and common standards. Librarians in cooperation with software creators and Web page designers are discussing different strategies for organizing materials which will make the items accessible to users. Metadata applications appear to be the solution. However, librarians and their colleagues have not agreed upon which standard is most appropriate for which type of document and which type of user. This paper explores the status of metadata applications among Africana librarians at various institutions in their effort to disseminate information about African studies. Three standards are compared: MARC, Dublin Core, and CIMI. Appendixes, which make up more than half of this paper, include: a table of digitized U.S. African Collections (selected contacts); several samples of Africana metadata; and MARC, Dublin Core, and CIMI samples. (Contains 11 references.) (Author/AEF)
THE STATUS OF AFRICAN STUDIES

DIGITIZED CONTENT:

THREE METADATA SCHEMES

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P. J. Kuntz

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
Abstract

The proliferation of web pages and digitized material mounted on Internet servers has become unmanageable. Librarians and users are concerned that documents and information are being lost in cyberspace as a result of few bibliographic controls and common standards. Librarians in cooperation with software creators and web page designers are discussing different strategies for organizing materials which will make the items accessible to users. Metadata applications appears to be the solution. However, librarians and their colleagues have not agreed upon which standard is most appropriate for which type of document and which type of user. This paper explores the status of metadata applications among Africana librarians at various institutions in their effort to disseminate information about African studies. Three standards are compared: MARC, Dublin Core, and CIMI.
THE STATUS OF AFRICAN STUDIES DIGITIZED CONTENT: THREE METADATA SCHEMES

In 1958 and 1965 federal legislation concerning area studies was enacted and administered through the United States Department of Education as the now Higher Education Act (HEA). Included in its mandate is the development of area studies library collections to support the faculty and student research needs as well as to preserve important documents. During the 1990s, area studies librarians were frustrated with the inefficiencies of Internet search engines in retrieving quality sites. Recently, area studies librarians have explored strategies for digitizing some of their collections which became the Area Studies Virtual Library Catalog (McDonnell et al., 1999). The McDonnell et al. report that three objectives are critical for area studies: the designer must have consistent records for digitization, consumers must find locating information easy, and the search engine must have the ability to capture quality web sites.

For African studies, librarians of African collections oversee content of print and digitized formats. Increasingly, digitized collections housed on web pages have become the only format and means of preserving such as newspapers, books, and posters. Familiarity with various projects to organize the Web helps librarians to understand their options (Wells, 1999). For the most part, catalogers are using the MARC (Machine-Readable Cataloging) scheme (Z39.50 compliant) in which they apply the Anglo-American Cataloging Rules (AACR2R). TEI (Text Encoding Initiative) header is a suggested alternative with metatagging in
mark-up languages such as HTML (XHTML) or SGML (XML). Several of archival units are utilizing EAD (Encoded Archival Description). At the last Africana Librarians' Council meeting (April, 2001), some members proposed participating on a OCLC (Online Computer Library Center) CORC (Cooperative Online Resource Catalog) project (Caldwell et al., 2001; Hurt & Potter, 2001; Riemer, 2001).

In African countries, frustration about retaining materials is high. In addition to the lack of electricity, equipment, training, and software, the librarians struggle with the constant changes in information management strategies and with the disappearance of artifacts from their culture. The systematization of cataloging is critical for global use of African materials housed in African museums (Roberts, 1998). Collaboration among Africanist librarians around the world is critical to reduce duplication of efforts. Several cooperative projects have occurred in Cameroon, Malawi, Namibia, Nigeria, Senegal, Somalia, South Africa, and Zimbabwe. Metadata have the potential of bringing to the attention of a user a variety of information in various formats concerning a particular theme and thus facilitate the cataloging and preservation of unique traditional information.

This paper reports the results of a brief survey of key U.S. Africana librarians concerning their use of metadata as a digital cataloging tool. Applications of three standards for text and
image are described. The discussion ends with recommendations for Africana librarians.

Survey

A survey of Africana librarians and a search of various Web sites indicate that few U.S. Africanists (librarians or scholars) are utilizing metadata schemes, standards, or frameworks to organize digital collections. [Appendix - A] Most web page designers supply no embedded metatagging or simply allow default metatagging to designate the version of the software, and thus do not address the contents. Therefore, such information is of little use to an Africanist or general user searching for information with an Internet search engine. Furthermore, most users search the Internet for specific content (Feldman & Liddy, 2001) as they would a card or online catalog. Such a search might be "social implications" and "Gelede mask" and "Oyo" or "Nigeria." It certainly would not be "Adobe 4.0" or "Claris Home Page 3.0."

