It is an honor and pleasure to be here at the 2nd annual International Communication Foundation Colloquium, in this the 30th year of the IFC’s existence. I’d like to thank chairman Yoh Suk-kee for my invitation, and congratulate him on the organization he has built here. I’d like to thank Mr. Park and Yun, who made it easy for me to get here, and the other staffers who have been so helpful. I would also like to thank the other attendees for their important contributions – my head is spinning with all the things I have heard here today, and I will walk away from this colloquium with both new wisdom and new questions.

I’ve listened to those presenters.

Brother Anthony noted Ricouer.. that translation is the normal method by which we understand each other and thus despite its theoretical impossibility, it is the bread and water of human life. I will return to this at my conclusion

Eee Young-jun noted the importance of transnational and cross-cultural studies, and I will just note that if anything crosses transnational and cultural boundaries, it is the internet.

In the morning Michael Roberts noted that “subsidies to translators, however necessary and generous, can only go so far towards nurturing English language readership; what we might call the ‘demand’ side.”

Brian Boyd said something quite similar – “Increase demand”. More readers will lead to still more readers

Which leads us to the question – how can we increase demand? In essence, this is a marketing question, and I am here to suggest some marketing channels – all of them, particularly those having to do with social networks and social media.

I do not discount other approaches – in previous papers I have talked about choosing translations based on genre in the target language, the importance of good translation, the need for good titles and appealing covers. But, as this is the age of social media, I thought I would focus on that.

We not want Korean literature to become text akin to the dog whistle: beyond the ability of human organs to perceive.

**INTRODUCTION**

One of the increasingly powerful and popular ways to advertise or to create a brand is through the use of social media, or Social Networking Services. This is also one of the most efficient ways to do so and interested parties in Korean translated literature should be exploring these avenues. Unfortunately, those of us interested in Korean literature seem a step behind in the social media arena.

What is being discussed here is the possibility of using all of the tools of social media to increase the popularity of Korean translated literature. This mean social media in the broadest sense possible – First it means the things we normally think of as social media – Twitter, Facebook, and other kinds of messating – as well as a couple of other avenues that are not so obvious.

The Wikipedia claims that according to social media theorists there are six different types of social media: collaborative projects (e.g., [Wikipedia](http://www.wikipedia.org/)), blogs and microblogs (e.g., [Twitter](http://www.twitter.com/)), content communities (e.g., [YouTube](http://www.ktlit.com/korean-literature/www.youtube.com)), social networking sites (e.g., [Facebook](http://www.facebook.com/)), virtual game worlds (e.g., [World of Warcraft](http://kr.battle.net/ko/int?r=wow)), and virtual social worlds (e.g. [Second Life](http://secondlife.com/whatis/)). To this I would add savvy traditional media outlets such as Arirang TV/Radio or The Asia Literary Review, which use social media services to tie to and amplify their ‘traditional’ media outlets.

By the way, as Brian Boyd demonstrated before me, book covers are actually a form of social media, both in the racks at bookstores, airport bookstores and lobbies, and on book websites, they are (or should be) a graphic communication, to all who pass by, of the societies created inside.

For the purposes of this paper virtual social and game spaces have been discarded, as it is difficult see virtual game worlds and virtual social worlds as being important to Korean literature, while the others self-evidently are.

In addition, this paper aims to extend the parameters of social media a little bit. It argues that for literature Amazon is also a social media. Related to that it claims that ebooks are a social media. Additionally it argues that many traditional “media” sources that are repurposing themselves online as social media outlets have also become social media, in their posts, forums, and comments, and in addition note that even to the extent that they remain ‘traditional’ media outlets, they hand much of their ‘buzz,’ advertising, and all of their extension into multimedia through SNS channels. Finally, this paper would like to strongly support the claim that Wikipedia, perhaps the best example of successful crowdsourcing on the Internet, is a social media with respect to literature. Sometimes people don’t think of the Wikipedia as a Social Networking Service, but for certain kinds of information it undisputedly is.

