Research on the Development of a User-oriented Korean History Site: Focusing on Analysis of Site Situations and Suggesting New Directions for Development

Jeong Mi-Ryang
Kihl Tae-Suk

Introduction

It is time that user-oriented history sites be developed to provide a variety of content in order to meet the requirement of the general public's interest in and preference for Korean history. The reason is that a lot of historical content presented in the mass media such as dramas, movies and historical documents have stimulated users' interest in learning about Korean history in addition to increasing the interest of members of the general public in creating various second-stage content based on historical information.

Incidentally, the number of those who have taken advantage of Korean history sites developed by government institutes, including the National Institute of Korean History, is still small. Few ordinary people, and even few experts, know of the existence of such sites as a result of poor public relations and the failure of these sites to fully meet users' expectations. Though government institutes and groups aim to provide information to the general public and focus on mutual communication between users or between users and institutes, historical content sites are usually for experts. Furthermore, most of those sites simply provide information in a one-way manner.

In this article, we evaluate history-related sites developed by institutes and individuals from the viewpoint of users. We examine what problems and limits current history-related sites have by conducting a survey of Koreans and foreigners who are using them. Then, based on the survey results, we suggest directions in which user-oriented sites could develop in conformity with users' tendencies and expectations.

Studies on Korean history web sites have generally focused on specific areas or themes such as: research on the use of Korean history web sites for educational purposes (Park and Lee 2000:75-94, Kwon 2003:47-66, Park 2004:144-171, Kim 2005:271-295); research on the manufacturing of historical content (Oh et al. 1999:114-123, Moon and Park 2003:185-201, Ryu, Ahn, and Kim 2009:32-40); or the digitalization of historical documents and materials (Lee 2003:117-130, Ryu 2008:377-382, Kim 2009:211-248) rather than analysis of Korean history web sites *per se*.

This paper proposes a new type of history site that is designed to meet the requirements of ordinary users, reflect debate about history, and cover subjects attracting public attention and social controversy instead of simply describing normative history or posting content for public relations purposes. This type of site should provide well-balanced information based on historical records. Such an approach will contribute to raising users'

satisfaction. In addition, it will constitute a foundation on which cultural content such as the arts, movies, games, and characters can be created.

Analysis of History-Related Sites and their Users

Analysis of Major Korean History-Related Sites from the Viewpoint of Users

The Current condition of history-related sites

History-related sites can be examined from the viewpoint of who provides them, who typically uses them, and what is posted on them. In terms of providers, they are classified as national institute and group sites, and individual sites; in terms of main users, as sites aimed at ordinary people or sites aimed at experts. They have one thing in common, which is to provide history-related content, but they differ from one another according to the period or subject with which they deal, therefore they are classified either as sites focusing on a specific period or subject, or sites providing a variety of materials in terms of content. In this article we analyze, from the user's standpoint, history-related sites with relatively high link rates, established by institutes or groups and individual history-related homepages. The history-related sites we focus on are listed in Table 1 and are, initially, divided by major user group.

Korean History On-line, the history information synthesis system operated by National Institute of Korean History, provides Korean history materials through systematic and comprehensive computerization with a large number of specialized history material institutes participating. There are a total of 28 sites linked to it, including The Annals of the Choson Dynasty, The Daily Records of Royal Secretariat of Chosun Dynasty, Life History Museum, Ugyo Net, Integrated Data System for Korea's Historic Figures, The Merits Digital Historical Materials Site, The History of Korean Independence Movement Online, Women's History Knowledge System, Modern Korea-Japan Diplomatic Materials, and, Korea Epigraph Synthesis Image Information System. At The Annals of the Choson Dynasty and The Daily Records of Royal Secretariat of Chosun Dynasty users can obtain images of originals and translated history materials. At the Integrated Data System for Korea's Historic Figures, they can access a variety of information on around 79,000 historical figures and their surnames, family origin and