When metatags are embedded in the source code of a digitized document, the contents are typically a sentence description and some keywords. Nine of the 33 African studies sites provide such embedded tagging for bibliographic control. Unfortunately, relying on only this type of tagging is inadequate (Gorman, 1999). Researchers seeking specific authors, dates of publication, publishing organization, or types of images will have difficulty locating materials. Regrettably, given the
design of Internet search engines such as Alta Vista, Looksmart, Hotbot, NBCI, Northernlight, or Google, the automated selection of keywords rarely discriminate among African, African-American, and non-African content sites or among African content sites. Some web page designers of African content have written in "Africa" repeatedly (sometimes up to 20 entries) so as to insure that the search engines show their web page first in a generic keyword search. For this reason, a user might obtain an extraordinary large number of web page hits on remotely related content. Clearly, additional information is necessary for a quality search.

Material on most African-content web pages displays a minimal association with Dublin Core (DC). Some librarians reported that catalogers used MARC to prepare a record for the online catalog which utilized other software (MELVYL, NOTIS, SIRSI or Voyager). The catalog record may actually describe the artifact or object and not the surrogate, digital object. A simple annotation of content and physical description often is not sufficient for a researcher. [Appendix - B: Public Diplomacy Research Center] Two universities, Northwestern and Indiana, have digitized African posters and have provided information about each image. The Herskovits Library at Northwestern University follows the DC scheme. [Appendix - B: Posters] More common are digitized slides or photographs from art exhibits such as pages at the SUNY-Oswego, the Schomburg Center, or the University of Virginia sites. [Appendix - B: The Exhibition]
Several universities (UCLA, Pennsylvania, Wisconsin) provide online courses in Hausa or Swahili. Two universities, Florida and Indiana, have created a database of children's literature about Africa and its authors. The Montgomery County (Maryland) example illustrates a DC-like application; however, the creator is not familiar with DC per se. [Appendix - B: Montgomery County] DC may be intuitive for a librarian. For the most part, these web pages contain limited categories and order necessary for intensive research such as dates, author, type, format, description, identification, etc.

In contrast, three institutions provide examples of implementing metadata. The African Studies page of the Duke University library contains embedded metatagging in the DC standard. In the source code page, the designer tells the reader that DC is the standard and incorporates 12 of the 15 DC elements: title, creator, subject, description, keywords, publisher, date, type, format, identifier, language, and coverage. Moreover, the designer utilizes four "subject" tags to address the LCSH and Dewey Decimal Classification (DDC).

Likewise, the designer of the Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture of the New York Public Library utilizes metadata. For each image in the Photograph and Print Division link, the designer has implemented a form of DC standard. In this example, there are seven elements: descriptive title, caption, type, creator, date, source, location and subject(s).
The University of Wisconsin's Africa Focus provides another example of a metadata application of multimedia content. In this case, an Africanist scholar has collaborated with several specialists of digital projects in preparing the document in HTML. The scholar utilizes ten of the 15 potential DC elements in his coding in the embedded HTML (source code page) and on the page (visual) for each record. While he has embedded the "subject" element once as a tag, he utilized "format" three times to indicate the composition of the multimedia format: text, images, and audio. In addition to embedding the metatags, he has created for each slide two levels of data written in DC standard. The first level comprises country, title, data, and documenter; the second level contains country, place, documenter, date, title, series title, series number, call number, subject headings, and availability. Some of the DC elements are changed to fit the needs of this collection such as "call number" and "availability." This digitized slide collection exemplifies the argument posed for metadata management by Boll et al. (1998). The authors suggest that metadata can "be modeled, classified, extracted, managed, and applied to support a convenient handling of digital media." Several situations may explain the limited use by Africana librarians of metadata for organizing original or digitized materials. Presently, only Internet Explorer (browser) can interpret the embedded metadata tags. For example, Explorer can
decipher three tags: title, keywords, and subject. Since not all web page software provide metadata tags as a default, designers must know how to type the tags into the "Head" portion of the web page. However, in a year, browsers will decode all embedded metadata tags. Because the tagging does not have complete, current application, many librarians choose not to include the tagging in the current versions of their web pages.

