

Web-based Academic Networking in Asia: an example of EPASIA

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The “Local” knowledge is now produced and mediated to the Global community by means of ever developing Information Technology in many Asian countries. My presentation is to introduce to you a web-project of mine, an academic initiative taken as a part of Brain Korea 21 project to build a network of collaborative relationships among Asian scholars in the field of English Studies. This is a pioneering digital humanities project, the first of its kind in Korea, to maximize the technical potentiality of computer technology in the humanities.



[My own portfolio: a track record of a digital humanist](#)

1999

Journal Article: *The Humanities in the Age of Information: Crisis and Potential* (1999, A Korea Research Foundation Project)

Abstract (*Semiotics*, Association of Semiotics in Korea, 2000)

The Humanities in the Age of Information: Crises and Potentials

The crisis of the humanities in the modern world has become something of a cliché. The humanities as an instrument for discovering truth has always been suspect since its inception, particularly after the science revolution of the 17th century. Is there then

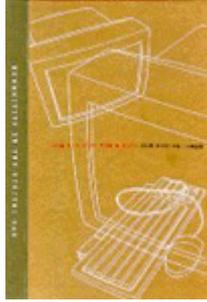
anything special about the crisis that the humanities scholars have recently experienced? This paper does two things to answer the question; one is to recapitulate the original ideas of the humanities in the Western world along with a preliminary discussion on their compatibility with the nature of an informatizing society. The other is to survey the history of the controversies between the humanist scholars and scientists since the scientific revolution the most articulate proponent of which was Francis Bacon. In this paper, I argue that the present crisis of the humanities is yet another challenge from the natural science in the context of their ongoing battle since the 17th century. The crisis of the humanities brought about by the recent IT revolution is serious and unprecedented indeed, which however does not necessarily mean that the humanities has become redundant. The human intelligence of more a comprehensive kind, for example, has become more indispensable in this age of information and that is one thing the humanities scholarship can best deal with. The Age of information, therefore, is at once a crisis and an opportunity to the humanities at the same time.

Visiting HATII(Humanities Advanced Technology and Information Institute,
Glasgow University, UK)



2001

Editing a Monograph of Digital Humanities: *The Humanities in the Digital Age: What is to be done*(Social Criticism, Seoul)



Creating a Research Institute of Digital Humanities at Ewha Womans University: [CHDT](#)(Center for the Humanities and Digital Technology)

A Multimedia Pedagogical Project: [Multimedia UK](#)

Designing a Multi-purpose Homepage for an academic association: [SESK](#)(Scholars for English Studies in Korea)

2002–2003

Creating a New Curriculum of Digital Humanities for undergraduate students(University Curriculum Development KRF Project) with a specially designed website [HCRG](#)(Humanities Computing Research Group)

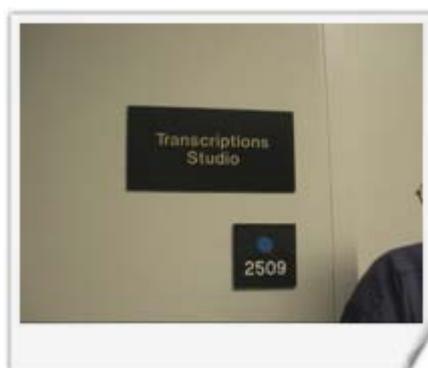
Journal Article: “A Case Study of a Web-based Culture Class with HCRG”(English and American Literary Education, The Korean Society for Teaching English Literature 9-1, 2005)

Abstract

This paper begins with the fundamental dilemmas of culture classes offered by the literature departments such as the obscure boundary of the culture class, the lack of

professional qualification of the literature and linguistics major professors, and the inflexible curriculum of the current university system. “A Study of Culture with Web” is a pilot project to figure out a way to solve or alleviate such dilemmas with a new pedagogical paradigm materialized by a new model of an off-line culture class making the best of web-based cyber class environment. The main part of this paper is a detailed explanation of the rationale of the newly developed website HCRG that includes Webcontents, Exhibition, Database, and Hyper text Lecture Notes. These manual type descriptions however do reflect a series of new pedagogical disciplines such as teaching as collaboration rather than unilateral lecturing, active learning, bi-directional interchanges between teacher and student, and the curriculum as the continuum. The next section examines the possible constructive effects the new pedagogy of “A Study of Culture with Web” may bring about. This paper argues that the new pedagogical model materialized by the menus of HCRG website might be not only a possible way-out from the dilemmas of the culture class within the curriculum of literature departments but also a promising model of the liberal. The conclusion is that the continuous update of the database with quality contents, the correct understanding of the new pedagogical disciplines by both teachers and students, the priority of humanistic thinking over the technological maneuverings, and more systematic institutional supports for the pioneering teachers who develop, maintain, and upgrade the forward looking educational device of the information society are absolutely necessary for the success of this new pedagogical experiment of digital humanities.