**SOCIAL MEDIA AND KOREAN TRANSLATED LITERATURE**

One to look no farther than the success of KPOP to see how a social media based program can succeed. Sun Jung notes

Around the world, pop consumers are increasingly accessing popular products through social media. Online fan groups of Korean popular music (K-pop) in Asia have dynamically and transculturally circulated their product through social media such as Facebook and Twitter. In October 2010, Super Junior, a K-pop idol boy band, was ranked as the number one worldwide trending topic on Twitter—ranking even higher than a sensational news story about trapped Chilean miners. Regional fans in Indonesia in particular have been identified as the source of a spike in tweets on this topic. Such a phenomenon illustrates how social media–empowered online fandom enhances cultural flow and affects transcultural pop circulation dynamics.

This awareness is beginning to effect the marketing plans of institutions dedicated to the popularization of Korean Literature. I would particularly note the Korean Literature Translation Institute (LTI Korea), whose CEO Kim Seong-gon noted in an interview with KTLIT noted that:

They say that it took five years for BOA, a Korean singer in Japan, to be famous in Japan. That was a long time ago. That was not the generation of SNS. But, Girls Generation, it took one day to become famous, thanks to SNS, twitter, youtube, etc. So, the time has changed. The importance of using the internet and social media cannot be stressed to much. So we’re planning to provide ample information about Korean writers on the internet. We are considering administering at least 50 representative Korean writers on the Wikipedia. Currently it is different to find. You punch in the name of a famous Korean writer and nothing happens. It is a very urgent matter that we have to deal with.

This process may need a bit of a kick-start, but once it begins it should be propagated by fans and require only a slight bit of feeding and tweaking to keep going, as seems obvious when one canvasses K-pop sites, or even literature sites such as GoodReads.

Further, it seems clear that these media are already having an effect on the success of Korean Literature in translation. When Pak Wan-so’s **Who Ate Up all the Shinga,** and Kim Young-ha’s **Your Republic is Calling You**, had their successes, they immediately affected the overall success rate of Korean fiction as measured by Amazon sales of Jimoondang/LTI Korea publications.

The only place people really could have found the information necessary to buy more Korean fiction was Wikipedia or Amazon – this fiction is simply not carried in bookstores, and neither do bookstore owners know about it. On a trip across the West Coast of the United States:

We stopped at somewhere between 40 and 50 bookstores.

At each of those bookstores I asked about Korean literature, and at each of those bookstores the cashiers/owners were utterly stumped.

I also asked for the books I knew should be there – Kim Young-ha’s **Your Republic is Calling You** and Shin Kyung-sook’s **Please Look After Mom**. To my dismay only three bookstores had either of the books (two stores had **Mom**, and one had **Republic**) and no store had both. At the stores that did not have the books I asked if the books had ever been stocked. As far as the clerks could determine, they never had.

I’m not sure what to make of this – it’s boggling, particularly with respect to **Please Look After Mom**, which was a legitimate NY Times bestseller.

Worse:

in Berkeley CA the [Eastwind](http://www.asiabookcenter.com/) bookstore which describes itself as:

Your source for Asian American literature, Asian studies, Ethnic Studies, language learning, traditional Chinese medicine and martial arts books.

had only 8 books on Korean culture (in total [and you can seem them here)](http://www.asiabookcenter.com/korean-literature) and one copy of **Please Look After Mom** stuffed away in a corner (and, yeah, that counts as one of the two copies I found on my three week trip).

The only place this information can be found is on the internet, particularly, currently, Amazon, as we shall see and, increasingly, on the Wikipedia.

These areas, though often overlapping, may be best initially understood individually.

**Blogs**  
 Blogs can be a powerful way to get the word out and the KTLIT website is an example of that. In the last 90 days (measured on June 1st) KTLIT has received over 10,818 individual visitors on 24,379 pageviews. This, of course, is utterly puny compared to what K-pop sites routinely get, but these numbers are way up from where it began. In a similar time period in 2010 the site had 1,804 individuals who took 3,384 pageviews. The geographical nature of readership has changed as well, from 45% of viewers originating in South Korea at the outset, to under 20% from South Korea today, with the international visitors coming from over 100 countries, with over 70% of those visiting in English . In essence, the blog has internationalized.

