

GIS Recreates Historical Township Maps



In order to have a better understanding of historical geospatial relations, GIS technologies are providing historians with modern methods to rebuild a historical township. With SuperGIS Desktop 3.2, historians can firstly rectify the historical Qing-Dynasty map, and locate current coordinate information on the old image. Satellite images and digital maps can then be imported to overlay onto the old map, enabling comparisons to be made, in a geospatial way, between the different periods of development in Huwei, a township in central Taiwan.

Meanwhile, various attributes can be marked and displayed on the map, and users can see how the different types of regions have been developed since the Qing Dynasty, about 200 years ago. For example, through the maps, users can observe that today's downtown

was not built under Qing and Japanese rule, but only when the sugar factories were established in 1907.

Furthermore, historians can visualise the most populated region with the Central Feature function in SuperGIS Desktop, and clearly see the changes in different eras. In Huwei, the early settlement was surrounded by sugar factories. As the main industry changed to towel manufacture, the most populated region moved as well. Today, the old downtown can no longer house huge numbers of citizens, so the suburban areas are now more populated.

Using GIS technology, the development of Huwei can now be recorded with digital maps. The rebuilt township map will not only help historians expand their vision for further study, but will also offer officials useful resources in future urban planning and the organisation of tourism routes. Citizens will also have a better understanding of the ancient period combined with the geography, enabling them to value their own history.