Visiting Alan Liu's Lab "[Transcriptions](#)"



[Contents Development Project of Digital Humanities for English Studies:](#)
(Department of English Language and Literature, Ewha Womans University)

2005–2006

Journal Article: “Humanities Computing and Literary Studies: A Brief Sketches” (*SESK* 12, Scholars of English Studies in Korea, 2007)

Abstract

This paper aims at examining the emerging academic discipline called “humanities computing” particularly in regard to the literary studies that finds itself within a strange cultural environment of new media. The first part is a general survey of the origin and the subsequent developments of humanities computing beginning from Roberto Busa’s concordance of Thomas Aquinas, which is followed by a critical discussion of Willard McCathy’s definition. John Unsworth’s theoretical explanation of humanities computing as an academic discipline is also examined. The second part is a full-scale discussion of the hypertext theory in regard to its enormous impact upon the topography of traditional literary studies. The theories of hypertext are critically examined particularly regarding its positive or negative effects on the traditional literary scholarship. Ted Nelson’s famous definition, James Bolter’s classic idea of hypertextual “writing space,” George Landow’s quick-witted summary of hypertext as a perfect embodiment of deconstructive textual theories are all discussed in detail. The conclusion is that the humanities computing’s contribution to the literary scholarship is real and substantial enough by any standard, but have not quite lived up to what some enthusiasts had claimed. Humanities computing, in fact, has been useful more as a technical assistance than as a whole new academic discipline so far. But humanities computing has done enough to present itself as the most feasible way available for humanities scholars to adapt themselves to the quickly evolving culture of information society.

2006–2012

Brain Korea 21 Project: “A New Model for English Studies in Korea: Scholarship, Cultural Translation and Professional English for the Global Context”

[Official Homepage in English](#)

[EPASIA\(English Portal Asia\)\(2007\)](#)

[Humanities Computing Workshop by HATII staff \(Ewha BK Winter School, January 2007\)](#)

KRF Digital Humanities Project: “Visualizing English Poetry”

“A Multi-layered Electronic Text of Wordsworth's *The Ruined Cottage*”

Abstract

Background and Objective

Wordsworth defined poetry as "spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings," but he never wrote his poems "spontaneously." Quite to the contrary, he revised the drafts again and again even after manuscripts were in the publisher's hands giving him the notorious title of "publishers' nightmare." *The Prelude* being the prime example, he sometimes decided not to publish the poems he had laboriously revised for a long time. *The Ruined Cottage*, generally regarded as one of the finest achievements of Wordsworth's entire poetic career, was another example that was never given the chance to be published as a separate poem in Wordsworth's lifetime. Wordsworth started to work on it from as early as 1796 and presented it to the world after very many revisions in 1814 as the first book of *The Excursion*. Even after publication, the poet did not stop tinkering with the poem until as late as 1845, five years before he died. But *The Ruined Cottage* had to wait more than a century to encounter scholars who appreciated it enough to think that it deserved publication as an independent poem. *The Ruined Cottage* was finally presented to the

general public as a separate work (MS B) by Jonathan Wordsworth in 1969 with his meticulous study of its long and complicated textual history. James Butler completed Jonathan Wordsworth's pioneering editorial efforts when he published *The Cornell Wordsworth* edition of *The Ruined Cottage* in 1979 offering three versions of reading texts along with an exhaustive textual history. There is no doubt that the Cornell series is an example of the best textual scholarship imaginable within the limits of print book technology: laboriously prepared reading texts presented as parallel pages, photographic reproduction of original manuscripts with their professionally deciphered readings printed alongside, and all the related source material available then. The Cornell edition of *The Ruined Cottage* has been accepted as a standard reference by all Wordsworthian scholars since its publication but its use has been by and large limited to Wordsworth specialists. Our objective is to develop a multi-layered electronic edition of *The Ruined Cottage*, making use of recently developed encoding technique, which we hope will make the results of textual scholarship contained within the Cornell edition more readily available to the general readers through multimedia visualizing technology.