office title. On The Merits Electronic History Material Site and the History of Korean Independence Movement Online, users can obtain independence movement-related information. At Modern Korea-Japan Diplomatic Materials, they can obtain modern Korea-Japan diplomatic materials concerning the time period before and after Korea opened its ports. Users can log on to Korean History On-line and get access to the sites linked to it, or log on to the site directly and get information they want to find. Most of these sites linked to Korean History On-line, except Life History Museum, Ugyo Net, Korea Epigraph Synthesis Image Information System run by Korean Studies Advancement Center and the National Research Institute of Cultural Heritage, provide historical records and other materials chiefly for history experts. That is the reason why ordinary people without sufficient knowledge of history have difficulty logging on to them and taking advantage of their materials. One may safely say that ordinary users cannot easily understand excavation reports after the 1940s on History & Culture Research Database and public or private texts in the Gyeongsang-do Province on National Archives of Korea provided by National Archives & Records Service.

On the other hand, Life History Museum, Ugyo Net, and Korea Epigraph Synthesis Image Information System provide documentary materials in a visual way through digital images and add explanations to their historical records and materials, enabling ordinary people as well as history experts to have easy access to materials.

The Electronic Encyclopedia of Korean Grand Culture covers a lot of detailed information on local communities from the era before the three-nation period until the present, and helps its users search for specific locations and find local information. The Culture Content Site of the Korea Creative Content Agency provides information on numerous subjects in various ways such as letters, original images, videos, pictures, 2D or 3D graphics, and acoustics. Dictionary sites such as EncyKorea and Korean History Dictionary offered by the Academy of Korean Studies mainly focus on the explanation of terms related to Korean history and culture along with visual materials such as pictures and photos. The users of The Oral History of Korean Arts can review oral statements of artists. The Research Group for the People without History in the 20th Century provides archives of the daily lives and living history of the common people. Those sites for both history experts and ordinary people provide information through colorful means instead of text alone, and in particular, feature historical records coupled with explanations.

Table 1. History-Related Sites Analyzed

Major users	Site name and address	Provider	Major content
History experts	Korean History On-line (역사정보통합시스템) http://www.koreanhistory.or.kr/	National Institute of Korean History	Books, documents, periodicals, maps, historical materials as to relics and remains
	Korean History Database (한국사데이타베이스) http://db.history.go.kr	National Institute of Korean History	Database of modern and present Korean history materials
	The Daily Records of Royal Secretariat of theChosun Dynasty (승정원일기) http://sjw.history.go.kr	National Institute of Korean History	The image of the original Diaries of the Royal Secretariat, and its Korean translation and original text
	The Annals of the the Choson Dynasty (조선왕조실록) http://sillok.history.go.kr	National Institute of Korean History	The image of the original Annals of the Choson Dynasty, and its Korean translation and original text
	Integrated Data System for Korea's Historic Figures (한국역대인물종합정보시스템) http://people.aks.ac.kr	The Academy of Korean Studies	A dictionary of historic figures of each period
	The Merits Digital Historical Materials Site(공훈전자사료관) http://e-gonghun.mpva.go.kr	Ministry of Patriots & Veterans Affairs	Database of independence movement –related materials
	Women's History Knowledge System (한국여성사지식정보시스템) http://www.womenshistory.re.kr:7070	Korean Women's Development Institute	Women-related Materials and their historical records
	The History of Korean Independence Movement Online (한국독립운동사정보시스템) http://search.i815.or.kr	The Independence Hall of Korea	Information on independence movement-related original texts, documents and images
	Modern Korea-Japan Diplomatic Materials (근대한일외교자료) http://siminlib.koreanhistory.or.kr	The Busan Metropolitan Simin Municipal Library	Database of Modern Korea-Japan Diplomatic Materials
	Korean History & Culture Research Database (한국역사문화조사자료데이타베이스) http://www.excavation.co.kr/	Zininzin Co.	Excavation reports after the 1940s
	National Archives of Korea (국가기록원역사기록관) http://busan.archives.go.kr/	National Archives & Records Service	Public and private records located in the Gyeongsang province
Ordinary users	Seoul City Culture Information Network, Seoul City History Compilation Committee (서울시문화정보네트워크서울시사편찬위원회) http://history.seoul.go.kr/	Seoul City Hall	Basic materials on Seoul's history and culture
	The Multimedia Jeju Customs Tourism Unabridged (멀티미디어제주민속관광대사전) http://jejuro.go.kr/	Korea Information and Culture Promotion Committee	Information Content on Jeju-related history and culture
	Edunet(에듀넷) http://www.edunet4u.net/index.jsp	Ministry of Education, Science and Technology	Explanation of Korean, English, Mathematics, Science, Sociology subjects from fourth grade of elementary school to high school
	History Special(역사스페셜) http://www.kbs.co.kr/history/collect.shtml	Korean Broadcasting System	Historical Documentaries

