

Report on Visit to Korea on US-Korea DL Collaboration

Daejeon and Seoul, Korea
November 26 – December 1, 2002

By

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1. SCHEDULES

November 26, 2002

6:00 am – Leaving for Logan Airport, Boston

November 27, 2002

10:00pm - Arriving in Seoul, Korea via UA 883

November 28, 2002

2:00 am – Arriving in Daejeon by car from Seoul

10:00am – Pick up by Prof. Sung Hyon Myaeng of Chungnam National University to the Information and Communications University (ICU).

11:00am – An hour-long talk to ICU faculty and students, hosted by Prof. Soon J. Hyun of ICU

Title: "Toward Global Digital Library: Convergence of Technology, Content, and Global Collaboration"

Abstract: Dr. Ching-chih Chen advocated Global Digital Library (GDL) as early as in 1993 when she was a keynote speaker celebrating the 60th Anniversary of the National Central Library in Taiwan. Since then, she has been tirelessly promoting GDL through her international consulting and speaking as well as her publications, meetings, and her role as a member of the US President's Information Technology Advisor Committee (PITAC). In recent years, in addition to her award winning multimedia work, she has directed a National Science Foundation's International Digital Library Project, Chinese Memory Net (CMNet) which she has attempted to create a model for international collaboration in digital library R&D activities. She is also the US

co-PI of the China-US Million Book Digital Library Project which also linked to the India-US Million Book Digital Library Project. At this talk, Professor Chen will use these activities as examples to discuss the future of GDL and the need for convergence of technology, content, and global collaboration.

More than 75 people were present at the talk, and it generated considerable interest in digital library work among participants.

12:45 noon – Lunch discussion with Profs. Sung Hyon Myaeng and Mann-Ho Lee of Chungnam National University, and Profs. Soon J. Hyun and Jinah Park of ICU.

2:30 pm - Visit Korea Institute of Science and Technology Information (KISTI), and had 2-hour discussion with Dr. Kim Hyeon, Director of Information System Department of KISTI on the potential of Korea-US collaboration (to be elaborated further), accompanied by Prof. Sung Hyon Myaeng.

4:30pm - Quick driving view of Prof. Myaeng's Chungnam National University

6:30pm - Informal discussion with faculty members of the Department of Nuclear and Quantum Engineering (DNQE) of Korea Advanced Institute of Science and Technology (KAIST), and met Prof. C.S. Rim of the DNQE of KAIST, who is an influential member of the Korea National Science Digital Library (KNSDL).

November 29, 2002

12:00 noon – Taking a train from Daejeon (2 ½ hours by car from Seoul) to Seoul, accompanied by Profs. Myaeng and Hyun.

3:00 pm - Meeting Dr. Jun-Cheol Yang, Director General, International Cooperation Bureau of the Ministry of Information and Communication (MIC) of Korea, accompanied by Profs. Myaeng, Hyun and Hae Chang Rim of Korea University. The meeting discussion was most cordial and lasted for an unusually long hour (to be elaborated further).

4:30 pm - Parting discussion over coffee at the **Koreana** Hotel with Prof. Myaeng, Hyun, and Rim, and strategizing the next step with MIC (to be elaborated further)

November 30, 2002

Informal meeting with faculty members from Seoul National University, and also my former doctoral student, Dr. Hae-young Rieh, Associate Professor at the Center for Liberal Arts & Instructional Development, Myongji University in Seoul

December 1, 2002

Leaving for airport at 8:00am for a long trip home.

2. OBSERVATIONS AND FINDINGS

During my short and intensive visit to Daejeon and Seoul, I have benefited a great deal from the thoughtful arrangement of both Profs. Myaeng and Hyun. My own personal informal contacts with several high-level scientists in Korea were proven to be also helpful in enabling me to obtain some up-to-date, new and relevant information related to national funding priorities in science and technology in Korea, which have proven to be also very useful to our Korea colleagues - Profs. Myaeng, Hyun and Rim. I left Korea with the following major observations worthy of mention:

- 1) In my 2 1/2-hour midnight drive from Seoul to Daejeon immediately after arrival, I learned from a KAIST scientist that the current national funding priorities in Korea are concentrated in 6 "T" areas – Information Technology (IT), Bio-Technology (BT), Environmental Technology (ET), **Cultural Technology (CT)**, etc... CT is a new phrase apparently coined in Korea, later I learned from Dr. Kim of KISTI. Last year, it had US\$100 Million funding, with more than 50% supported by the Ministry of Information and Communication (MIC) with co-sponsorship from the Ministry of Cultural. Most funds were given to companies to support the product development of cultural materials using technology (presumably multimedia and digital CD products).

I was aware of this interest when I met Korea's former Prime Minister, Dr. Soo Sung Lee, at the *International Digital Library Forum* in Beijing, China, organized by the Ministry of Information Industry of China, in May 2002 when I was invited to give a keynote speech. But, I was able to make the connection only after meeting with Dr. Jun-Cheol Yang, Director General, International Cooperation Bureau of the MIC in Seoul on November 29, 2002.