When blogs work right, they actually turn into something more like online magazine and press-release machines. Returning to KPOP you have sites like [AllKpop](http://www.allkpop.com/) which attract over 4 million individual viewers per month and get some 75 million individual hits.

This is not to suggest that it is likely that numbers of this sort will be associated with Korean literature, as literature is necessarily a smaller market, but it is evidence of what can happen if a blog hangs around and something becomes popular.

So, with respect to Korean literature, what exists in the blogosphere? Not much. The main problem here seems to be continuity. For instance, two of the best translation blogs in recent history are [Subject Object Verb](http://subjectobjectverb.com/) and the now defunct [Impossible Transfer](http://impossibletransfer.com/). The first is a kind of survivor/reconstruction of the second, and it is already producing posts at a declining rate. The fact is that this kind of blog either needs to be institutional, or to have initial institutional support or in most cases it will dwindle away in the face of real-life concerns of the blogger. And, in fact, most blogs follow an “efflorescence to senescence” path, which must certainly be taken into account in planning.

**Twitter and Facebook**

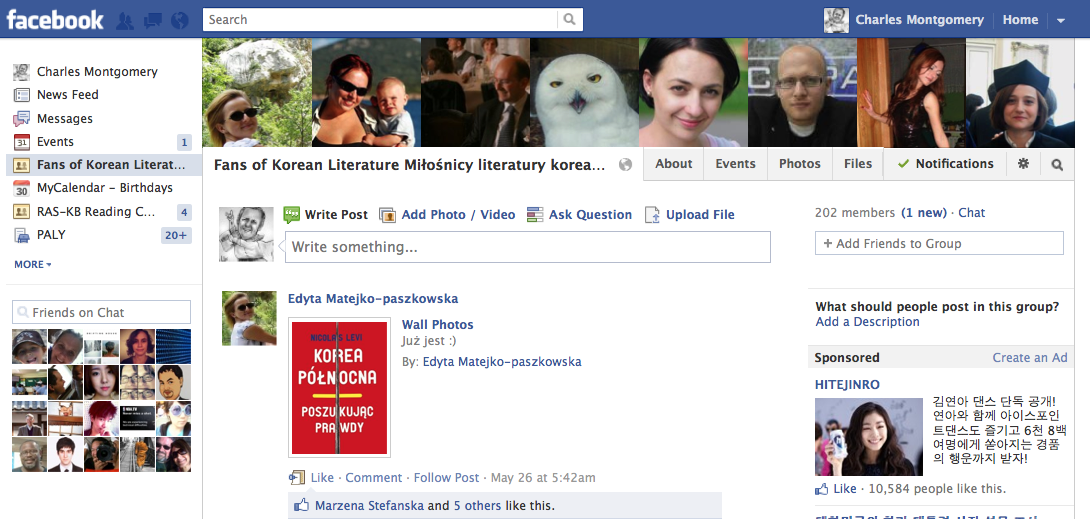
These are the obvious cases. They can be used as marketing tools for blogs, or as standalone channels of information. KTLIT, for instance, both markets its blog using these tools and sends non-blogged material out as well. It was interesting to watch, for instance, twitter blow up (in a sense relative to literature) when Shin Kyung-sook won the [Man Asia Literary Prize](http://www.manasianliteraryprize.org/). Twitter is a brilliant amplifier of these kinds of things, although it requires a lot of consistency because it is ephemeral by nature – tweets flash by on a computer screen at an alarming rate. [KTLIT](http://www.ktlit.com/) has over 650 followers on twitter and feedburner and follows 270 tweeps. Watching the tweet-feed is to watch tweets rocket by. In twitter it is important to have quality followers, those who look for your tweets and repeat them, not just a large number. Still, by developing good twitter relationships and judicious use of hashtags, a lot can be accomplished.