Purpose

As a computing humanist scholar of Wordsworth, I have always dreamed of an ultimate text of Wordsworth which somehow visualizes the poetical texts that are constantly evolving within the poet's mind, only a few slices of which were to materialize in printed editions. My ultimate text made possible by digital technology would have the following features:

- * The E-text would accommodate all the surviving materials that contributed to the making of *The Ruined Cottage* from a short fragment to a full scale printed version. That is, the collection of related materials must be comprehensive and complete.
- * The E-text would be able to show clearly the evolving process of the poem, not only as a whole but also part by part even to the level of a single word, which will be made possible by the multi-layer encoding technique along with a related visualizing method.
- * The E-text would be malleable enough to allow non-specialist end-users(readers) easy accessibility and maximum manipulability. Readers should be able to access easily a particular part of a particular version with hypertextually linked and graphically connected related materials. Readers should also be allowed to bring out a particular part of a

particular version and compare it easily with another particular part of another particular version, assuming himself a temporary editorial authority to his own customized need.

Technology

Apart from basic background knowledge gleaned from McGann and Hockey, we have been greatly inspired by Dino Buzzetti's model of dynamic text and Casey Due's multitext project of Homer both of which were presented at the 2008 Digital Humanities conference. We also learned a lot from *The Canterbury Tales* project by Peter Robinson of University of Birmingham. Making the best of all the useful knowledge from the preceding research, we hope to contribute to the scholarship of electronic text with our multilayered electronic text of *The Ruined Cottage* by incorporating:

- User-friendly interface using multimedia visualization techniques
- Increased interactivity between the text and the user by "autopoietic" structure of e-text
- Three-dimensional graphic images showing the depth of multilayered e-texts
- VR navigation techniques to feel the volumetric effects of the layers
- Comparison among various hypertext poems using XML techniques
- Graphical rendering with the original calligraphy and material according to the change of some parts in the e-texts

Significance

Wordsworth's life-long textual manipulation of his major works makes him in hindsight a precursor of a hypertextual author; he for example had an ambition to organize all his poetic texts into one great work allocating a proper place for each poetical text in the hierarchical structure of his poetic *corpus* where each poem is implicitly or explicitly cross-referenced("linked") with each other, which was all done within the limits of print book technology. In other words, the *corpus* of Wordsworth's poetry was already structured like the Web and his inveterate habit of revision might well be understood as a reflection of his efforts to weave a particular poem into his own *docuverse* by placing it in a new context with a new link. The textual history of any single poem of Wordsworth, therefore, is not to be revealed until it is shown within the complex web-like structure of his poetic *corpus*. Our multi-layered text with its three-dimensional visualizing technique

will offer a clearer picture of a poem's connection to the Wordsworthian *docuverse* system, the e-text of *The Ruined Cottage* being its first showcase.

References

Butler, James. (ed.) (1979). *The Ruined Cottage and The Pedlar*. Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press.

Buzzetti, D., Rehbein, M., Towards a Model for Dynamic Text Editions. *Proceedings of Digital Humanities 2008*, Oulu, Finland, June 2008.

Due, C., Ebbott, M., The Homer Multitext Project. *Proceedings of Digital Humanities 2008*, Oulu, Finland, June 2008.

Landow, G.P. (2006). *Hypertext 3.0: Critical Theory and New Media in an Era of Globalization*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.

McGann, J. (2004). Marking Texts of Many Dimensions. In Schreibman, S., Siemens, R., Unsworth, J.(eds) (2004), *A Companion To Digital Humanities*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.

Robinson, P. (1998). New Methods of Editing, Exploring, and Reading *The Canterbury Tales*. <http://www.canterburytalesproject.org/pubs/desc2.html> (accessed 2 November 2008)

EPASIA



EPASIA(English Portal Asia) is a web project composed of an annotated bibliography of academic web contents, video lecture archive, peer-reviewed online journal, and academic portal site of English studies. Our mission is to mediate the English Studies in Asia to the Global community by means of advances in information technology becoming more widely available to humanities scholars. EPASIA is offering itself as a common space where the Humanities scholars of Asia-Pacific region communicate each other working together as an academic community within a shared cultural context of Asia-Pacific region.