Librarians also indicate a need for training. Many of these librarians or selectors are part-time employees with responsibilities in other disciplines or services. In addition, many of the librarians are educated for reference duties and are not familiar with new trends and schemes in cataloging digital materials. This situation shows some similarities with the case that Caldwell (2001) described at Brown University in an effort to inspire reference librarians to collaborate with catalogers by using DC. Furthermore, many librarians indicated ignorance in metadata coding. In the case of Africana librarians, only six full-time catalogers actually catalog materials. Since there are no Africanist catalogers at the Library of Congress specializing in Library of Congress Subject Headings (LCSH), the few Africana catalogers are still attempting to change current stereotypic and pejorative subject headings of print materials. Unfortunately, this process is very time consuming. They have not had time to focus on digitized materials. Finally, many of the librarians earned their library degrees in the late 1970s at a time when technology was not a high priority.
Given this situation, members of the Africana Librarians Council of the African Studies Association acknowledge that they need additional information on the current thinking in metadata applications. To demonstrate the difference of schemes, this author compared two physical objects: a book and a mask.

Examples

The following comparison of three examples is a sample of standards which Africana librarians may want to consider at the next Africana Librarians' Council meeting. For the purpose of this paper, objects were compared using MARC (Machine-Readable Cataloging), DC (Dublin Core), and CIMI (the Consortium for the Computer Interchange of Museum Information) produced by different generators. [See Appendices for African examples]

Machine-Readable Cataloging (MARC).

The Library of Congress Catalog Section created the MARC system to facilitate the processing of print materials. In the 1960s, when MARC was created, there was no consideration for digitized materials. Consequently, librarians have had difficulty in adapting MARC to cataloging Web pages. Although generators such as MARC Magician do exist, the field requirements still confound librarians concerning digitized images. The syntax and application are based upon the AACR2R and the LCSH or Sears Headings. Syntax is a major concern as is the "rule of three" which may restrict some information.
Although most U.S. catalogers know MARC and the AACR2R, Africana bibliographers who specialize in reference generally do not know it thoroughly nor do most of their African counterparts. Therefore, Africanists would need to learn MARC and the AACR2R. This knowledge would require additional training and take time away from their selection, instruction, and reference duties. Many of the fields contained in MARC are unused given the lack of information available, the nature of the African publishing industry (ISBN/ISSN/ISBD), and other means of recording knowledge. In addition, the current U.S. institutions have a tremendous backlog of uncataloged print materials. Consequently, it is not possible for a librarian to utilize an original print bibliographic record for the surrogate digital record.

**Dublin Core (DC).**

The DC has emerged as a popular, international standard. Because it is associated with the OCLC, there are adequate tutorials and support. Moreover, the 15 elements seem sufficient to address the needs of the user and the time constraints of the librarian. [Appendix - B] These elements deal with issues of content, intellectual property, and instantiation. DC appears also to be popular among humanists in Europe where many African-content materials reside (Miller & Greenstein, 1997). Finally, HTML 4.0 now provides `<meta> tag on both Internet Explorer and Netscape browsers to remind creators of the need for its use.

Unlike MARC, DC elements are repeatable, optional, and even extended for more complex applications such as might concern
African content. Likewise, the elements can be embedded in Web pages and DC is recognized by the World Wide Web Consortium. Several generators exist such as the Nordic one <http://www.lub.lu/se/cgi-bin/nmde.pl>. However, the lack of authority files is a concern of librarians.

**Computer Interchange of Museum Information (CIMI).**

The third standard CIMI is a relatively new one. In this case, the focus is on museums and their need for indexing and preserving of images. The elements of the scheme require specialized knowledge of the art discipline. [Appendix - C] There is a focus on the image composition and on a synonym schema for describing the use of the image in society; however, the record still depends on the organization’s needs. Consequently, it is not as well known in the U.S. and has less use in African libraries or museums. There is little documentation and support for Africana librarians particularly those who do not have contact with museum curators. Furthermore, some of the elements of CIMI still do not address the contents of objects any better than does MARC or DC.

**Conclusions**

The community of Web users interested in African content is spreading slowly. Previous European nations which colonized various African countries still hold libraries of "stolen" documents and artifacts. Non-colonial nations (Russia, Sweden, Norway, Denmark, and Switzerland) have built collections based
upon recent research. On the African continent, frequently political upheaval or the lack of climate controls has destroyed ancient libraries (Alexandria, Timbuktoo, Fez) and recent ones (Kigali, Mogadishu, Monrovia, Freetown, Luanda). Often lack of government or community interest or priority has limited what librarians and scholars may do to prepare materials for a digitized format. In these situations, preservation becomes a greater priority than does general public access.

On the other hand, access is critical to stave off pejorative terminology and stereotypes about African peoples. The digitizing of materials by HEA institutions among others enables the international public and the U.S. citizen to become familiar with current African information and languages and to build a knowledge base upon which to make more accurate economic, military, political, and social decisions than in the past.