This is currently a weak area for Korean literature. KTLIT tweets, but there is not much of that from anyone else. Subject Object Verb, another translation blog, doesn’t tweet that I am aware of. The Daesan Foundation doesn’t have a twitter account. LTI Korea has a twitter account, but it is for its Translation Academy and only tweets in Korean. In addition, while some Korean publishers do have active twitter accounts (e.g. Minumsa – who appallingly cannot be found by google search in English) these accounts are solely in Korean, and thus not generally comprehensible outside of Korea. This, of course, is a problem across the media, that much of what is put out for public view is in Korean language only.

This is an area that could really be improved by interested organizations just doing the kind of brand extension that most of the west has accepted as inevitable, if not yet normal.

Facebook is similar. There are two possibilities on Facebook, either posting status updates (similar to Twitter) or having static pages intended to provide information and link elsewhere. Sadly Korean literature doesn’t do this well. Daesan Foundation is absent, LTI Korea has a minimal presence based on its Translation Academy and there is almost no one else on Facebook. Neither the LTI Korea or Daesan facebookers post status updates, instead relying on static “fan” pages.

Suprisingly, or maybe not, the best site on Facebook is [the Fans of Korean Literature Miłośnicy literatury koreańskiej site](https://www.facebook.com/groups/307944885899419/), which is produced by Polish fans of Korean literature, and is pretty active, though generally in Polish!



Facebook and Twitter are two major pillars of social media that are being, essentially, ignored. The good news is that everyone knows how these outlets work, and I hope it is only a matter of time before the involved institutions here get on board. Facebook, particularly, could be begun with the creation of a few static pages and then a move into complete interaction. Hallyu, for instance, has a page with over 120,000 likes and KPOPLive has over 409,762 likes and is working to create online and read links between KPOP and US Korean-Am rappers like Dumbfoundead. That small example suggests the kind of community that can be built online, and the synergies that result.

This is a real opportunity, and a relatively inexpensive one, particularly if you harness fan enthusiasm. One small example of this kind of thing might be the essay contests that LTI Korea holds, the essay contests that overseas Korean institutions hold. These could be radically expanded, in terms of publicity and submissions, by use of blog posts and/or Facebook posts. Similarly, when winners are announced, Facebooking and twittering their winners, and the excellent essays that have been produced (For now, I don’t see these essays going public in any way, which seems a tremendous waste of fan input and energy), could only help push the brand and build online excitement about Korean literature.

Taking a look on Twitter and Facebook, what does one see?

Facebook can’t be directly queried for total posts on a topic, so measurements were achieved using two other Facebook metrics, and as in most cases of measurement in this paper, contrasted with similar Japanese metrics to achieve a baseline:

* Facebook has 25 pages dealing with Korean literature
* 46 with Japanese
* 8 groups dealing with Korean literature
* 12 groups dealing with Japanese literature

So Korea, using these admittedly imperfect metrics, is somewhere between 50 and 90 percent behind on Facebook, if it is judged against Japan.

Twitter is more difficult to measure, but looking at hashtags (the way by which tweeps identify/tag their tweets and attempt to make them searchable) a rough outline can be seen. Again, measurements were for Korean literature and Japanese literature. The results on March 28th were zero for Korean literature, and only three for Japanese literature. A more recent survey of a four-day stretch revealed the following

* June 1: Japanese Literature receives 7 responses versus 3 for Korean Literature
* May 31: Japanese Literature receives 15 responses versus 4 for Korean Literature
* May 30: Japanese Literature receives 15 responses versus 4 for Korean Literature
* May 29: Japanese Literature receives 14 responses versus 9 for Korean literature

It would be of substantial interest to future research if anyone reading this paper knows of a more fruitful way to query Twitter!