Although MIC is the most likely funding agencies for digital library activities in Korea, yet Dr. Yang is uncertain of the current possibilities for the kind of collaboration that we tried to convey, but promised to explore further. **However, at this meeting, Dr. Yang became aware of the possibility of a forum on international DL collaboration, which Profs. Myaeng and Hyun are hoping to launch with the support of NCA/MIC, and he expressed interest in discussing further on this matter.**

However, to my surprise, he did mention that the current major digital initiative of MIC is a collaborative project with China and Japan in the digital development of cultural and heritage materials among these three countries. It is expected that more than US\$50 Million will be invested to this activity this year. Because of this, he said that he underlined in my biographical information sheet about my multimedia work on the *First Emperor of China*, and expressed interest on the current NSF/IDL *Chinese Memory Net* and the *US-China Million Book Digital Library Project*. He sees potentials in collaborative R&D in this area.

This new piece of information is of substantial interest and value to Profs. Myaeng, Hyun and Rim, and they will follow up with more strategic exploration with the MIC.

- 2) Although about 10 Korean colleagues were present at the San Diego Workshop, I had the opportunity in meeting only with 4 – Profs. Myaeng, Hyun and Rim, and Dr. Kim of KISTI. I did not meet any “library and information science” people. I learned that the “real” collaborative DL activity between library school professors and those in the computer science does not really exist. Thus, any promotion to encourage more meaningful collaboration between two groups would be very useful for DL development in Korea.
- 3) Dr. Kim Hyeon, Director of Information System Department of KISTI, is interested in further collaboration with the NSF’s NSDL Program. KISTI, Korea Institute of Scientific and Technical Information, is a key government institution responsible for the production of most government publications – both hardcopy and electronic formats – in science and technology. KISTI has its own supercomputers and all kinds of dedicated servers for online databases, journal publications, etc.
- 4) Dr. Kim was the Director of Information Systems Department of Korea Research and Development Information Center (KORDIC) at the time of visit to San Diego in August 2000, but since then, KORDIC has been merged with KISTI.

KISTI’s counter parts in other Asian countries are JIST (Japan Institute of Science and Technology), ISTIC (Institute of Scientific and Technical Information of China), and the National Science Documentation Center of Vietnam. Thus, KISTI has Memorandum of Agreements (MOA) with these sister institutions for publication sharing and exchanges.

Following this, Dr. Kim expressed interest in signing similar MOA between KISTI and NSF in making KISTI’s information resources available to the US, and having selective information resources from NSF’s NSDL available in Korea.

In this regards, it is my observation that the sharing of information resources between KISTI and NSF/NSDL can be mutually beneficial and is also achievable, **since KISTI is interested in working with one or more groups of the US/NSDL for practical sharing and content and technology.** Yet, to my own observation, what is difficult is to have the MOA signed by NSF and KISTI, rather than by a PI of a NSF funded project. The former is apparently what Dr. Kim is more interested in at this moment. In other words, having Lee Zia representing NSF as the government organization to sign the MOA with KISTI is of great interest to Dr. Kim.

If Lee Zia is able to do so, then it seems to me that KISTI is ready. However, if this is unlikely, then I would suggest that this impossibility be made very clear to KISTI in any future dialogs.

Aside from this potential difficulty, I see the real potential value of Ed Fox’s NDLTD to be linked with the dissertations and theses available from KISTI. Again, Ed will have to make it clear that the collaboration is between KISTI and Ed’s NDLTD, rather than it is between KISTI and NSF.

- 4) There is a **National Digital Science Library (NDSL)** of Korea at KAIST (Korea Advanced Institute of Science Technology). KAIST is the most significant and advanced S&T R&D institution in Korea, thus the NSDLK will be a rather major activity, similar to the NSDL (NSDL of China). Potentially, NSDLK will possibly expand to include other digital contents, but the current focus is more like a NSDL of electronic resources of books and journals.

3. CONCLUSION

I believe that the whirlwind trip to Korea was a very productive one, and much appreciated by my two Korean hosts – Profs. Myaeng and Hyun. My hour-long talk on *"Toward Global Digital Library: Convergence of Technology, Content, and Global Collaboration"* was well received by participants – both students and faculty. Interests were expressed on possible collaborative R&D activities.

My discussions with all our Korea colleagues and partners have helped to clarify some current situations related to DL development in the US, and point to some potentially great opportunities for DL activities in Korea, as well as US-Korea collaboration.

I see the continuing potential in forming the US-Korea partnership, and would be happy to play whatever helpful role I can to **promote** this development. Given the “political” interest in collaborative activities among Korea, China and Japan, I would also be happy to share all my experience in my US-China DL collaborative activities with my Korean colleagues.

Finally, I wish to thank Ed Fox for suggesting this visit and making it possible, to Prof. Sung Hyon Myaeng for his thoughtful arrangements, Prof. Soon J. Hyun for his sponsorship of my talk at the Information and Communications University, Prof. Hae Chang Rim for arranging the appointment with Dr. Jun-Cheol Yang at the Ministry of Information and Communication. I am also grateful to Dr. Kim Hyeon of KISTI for his time in sharing his thoughts and ideas.

I hope that the observations and findings can be of interest and use to Lee Zia of the NSF/NSDL, Steve Griffin of the NSF/IDL, and Jane C. Prey of NSF, as well as Ed Fox and other colleagues who are eager to promote US-Korea DL collaboration.