Mission

The Website EPASIA is a multi-purpose academic portal site containing a webliography (an annotated bibliography of academic websites), a video archive of lectures, and an on-line journal developed and maintained by the English Department of Ewha Womans University. EPASIA is a pioneering academic web-project of digital humanities, the first of its kind in Asia, which is working for a networked partnership among Asian scholars of English Studies. It is an ongoing project, still in the middle of its making, waiting for the contributions from our partners in other Asian countries.

Global Scope

EPASIA is currently limited only to English Studies, but it can easily be expanded to any other academic fields. What is unique in EPASIA is its truly global scope; it covers not only Anglo-American regions (UK, US, Australia) but also many Asian countries such as China, Japan, Singapore, Taiwan, the Philippines, India, and Korea. So far we have uploaded a little more than 850 original review articles about academic websites for English Studies produced in and out of Asian countries and we are hoping to increase our number of items and upgrade the quality of our information with the collaboration of our foreign partners. If they contribute contents produced in their native regions perhaps after their own "translation," EPASIA can become a truly unique collection of site information, which will make the hitherto-unknown Asian scholarship in English Studies more visible to Western academic communities.

Collaborative Network

The primary feature of EPASIA is an annotated Webliography. EPASIA's annotations are given by an open-ended, bilateral network of scholars and graduate students in Asia. The main database is located at school digital lab but it is uploaded, updated, and maintained by a series of satellite websites called Editor's page developed and maintained by outside editors who run their own review sites. A site concerning Jean Rhys maintained by professor Pin-chia Feng of Taiwan, for example, was annotated by a graduate student at Ewha majoring in contemporary British fiction who maintains her own website related to the contemporary fiction. An annotator is asked to contribute review articles in her own field to EPASIA in a standardized format, just in the way an independent local TV production company provides a national broadcasting system with its own programs. The contents of EPASIA are thus uploaded and maintained by a networked community of students and scholars who best know the contents in their own fields. The academic network supporting EPASIA exists currently only among Ewha students, but could easily be expanded nationally and internationally.

Webliography

Data Uploading Procedure (Editors)

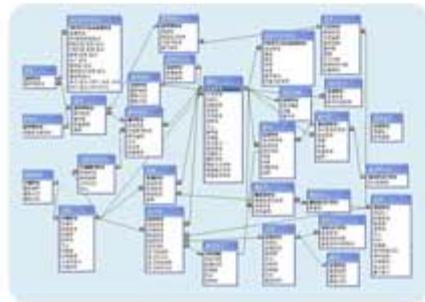


Subjects Pool

Keywords Pool

Data Effectiveness Checking Procedure

Epasia DataBase System



Korean Service

English Service

Editor's Pages

Rating and Commentary

Structure

EPASIA is a Web Bibliography specialized in English Studies. Each item of the bibliography is annotated by editors who review the notable academic websites in his/her own field. Editors, sharing the keyword pool and the subject pool, slightly modified from those of Library of Congress, provide EPASIA with their review articles in a standardized format. Each item is rated by the editors and the users who can put their own ratings to it. EPASIA is currently serviced in two languages, English and the local language(Korean). Editors may or may not have their own web pages(editor's pages) which are linked to the main EPASIA.

Contents

The image shows a screenshot of a web page from EPASIA with various elements annotated with red numbers 1 through 11. The page features a navigation menu with 'Literature' (1) and sub-categories like 'Poetry', 'Novel', 'Drama', and 'Criticism' (2). A search bar is located at the top right. The main content area displays a listing for 'Sir Gawain and the Green Knight' (3) with a five-star rating (4). Below the title is a thumbnail image (5) and a detailed description (6) of the work, including its historical context and available resources. A URL is provided (8), and keywords are listed (9). At the bottom, there are buttons for 'Editor's Page' (10) and 'Your Rate' (11), along with a comment box and a 'Submit' button.