**Google**  
Moving on to Google, we find a way in which we can really limn the problem. Though Google does not query Twitter or Facebook, it is the master at looking at the web and on October 31, 2010 a KTLIT search revealed the following :

A general search for “Korean Literature,” using Google, returned 119,000 results, while a search for “Japanese Literature” returned 720,000 results. When using the search terms for fiction, “Korean Fiction” returned 28,500 results, while “Japanese Fiction” returned 91,500 results. Finally, a general search by author for “Korean Author” returned 31,700 results, while the search for “Japanese Author” returned 57,400. Statistically, for Google, this was the best relative result for Korea. In general the difference in numbers was vast, but as Google search results tend to lose relevance the farther along Google one clicks, this initial search seemed a bit imprecise as the “long tail” of these results might be composed of less useful results.

I measured these things again on March 26, 2012

* 1,390,000 hits for “Japanese Literature:
* 272,000 for “Korean Literature”
* 629,000 hits for “Japanese fiction”
* 203,000 hits for “Korean fiction”
* 270,000 hits for “Japanese author”
* 139,000 hits for “Korean author”

When this is broken down into ratios (to take account of the general growth of the number of sites measured by Google, which renders ‘numbers across time’ comparisons inaccurate) the following ratios are reveald:

* The ratio of Japanese lit to Korean lit went from 6:1 to 5.1:1
* The ratio of Japanese fiction to Korean fiction went from: 3.2:1 to 3.1:1
* The ratio of Japanese author to Korean author 1.8:1 to 1.95 to 1

Proportionally that’s a flat result over the last two years, meaning that at least with respect to Japanese literature on the web, Korean literature has not advanced. Given Korea’s relatively poor initial position (based on many things beyond the scope of this paper), that is a deflating result.

I return to Sun Jung, quoted earlier:

New knowledge, cultures, and lifestyles are increasingly transmitted transculturally, quickly, and easily in this ever more globalized, diverse, and technologically mediated world. The growth of social media since the mid-2000s has rendered various Asian popular cultures—once considered marginalized and difficult to access—now freely accessible as they flow across different national borders.

The question is, how does Korea take advantage of this?

**Amazon**  
Amazon is often considered a commercial site, but it is also much, much more. While is a commercial site it also has a strong social media aspect in two of its functions. First is Amazon’s “recommend” feature, which creates what KTLIT calls the ‘Amazon Ripple Effect.’ Second, Amazon has a reader review functionality that works two ways as a social media tool.

Let’s begin with the review function, which is quite simple, but currently empty for Korean books (Not including **Please Look After Mom**, the major commercial breakthrough, which will be discussed shortly). Amazon reviews both give more perspective to a particular book that a browser might be considering, but they also function as a kind of thermometer. When a potential reader looks at the Amazon page for Please Take Care of Mom he or she sees many reviews and is reassured it is a book people cared about enough to discuss. This argument is true of other “bookie” sites like [Goodreads](http://www.goodreads.com/).

The absence of reviews for Korean literature is a kind of “chicken and egg” question, since it is precisely the lack of online interest in Korean literature that leaves these areas blank. And, a presumption of this paper is that if Korean literature does become more potent in all SNS arenas that this lack of reviews will eventually cure itself. Even so, it does not seem unethical to “seed” the reviews – I do it now and then myself, with honest responses to the books on Amazon. From a browsers perspective, a lack of reviews of a book is a silence that speaks volumes.

Then there is the Amazon Ripple Effect. If an Amazon customer browses a book by Kim Young-ha, Amazon politely refers that reader to more books along the same lines (ones that were purchased by previous browsers of Kim Young-ha), primarily books of translated Korean fiction. This is social media as measured by customer dollars. Browsing the page for **I Have The Right to Destroy Myself** results in the following recommendations:



These recommendation, it should be emphasized, are based on what other PURCHASERS bought, so the more ‘mainstream’ the Korean book, in some ways, the less it will impact other Korean fiction.

**Please Look After Mom,** for instance, renders this:



This, obviously, raises a question for a different time, “Do genre-blockbuster successes actually have a salutary effect on Korean fiction as a whole?”