Major users	Site name and address	Provider	Major content
Ordinary users	HISTOPIA http://www.histopia.net/zbxe/home	Seunggee Joo	Providing database of Korea's geographical names and Baekje cultural relics. Materials on the establishment of the Korean historicaly-related community
	Cyber Chosun Dynasty (사이버조선왕조) http://www.1392.org/	Dooyoung Kim	A virtual society of the Chosun Dynasty
	Korea 100-year Picture Museum (한국100년전 사진박물관) http://www.nojum.co.kr/	Nojum(Seunggil Jung)	Korean history-related photos of the last century
	Exploration of history and society by Haesuk Kim(김혜석의역사와사회탐구) http://khskk7.com.ne.kr/	Haesuk Kim (school teacher)	Modern Korean history –related information, study materials, historical images flash media
	Sociology Classroom by Yongho Ko (고용호 사회교실) http://very.good.to/	Yongho Ko (school teacher)	Korean history and sociology-related study materials for middle and high school students, modern history-related information
	History Love by Kunho Park (박건호의 역사사랑) http://guno.pe.kr/	Kunho Park (school teacher)	History class materials, songs, traditional songs, historical information through stamps
	History stories by Golmal (골말의 역사이야기) http://history.new21.net/history.php3	Golmal (School teacher)	Korean history stories, Academic Material Room
	History class by Changho Lee (이창호의 역사교육) http://chang256.new21.net	Chang Ho Lee (School teacher)	cCultural history by period, Buddhism, cultural history-related information and photos
Both	Life History Museum (옛문서생활사박물관) http://life.ugyo.net	Korean Studies Advancement Center	Cyber museum exhibiting documents from the establishment of the Chosun dynasty to the year 1945
	Ugyo Net (유교넷) http://www.ugyo.net	Korean Studies Advancement Center	Confucian culture-related information
	Korea Epigraph Synthesis Image Information System (한국금석문종합영상정보시스템) http://gsm.nricp.go.kr	National Research Institute of Cultural Heritage	Epigraph-related information
	EncyKorea(민족문화대백과사전) http://www.encykorea.com/EncyKorea.htm	The Academy of Korean Studies	An encyclopedia related to Korea's national culture
	Korean History Dictionary (한국사기초사전) http://yoksa.aks.ac.kr/jsp/cc/Directory.jsp?gb=1	The Academy of Korean Studies	Explanation of major terms of Korean history and culture
	The Electronic Encyclopedia of Korean Grand Culture (한국향토문화전자대전) http://www.grandculture.net/main/main.asp	The Academy of Korean Studies	Database of local cultural history materials
	The Oral History of Korean Arts (구술로 만나는 한국 예술사) http://oralhistory.arko.or.kr/oral/main.asp	Korea Culture and Art Committee	Oral records by elderly artists
	The Research Group for the People Without History in the 20th century (20세기 민중생활사연구단) http://www.minjung20.org/main/	Group for the People without History	Oral history/Lives of ordinary people
	Culture Content Site (문화원형 과제 사이트) http://www.culturecontent.com/	Korea Creative Content Agency	Culture prototypes. Content related to food, clothing and shelter, architecture, ritual religion, transportation and communication, military diplomacy, art, science and technology, and literary documents topics

Sites for the general public provided by the national institute level are generally made by local governments. Two sites established by the Seoul metropolitan government and the Jeju city government are examples of these. They provide historical knowledge and information related to their own regions. In case of the Multimedia Jeju Customs Tourism Unabridged site, though its information is limited to Jeju, it provides local information concerning history, culture, society, nature and art through various multimedia and historical materials, and offers a number of events in an effort to draw ordinary users' participation.