1 Literature

2 Poetry Novel Drama Criticism

3 Sir Gawain and the Green Knight ★★★★★

4

5

6 English Literature->Poetry->By period->Medieval,Middle English (1066-1500)

7 This website provides information on what may be the best acclaimed work of medieval English romance--Sir Gawain and the Green Knight. In this beautifully designed web site with its own background music, this users can see medieval images of Sir Gawain and the Green Knight in the first page of the web site. It is also well constructed, thus easy to get information. In "Introduction" it gives detailed information related to Sir Gawain and the Green Knight, such as when, by whom, and where the work was written. It also gives users the first publication date of the romance, as well as the best translation available (that by Marie Borroff in 1967). In "Resources," users can see many authors who translated Sir Gawain and the Green Knight. By clicking on the names of the authors, users can view the full translations in PDF format. The available editions are translations by the following scholars: J. R. R. Tolkien and E. V. Gordon; Norman Davis; W. A. Neilson, and Jessie L. Weston. In "Essay and Articles," there are many essays and articles by students and scholars on Sir Gawain and the Green Knight.

8 URL : <http://www.luminarium.org/medlit/gawain.htm>

9 Keyword(s) : Sir Gawain and the green knight, Gawain (Legendary character), Gawain, Romances

10 Editor's Page Your Rate

11

1. Main Category
2. Sub Categories
3. Title of the site
4. Evaluation : ★★★★★ Best / ★★★★★ good / ★★★ / ★★ / ★
5. Image of Main Page
6. Searching paths
7. Annotation
8. URL
9. Keyword(s)
10. Editor's Page
11. Your Rate : YOU can also evaluate the website and webliography.

Editor's Pages

EPASIA's central database is uploaded and updated by a network of editors who maintain their own webpages(satellite pages) specialized in their own fields. EPASIA is currently made of 14 satellite pages that publish more than 850 original review articles in English Studies. EPASIA's current collection of review articles provided by our student editors was made mainly for an educational purpose: all the Phd students of Ewha English Literature departments are required to create and maintain their own editor's pages containing all the current academic information concerning their own fields. They are expected to be always informed of the recent digital publications in their specialized fields, to provide

EPASIA with the most updated reviews of all the notable academic performances or materials available online. EPASIA's review articles have been written by our students so far, but the scope and the quality of the contents can dramatically widened and upgraded with the contributions from the outside editors, particularly the foreign reviewers who could collect and review the materials produced in their own regions: Chinese editors can best review the academic websites located in China, Indonesians Indonesian local sites, Japanese Japanese sites, etc. EPASIA is now open to the local editors anywhere in the world, particularly in the Asian region waiting for their participations. EPASIA is still in its infancy, but could grow up and become a more decent academic portal of truly global scope with friendly attention and active commitments from our friends and colleagues in other countries.

Digital Archiving

Video Lectures

EPASIA is currently podcasting 32 one hour lectures given by the scholars of English studies who were invited to EPASIA's various international occasions such as EPASIA international conferences, Ewha-BK International Winter Schools, and EPASIA's Prominent Lecture Series of English Studies. EPASIA's Video Archive which is accessible anytime, downloadable anywhere, is simple in its idea, but very significant in its implication because it means that all the valuable performances held within academia, previously all

one-time occasions taking place far off from the general public, can now be "preserved" and shared by everybody. EPASIA's video archive is a small step towards a more open academia EPASIA imagines, but it can easily developed into a kind of academic "youtube" with contributions and commitments from the institutions and the people sharing our vision.

International Conferences & Workshops

EPASIA mediates all the offline academic activities to the cyber space by publishing digitally all the procedures and the results of conferences and workshops hosted by EPASIA. Lecture scripts, proceedings of the conferences, working papers and presentation materials produced and used during EPASIA's previous two international conferences and three international winter schools are all collected and published as they were. In the third international winter school, for example, we opened a unique online classroom specially designed for our 5 day English academic writing workshop with which the main lecturer of the morning sessions could give her feedback to the writing sessions which were held in the afternoon sessions under the supervision of writing tutors. The classroom is still open and accessible after logging in. EPASIA is trying to preserve and represent all the "traces" of academic efforts offline so that it functions more as an active camera eye upon our academic performances rather than a still library of collected materials.

E-Journal

EPASIA's e-journal is more than an online version of the existing paper journal. JEAS(Journal of English American Studies) is an independent academic journal of English Studies published offline and online at the same time. But its online version offers itself as the nexus of international collaboration among the scholars in and out of Korea. Many foreign participants to the international conferences and workshops organized by EPASIA, for example, not only contributed their papers to JEAS afterwards but also joined its editorial board. Our e-journal JEAS not only reflects the academic efforts already made somewhere else offline, but stimulates the current, ongoing collaborations among scholars of wider scope functioning more as an active academic community rather than a publication.