In any case, in two ways at least, Amazon is a social media platform, and as I have mentioned previously, the success of particular translations of Korean literature on Amazon, in fact does have an “a rising tide lifts all boats,” effect on other translations of Korean literature.

This can be taken advantage of in two ways. One way is simply to add reviews to existing books and view them. This could be done by a contest – give a prize each month to the person who writes the best review. There are likely many other approaches to this, too subtle or clever for the author of this paper to propose!

The other way this rippled effect can be used is to carefully choose, before translating, to maximize the translation of books that will:

* be at least moderately successful, and
* contain substantial Korean cultural content

As usual, the claim here is not that other kinds of books shouldn’t be sold; in fact I’ve long been an advocate of running out pulpy genre-based potential best-sellers. But this does mean that multiple kinds of books also have their roles in pushing the brand.

Which brings up a final point about Amazon (and other publishing platforms).  It seems absolutely counterproductive to not be producing, particularly out of the large stock of translated but no longer in publication literature, ebooks, which can be sold online in an instant, or even given away. My wife, for instance, is the proud owner of a Kindle, and will happily download and read most any literature she finds. She finds, of course, no Korean literature in that category.

There are hundreds of translations of Korean literature available online, it is just that they are incredibly difficult to access. The Korea Journal, for instance, has hundreds of short stories and poems available in pdf (of various quality) form on their website. Unfortunately, you have to use their search function to find the works, and this requires that you previously know the name of an author or title of a book and you then have to download the file and read it in Adobe’s pdf reader, which is a less than optional experience.

Similarly, LTI Korea has translated a raft of stories that aren’t available, and others have published scores of older collections of Korean fiction (e.g. [**The Cruel City**](http://www.ktlit.com/korean-literature/review-the-cruel-city) a Si-sa-yong-o-sa publication) that have gone out of print.

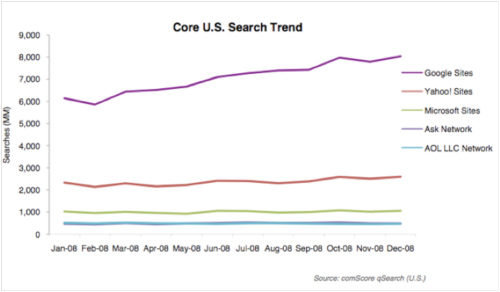
If the publication rights are already owned for these works, and there are no copyright issues, why isn’t some clever person assiduously converting these to ebooks and making them available online, either free or for a small price?

That just seems obvious.

This wouldn’t necessarily have to have anything to do with Amazon, the ebooks could be made available anywhere, it is just that Amazon is well known, extremely centralized, and has a powerful search engine.

**Wikipedia**  
 Wikipedia is a key form of Social Media for several reasons, the most important of which is that this is where English speakers go to get information. That perhaps is a simplification – they also go to Google to get information, but in the case of something non-commercial, the first Google responses usually include something from Wikipedia. Wikipedia has thus become the de facto first stop for a wide range of information seekers, both those who go directly to the Wikipedia, and also those who use Google as their search engine.

To completely discuss the Wikipedia as a social networking tool, it is necessary to reprise some aspects of the role that Google plays in English-language information acquisition on the web.



In the United States, the Google search engine is far and away the preeminent tool for research and popularization, with 63.5% of the market in 2009, a number that was growing as general search numbers increased. And in most cases (A search for the term “Korean Literature” included) the first result for a search query is from Wikipedia. Wikipedia is the ultimate social media, essentially a blog managed by approximately 3-million contributors and visited 23,679,652 times a day.

In addition, many Wikipedia users start on that page, and use of the Wikipedia skews to those who might naturally wish to explore Korean literature:

50% of those with at least a college degree consult the site, compared with 22% of those with a high school diploma. And 46% of those age 18 and older who are current full- or part-time students have used Wikipedia, compared with 36% of the overall Internet population. (Rainee)

Therefore, it is unfortunate that there is very little content available on Korean Literature when a Wikipedia search is conducted. A general page for Korean Literature shows up, as well as a page for Korean novelists. Unfortunately, not only were these pages not linked but before the KTLIT Wikipedia Project 80% of the names on the Korean Novelist page were linked to non-existing author pages.