Members of the general public are as enthusiastic about history as Korean history experts. They typically share historical content through individual blogs or obtain historical information through portal sites like Daum or Naver. Much of the popular historical content shared by individual blogs consists of history materials related to middle and high school studies. Glossaries of Korean history, references that are arranged according to their textbook content, as well as pictures, moving images and animations for understanding the history curriculum are shared. Some blogs provide historical content in accordance with their preference through various means like music, cartoons, animation, postcards, virtual reality, and UCC. They deal with a wide range of subjects like historic events, the modern and current history of North Korea, history stories connected with soap operas or movies, historic figures, and cultural history. These individual blogs feature mutual communication between their users and providers, and offer us a clue to various history subjects in which they are interested. They suggest directions for development of a new type of history site.

The Problems and limits of the current history-related sites

While history site users are composed of history-related professionals and general users who log on to those sites for various reasons, only a small number of sites are now able to meet their demands for historical information. Most general users simply make use of information provided by individual blogs or portal sites, but they have to spend a lot of time looking for information because they cannot find enough relevant information to satisfy their needs at the sites they frequently visit.

First of all, sites linked to Korean History On-line provide text-dominated information, which can be a barrier when users don't have sufficient knowledge of history including text titles, historic figures, historic events, era, and Korean history terms. Then, even when they manage to

access the information they intend to find with the assistance of directories for each era or examination words offered by these sites, in many cases they have to find other material in order to understand the information since it is mainly designed for history experts (Ryu 2008:377-382).

Sites that provide information focusing on such historical records or research materials are of no interest to the general public. While they also have a great interest in original materials or historical records, their interest may have been provoked by researchers or some other factor. Personal blogs show that their interests in history are directed toward a variety of fields. They are interested in historical facts themselves as well as other subjects derived from their original interests such as movies, dramas, painting, photos, regions, literature, cultural assets, learning, travel, and conflicts. Therefore, current history sites can hardly live up to their expectations.

In the case of either present history sites aimed at both ordinary people and history experts, or ones aimed solely at ordinary people organized by institutes, they are limited to certain features like dictionaries, oral statements, and cultural assets, or provide only specific regional information. The Culture Content Site of the Korea Creative Content Agency provides information on a wide range of subjects, but it is hard to gain a comprehensive understanding of those subjects due to its characteristic as a general site where culture-dominated information is offered by numerous contributors.

Sharing historical information by means of individual blogs has an array of problems and limits as well. As an individual's taste is a predominant factor in deciding which content is to be posted, those blogs are lacking in diversity. They can rarely provide historical content in a systematic way as a result of technical disadvantages. Furthermore, in comparison with sites operated by institutes, their expertise is relatively poor and low and these blogs could provide users' personal opinions and baseless interpretations of history because they lack the benefit of peer review as exists in academic settings. The bottom line is that it takes a lot of effort and time to maintain these blogs, making it almost impossible for each individual blogger to continuously maintain his or her blog. As a matter of fact, over the past several years a number of sites have shown up then disappeared due to personal reasons or problems originating with the portal sites which provide blogs. Therefore, it is imperative that institutes construct user-oriented Korean history sites in order to provide content in a way that meets the needs of a variety of users.

Analysis of User Preferences for Korean History Sites Based on Survey Results

Outline of the survey

This survey was designed to analyze the use situations of users who take advantage of Korean history sites. It was designed to study their perceptions, demands and expectations concerning Korean history and Korean history sites. In order to fulfill this goal, we drew up a questionnaire and conducted a survey. The survey questions are outlined in the table that follows.