In reviewing the three proposed scheme, it is evident that the simplest and most flexible one is the best -- DC. Although DC is not perfect for Africana materials, it provides a framework for immediate cataloging of new web pages and coding digitized materials. Several Africana librarians did mention that they knew it existed. Because it contains only 15 elements, scholars and librarians as well as student assistants can utilize a DC template. Although many librarians are concerned about authority files given the various forms of African names and places, Africanists can prepare their own authority files and subject headings for DC, since the one at the Library of Congress used
for the subject headings in MARC is still inaccurate. This author believes that DC provides Africanists with an opportunity to disseminate accurate, reliable information.
Works Cited


Appendices

A - Digitized U.S. African Collections  
B - Samples of Africana metadata

Public Diplomacy Research Center  
Electronic Advance Documents Service  
http://usinfo.state.gov/agency/irc/titleind.htm

Posters (Northwestern University)  

The Exhibition (University of Virginia)  
http://www.lib.virginia.edu/dic/exhib/93.ray.aa/Exhibition.html

Montgomery County Public Schools  
http://filemaker.mcps.k12.md.us/aa...

Africa Focus (University of Wisconsin)  
http://africafocus.library.wisc.edu/  
http://webcat.library.wisc.edu:309

* Selected Examples by Institution *

Boston University - African Studies Center

Duke University - African Studies  
http://www.lib.duke.edu/ias/africa/

Iowa, University of - Center for Electronic Resources in African Studies:  
http://www.uiowa.edu/~africart

Ohio University - African Studies Newsletter

Schomburg Center - Images of the 19th Century  
http://149.123.1.8/schomburg/images_aa19/19c_info.

Virtual Library - Directory, Agriculture  
http://vlib.org/

C - MARC

D - Dublin Core

E - CIMI
## Appendix - A

**Digitized U.S. African Collections**  
*(selected contacts)*

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AFRICAN STUDIES PROGRAMS
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As an alternative to the current system of looking for titles under the different State Depa (Mission Performance Plan) codes, posts may now access information in recent Electronic Advance Documents Service e-mails via the new Title Index, with titles listed in reverse chronolog contents of the Title Index limit to the last six weeks of Electronic Advance Documents.

**TITLE INDEX**  
June 11, 2001

URL: [http://www.brook.edu/comm/policybriefs/pb082/pb82.htm](http://www.brook.edu/comm/policybriefs/pb082/pb82.htm)  
Item#: 01AD172 MPP Code: 12ELA

URL: [http://www.cnie.org/nle/ag-103.html](http://www.cnie.org/nle/ag-103.html)  
Item#: 01AD175 MPP Code: 5A

Item#: 01AD170 MPP Code: 14B

URL: [http://www.cnie.org/nle/eng-7.html](http://www.cnie.org/nle/eng-7.html)  
Item#: 01AD176 MPP Code: 4E

Item#: 01AD174 MPP Code: 4K

**Global Century: globalization and national security. Volumes I and II; Parts I, II, III, IV.**  
URL: [http://www.ndu.edu/inss/books/GlobalCentury/globcencont.html](http://www.ndu.edu/inss/books/GlobalCentury/globcencont.html)  
Item#: 01AD171 MPP Code: 1D
Search the African Posters Collection

Language: English
Country: South Africa / Nigeria
Artist: 
Title: Sanctions year against apartheid.
Publisher: [Lagos] : The Committee, (Emaconprint)
Date: [1985?]
Format: 1 poster : col. ; 88 x 58 cm.
Series: 
Notes: "Nigerian National Committee against Apartheid marks International Year of Mobilisation for Sanctions against South Africa."
Summary: Graphic showing white police brutality against black people--a man and child being beaten, a woman being restrained.
Restrictions: The images on this web site, from posters in the collections of the Melville J. Herskovits Library of African Studies of Northwestern University, are provided for use by its students, faculty and staff, and by other researchers visiting this site, for research consultation and scholarly purposes only. Further distribution and/or any commercial use of the images from this site is not permitted.
Object No.: B.107.
Subjects: Apartheid -- South Africa -- Posters. / Economic sanctions -- South Africa -- Posters. / Political posters, Nigerian.
Topic: Anti-apartheid movements.
Contributor:
The Exhibition