Wikipedia is difficult to quantify, but one way to do it is by categories and pages. This is a blunt tool because it depends on users to accurately tag their pages, but it does reveal general trends (Measured on Friday March 30, 2012).



These results are unfortunate because getting an article on Wikipedia pushes its topic higher on Google that it would otherwise be, because part of the Google algorithm is based on domain impact, and Wikipedia is highly trusted by that algorithm (although Wikipedia has recently been derogated in the algorithm). It is important being on Wikipedia just to increase the chance that good information will be found early in a search. How important is it to have ‘your’ information (and it is necessary to realize that Wikipedia is the way to get ‘our’ information online) on that first page link? Todd Jensen has found some research by Chitika:

A sample of over 8 million clicks shows that over 94% of users clicked on a first page result and less than 6% actually clicking to the second page and selecting a result displayed there.  One of the biggest drop off’s is between the 10 spot (bottom of the first page) and the 11 spot (top of the second page) from 2.71% down to 1.11%. That’s a 143% dip from one position to the next.

A Wikipedia page is a near guarantee of being on that first Google page and thus ensures that a potential reader/browser will not be ‘lost’ to the unseen second page.

This is particularly true if the searcher is using a very broad term such as “Asian Literature.”  If Korean pages don’t rank high, particularly including Wikipedia ones, it is unlikely that they will be found.

There are other beneficial effects as well. When other social media sites judge the importance of a site, they frequently include backlinks from Wikipedia as evidence of importance. Wikipedia also serves, through backlinks, as a tool from which searches hop to other pages. It is worth mentioning that Wikipedia links are the second largest identifiable source of visits to KTLIT, after general Google searches. While this is only 2% of KTLIT traffic in total, it is still an important contributor.

Youtube is another extremely useful tool in social media, and literature needs look no father than the Korean film archive to find an example of this.

**THE GOOD NEWS**

The good news is that the kinds of operations I am talking about here have already commenced, although with faltering steps. LTI Korea has created a Wikipedia page and their employees are working, sometimes even with KTLIT(!) to create additional Wikipedia content that is attractive and informative. In some cases publishers have even got involved and we have created quite good pages. Further, LTI Korea has already stepped into the video arena, both creating content on Youtube and in Itunes.

**CONCLUSION**

Korea is one of the most wired countries in the world. And inside Korea, Social Networking Systems are used quite effectively to tie companies, friends and family together. Korea is also a culture with a tremendous literary tradition and a modern literary ‘tradition’ that is perhaps most notable for its rapid generational changes. Finally, Korea is a culture that has recently placed great and reasonable importance on an effort to eliminate the rather large ‘information gap’ that the western world still suffers with respect to Korea. Somehow, however, advocates of Korean literature have not managed to tie these threads together into an effective web of Social Networking Services in support of the internationalization of the literature.

While choosing, translating, and publishing good (both by literary and marketability standards) works is a necessary precondition to the internationalization of Korean literature, it is not enough. Without a well thought out marketing and popularization scheme, translated books will remain unread. Social Networking Services have become increasingly important in the branding, marketing, and community creation efforts of individuals, companies, and communities of all kinds. If the individuals and institutions involved in the internationalization of Korean literature continue to ignore these methods of communication and connection, they do so at their own peril. Not just at their peril, but at the peril of Korean literature continuing to be the world’s greatest ‘unknown’ literature.

**APPENDIX: SOME THOUGHTS FROM THE WEB**

The following is a message board discussion from [www.ktlit.com](http://www.ktlit.com) that discusses some additional thoughts about using SNS to support the internationalization of Korean Literature. Italicized and indented sections are from Philip Gowman of Korea London Links.