Table 2. The Items and Detailed Content of the Survey[1]

Sphere	Major items	Detailed content
General Korean History	Interests and Understanding (5 questions)	* The Degree of Interest in Korean history * Impetus for interest in Korean history * The Degree of Sympathy towards Need to Understand Korean history * The Degree of Understanding Korean History Itself * Methods employed for Understanding Korean History * Group thought to be well aware of Korean History
	Quality Evaluation (3 questions)	* Evaluation of Recent Progress in Korean history studies * Evaluation of whether to include current social issues in Korean history studies *Evaluation on the quality level of Korean history studies
	Suggestions (3 questions)	* New content which should be included in order to enhance the quality level of Korean history studies * Activities which should be extended in order to enhance the influence of Korean history studies
Korean History Sites	Information Use Situations (4 questions)	* Frequency of Korean history information use (Internet Sites and Books) * Method of obtaining Korean history information(past) * Method of obtaining Korean history information(future) * Evaluation of information provided by Korean history books
	Site use situations and Evaluation (4 questions)	* Average use frequency of Korean history sites * Korean history site now used most frequently * Evaluation of Korean history site system to provide Korean history information *Evaluation of Korean history site content to provide information on Korean history
	Suggestions (3 questions)	* Content you want to learn through Korean history sites * Content you want included in Korean history sites

1. Of the structured questions in the questionnaire, the suggestion item contains one question that should be answered in a descriptive way; the others are multiple choice questions. The basic structure for the survey is as follows.

The population of the survey (Korean history site users) is ordinary people who use Korea history sites, including both domestic Korean and foreign sites. In terms of level of knowledge of Korean history knowledge, it includes a variety of users from common people who intend to learn Korean history because is part of their own culture to experts who specialize in Korean history. This survey divides Korean history site users into 6 groups. The actual respondents of each group are identified withas Korean history sites users in the manner shown in the below table. The reason why Korean history sites users are stratified is that this survey is endeavors to determine each group's use situations and their respective suggestions, as well as meaningthe implications of the foregoing by acknowledging each group's differences and examining the differences between history experts and common people.

Table 3. Population and the groups of actual respondents to the survey[2]

Population(Korean History Sites Users)	Actual respondents to the survey
Middle and High School students	High School students
Ordinary citizens interested in history	University students
Middle and High School teachers (including local government officials)	High school teachers
Content producers	University students majoring in games
Koreans living in foreign countries	-
Foreigners interested in Korean history	Foreign students staying in Korea
History researchers	Graduate school students majoring in history

The basic structure for the survey is as follows.

Classification	Contents
Sample Design	Population: Ordinary citizens who use Korean history sites at home and abroad (including foreigners)
	Sample size: 300 persons
	Sampling Method : Multiple Stage Stratified Random Sampling
Survey Method	Interview Method: one-to-one interview conducted during interviewer's in-person visit.In addition, individual in-depth interviews of foreign students staying in Korea as to the question of content
	Tools for collecting material : a structured questionnaire and individual interviews
	Survey Period: May 1, 2009 – June 15, 2009 (45 days)

2. Content producers are identified with as university students majoring in games. The reason is that University students majoring in games are now producing digital game programs based on Korean history content. Koreans living in foreign countries are excluded from this survey. Respondents to the survey have features shown in the below table as follows.
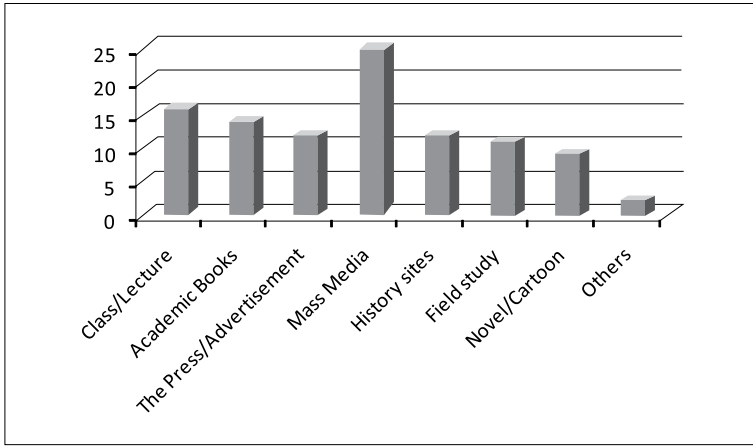
Survey findings