1. SOWEI MASK

Mende, Sierre Leone and Liberia
Wood

This mask is worn over the head of a female elder who dances for the Sande women's society. The mask displays and celebrates Mende ideals of female beauty and virtue: elaborately braided hair (cosmetic skills, sexuality); neck creases (full-bodied, good health); smooth, broad forehead (nobility, intelligence); lowered eyes (contemplativeness, restraint); well shaped ears; small nose; small mouth (not given to gossip); composed expression (inner serenity), smooth skin (youthfulness). All these features are exaggerated in the mask, its three thick rows of braided hair, large neck folds, wide forehead, diminutive nose and mouth, and polished surface. The bird figure (missing its head & tail) perched on top of the coiffure has many meanings: clairvoyance, love, fertility, power, danger, discipline, prudence, and laughter. The mask's shining blackness connotes the essence of female beauty and moral purity.

Gift of Mr. and Mrs. Peter Klaus, 1981.43.1

2. CHI WARA HEADRESS (male)

Bamana, Mali Republic
Wood, metal, threads

To the Bamana people, farming is the most important and noblest profession. At planting time, men of the Chi-Wara association of farmers dance with headresses like these in the fields to honor Chi- Wara,
Search the Africa Access Review Database

See Searching Directions at the bottom of this page

Title: 
Author: 
Type: - No Selection - ▼
Rating: - No Selection - ▼
Key to Ratings: HR = Highly Recommended; R = Recommended; A = Advisory; M = Marginal; N = Not Recommended
Subject: 
Copyright Date: contains ▼ 
Grade: - No Selection - ▼
Publisher: 
Reviewer: 

Sort by: -None- ▼ Ascending ▼
When Searching: □ Match all words between fields (AND)
□ Match any words between fields (OR)

Start Search  Find All Records  Reset this form

Return to Home Page
Africa Focus
(Embedded Metatags)

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Select view: Gallery | Brief | Full

Records: 1 - 12 of 23
Jump to: 1 13

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  Title: Egungun Masquerade, Alabala Type, Egbado-Yoruba
  Date: 1982
  Documentor: Drewal, Henry

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Documentor: Drewal, Henry  
Date: 1982  
Title: Egungun Masquerade, Alabala Type, Egbado-Yoruba  
Series Title: Egungun masquerade  
Series Number: 01 of 04  
Call Number: 3017hd01  
Subject Headings: Celebrations, Clothing and Dress, Dance, Masks, Masqueraders, Ritual ceremonies  
Availability: Henry Drewal
Metadata - African Studies

Boston University
(Embedded Metatags)

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Collection Description

In 1988 it was estimated that Duke Libraries adds about 1000 monographs annually to its collection of approximately 37,000 monographs on Africa (in all fields). Duke also subscribes to about 175 periodicals. This relatively substantial collection grew out of Duke's long-standing interest in the British Commonwealth, which included Eastern and Southern Africa as well as Ghana and Nigeria. The collection is especially strong in history, economic development, political science, public policy, religion, art and music. Based on research and teaching interests in the Romance Studies Department and the Program for Literature, Francophone and English African literature (including English translations) have gained in significance and are now actively collected. 

Research Guides

- Comprehensive Guide to African Studies Resources in Perkins Library

Databases and Indexes

- African Studies
- South African Studies
- African Newspapers currently received by American libraries (CRL)
- International African Bibliography. 1971-present. I61LU
Collections include material about the British Commonwealth, which included Eastern and Southern Africa as well as Ghana and Nigeria. The collection is especially strong in history, economic development, political science, public policy, religion, art and music. Based on research and teaching interests in the Romance Studies Department and the Program for Literature, Francophone and English African literature.
A detachment of the First South Carolina Federal Volunteers, Colonel Beard, repelling an attack of the Confederate troops in the vicinity of the Doboy River, Georgia.
**Database:** University of Wisconsin - Madison

**Search Request:** Author Browse = willett frank

**Search Results:** Displaying 2 of 8 entries

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245 00 $a Gelede Mask
   $h [realia].

260  $a Nigeria:
   $b Unknown carver,
   $c (nd)

300  $a wooden, cap mask, some paint, raffia from edges;
   $c 30 cm.

500  $a The Gelede mask is worn by men in the Gelede ceremony among the Yoruba of western Nigeria. This mask was purchased in Ile-Ife, Nigeria in 1971 from a Hausa trader.

651  _0 $a Arts, African.
651 _0 $a Masks, Yoruba.
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**IDENTIFIER: URL** (Location of the document. Start with 'http://')

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Dublin Core

Image - Mask

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African Studies

Appendix - E

CIMI

Text - Book

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* space provided for visual clarity

Image - Mask

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