*1 I think one area which needs looking at is getting the message out into the mainstream. Blog aggregation or magazine style sites are good for that. Mainstream readers might come across a more specialist literature article somewhere like 10 or Nanoomi and follow up for more. (Having said which, I was originally turned off blog aggregation sites because I couldn’t see any evidence of editorial / quality control)*

Aggregation (and curation, which I will talk about under your second point) is certainly a useful tool if controlled properly. It does widely disseminate posts, which is good. On the other hand, it can also be quite damaging to a site’s branding effort, which has several related consequences:

* Lack of copyright enforcement makes it more difficult to justify investing in developing quality content with a hope of return (financial, or of other kinds)
* Damaged Branding (You don’t get credit for what you write)
* Degradation of your search value (i.e. you drop in the rankings when super-popular aggregators jump above you for searches of your own material)

This initially seem selfish concerns, but they also get to popularization. A reader who finds one of my posts on an aggregator will find it tucked in with many other posts which may or may not be relevant. A person who finds my posts on KTLIT also finds (I hope) a narrow but information-rich channel, which they can mine for additional relevant material about Korean translated literature. The same, of course, is true if they hit your site. [A great article about these concerns can be found here](http://www.socialmediaexplorer.com/social-media-marketing/choosing-copyright/). Then, there is also the quality issue that you raise.

So, yes to aggregation, but you have to be quite sure that there are some reins on the thing, or it can actually turn against your site, and by doing so, actually harm the popularization of your message.

*2 Getting your content in more than one place has got to be a good idea. Even your most avid followers are sadly unlikely to read every one of your articles when you write them. I confess that I tend to visit you when I see one of your tweets. And unfortunately tweets from quality twitterers such as your good self ^^ soon get buried in the deluge of dross that is churned out by the pop culture sites which I follow because one tweet in a hundred is worth following up on. So getting your content retweeted and republished by blog aggregators is likely to get you more page views.*

Your main point is good, while the comments I made above, apply here also. This is why I prefer curated sites if I can get them. You mention [Nanoomi](http://www.ktlit.com/korean-literature/www.nanoomi.net), which is an example of such a site. Your point about twitter is accurate (I think I made it, also, in my first post) which is why it is important to use twitter as part of a larger strategy (I also use Facebook, Google+ and good-old-fashioned email) AND have good re-tweeting relationships with other important tweeps.

*3 Hate to sound geeky, but SEO is important. Wikipedia is good for that, as is a good WordPress site, but too many Korea-based sites aren’t outward-looking enough.*

Absolutely. And you mention two of the best places. I use [All In One SEO Pack](http://semperfiwebdesign.com/) in WordPress and it is fantastic! And SEO also needs Korea-based sites to use English, if they wish for English-language readers to see their content.^^

*4 Competitions like the KLTI essay contests are a good way of getting out the message to a non-specialist audience. Hopefully competitors then blog about it (though strangely in the past the KLTI has been sniffy about letting the winners blog their winning entries)*

Unqualified yes, again. This kind of thing heats up the masses.

*5 A follow-on from 4 and 1: non-specialist sites should also be regarded as a way of getting the message out if their interest can be caught once in a while. For example I found out about the Seopyeonje translation from browsing the* [*Korean Class Massive*](http://koreanclassmassive.blogspot.co.uk/2011/11/seopyeonje-southerns-songs.html)*.* [*And there’s always my own literature in translation channe*](http://londonkoreanlinks.net/category/books/literature-in-korean/)*l ^^*

This is also a good point, and one thing that pops to mind immediately here is cross-posting, which has worked well for KTLIT in the past, and I should probably look into doing again. I’m sure there are other linkages as well.

I think everything you have mentioned are good points, but what I’m seeing right now is an institutional inability for this to get done. There is no playbook (though maybe we are developing one now?), there is no centralization, and there is no management. This is not just at the higher levels, but it is also true within the component organizations which add up to the Korean literature translation machine (if that is not too grand a name for it^^) Until the kind of discussion we are having here becomes general and internalized knowledge in that ‘machine’ I think it is hamstringing itself.

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