First, while Korean history site users are concerned about Korean history, they feel there is something missing in Korean history sites and have low expectations of them. The average number of points related to interest in Korean history and the user's reasons for studying Korean history expressed by those users is 3.5 points and 4.2 points respectively on the scale of 5 points (1 point: Not/None at all. 3 points: Average. 5 points: Much more than average). However, the average number of points related to their level of understanding of Korean history is 2.9 points, lower than 'average' (3 points). While they are interested in Korean history and sympathize with the need to understand Korean history, they think their level of understanding of Korean history is low. As for what stimulates their interest in Korean history[3], 30% of the respondents say a course requirement in school, which represents the highest rate. It is followed by mass media (20%), academic books (12%), field study (9%), novels or cartoons (9%), the press or advertisements (7%). Only 3% of respondents select history sites, which represents the lowest rate. Some 25% of those responding select mass media as their preferred method for obtaining information about Korean history in future, followed by classes or lectures, academic periodicals and history sites.

Classification	Sample Size		%
Middle and high school students (50)	Male	21	7.0
	Female	29	9.7
Common citizens interested in history(50)	Male	25	8.3
	Female	25	8.3
Middle and high school teachers(50)	Male	29	9.6
	Female	21	7.0
Content producers (50)	Male	7	2.3
	Female	43	14.3
Foreign students staying in Korea(50)	Male	16	5.3
	Female	34	11.4
History researchers(50)	Male	26	8.8
	Female	24	8.0
Total (Case number 300 persons, 100%)	Male	124	41.3
	Female	176	58.7

3. Only 253 respondents who answered more than 'usual' in terms of their interest in Korean history were surveyed, and the questionnaire is composed of the questions that can be answered with multiple choices.

Table 4. Method by which you want to obtain information about Korean history (unit %)

Second, those who select Korean history sites evaluate the quality level of Korean history studies itself as average or better than average, but they evaluate the system and content of Korean history sites as average or worse than average. Their response is illustrated in the following table.

Table 5. Evaluation of Korean history studies and Korean history sites (unit: average points)

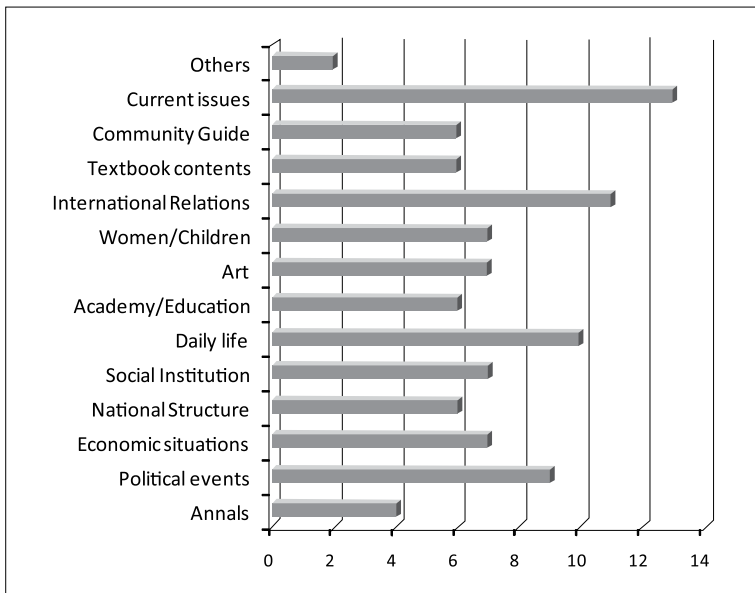| Classification	Content	Average points
Evaluation of Korean History Studies	The quality level of Korean history studies	3.5 points (better than 'average')
	The quality level of Korean history books	3.0 points('average')
Evaluation of Korean history sites	The system of Korean history sites providing Korean history information	3.0 points('average')
	The information content of Korean history sites	2.9 points(worse than 'average')

Annotation) 5 point scale. 1 point: very bad. 5 points: very good.

Third, out of the Korean history site user groups, the groups of middle and high school students or content producers report the lowest points in terms of interest and understanding of Korean history, information (books and sites comprehensively included) and the use level of sites, evaluation of Korean history and Korean history sites. That means middle and high school students who may be a major group using Korean history sites in the future

and content producers who make significant efforts to develop popular history content show a low response to Korean history sites. Substantial efforts should be made to enhance the general public's interest in Korean history and accept their demands.

Fourth, the average frequency of site visits (using a 5-point scale-1 point:not at all; 3 points:once a month; 5 points:much more than average) is 2.6 points, lower than the 'average frequency'. The history-related sites that Korean history site users visit most frequently are portal sites by Naver, Yahoo, Daum and others[4], and the information about Korean history which they want to see included in Korean history sites is current issues (13%), which represents the highest rate. It is followed by international relations (11%), everyday life (10%), and political events (9%). In particular, the annals come last (4%) on the list of content they want to see included. This demonstrates that information on the annals is adequately provided on many other Korean history sites.

Table 6. Information you want to see included in Korean history sites (unit: %)

---

4. Followed by national institutes' home pages like that of National Institute of Korean History(19%), history information home pages (17%), encyclopedia sites (16%), and individual blogs (12%). In particular, 64% of the group of middle and high school students responded that they use portal sites provided by Naver, Daum and Yahoo, which is much higher than the 32% average answer rate.

In addition, respondents expressed various and substantial requirements and problems through subjective questions asking in what way Korean history sites can advance. Among their suggestions are the opening of new corners where: history lectures for the general public are delivered, historical errors are corrected, specialized history scholars operate Q&A sessions, Korean history research trends at home and abroad and current social issues are provided, and virtual reality can be experienced. Furthermore, history expert groups pointed out that history sites need to provide interesting materials, easy access to such sites, and easy content. Additionally, they need to boost their public relations activities.

The Direction of User-Oriented Korean History Site Development

This section, on the basis of issues drawn from the second chapter's Korean history-related sites and user analysis, suggests new directions for development of user-oriented Korean history sites.

The Development of Sites for Non-history experts

New Korean history sites aimed at ordinary people should be developed in order to provide comprehensive information. Existing Korean history-related sites run by the public sector, which were set up to provide historical information to the entire population, have evolved into just providing historical records for history experts.[5] Although some sites - such as the 600-Year History of Seoul, the Multimedia Jeju Tourism Customs Unabridged, and the Electronic Encyclopedia of Korea Local Culture - provide relatively easy information for ordinary people, they are intended to benefit of their

---

5. Of Korean history-related sites run by pubic sector, typical sites like Korea History On-line, Korean History Database, Korean History Dictionary provide comprehensive historical records, and the sites of The Annals of Choson Dynasty, The Daily Record of Royal Secretariat of Chosun Dynasty, Integrated Data System of Korea's Historic Figures, The History of Korean Independence Movement Online provide historical records on a single subject. Individual Korean history blogs were not originally intended to provide specific historical records, so they are inevitably excluded from our discussion because their intention is quite different from that of the public sector's Korean history sites .

local communities. No coordinated history site exists organized by the public sector for the general public.

Problems arising from Korean history-related sites are vividly shown by analyzing their users. Each group among the respondent groups demanded that the content and system of Korean history sites be popularized and integrated. The group of middle and high students expressed their dissatisfaction saying that they have a difficulty understanding the content of Korean history sites and in getting a comprehensive picture of each era, and foreigners[6] also said that they cannot easily understand Korean historical information through Korean history sites. As a result, and in general, they have come to believe that learning about Korean history is difficult, tedious, and uninteresting. In particular, the group of content producers who find and make popular content has lower interest in, and expectations of, Korean history sites than all the other groups. The future may not be good in terms of whether Korean history sites will be able to increase the number of consumers. That is exactly what was pointed out as a serious problem by the group of history researchers. They suggested that easy Korean history content be provided and public relations for article sites be bolstered as Korean history sites are alienating to the general public.

Consequently, future Korean history sites should provide easy explanations of Korean historical terms and concepts, and add bibliographical introductions to historical records when they provide documents and oral historical records. They should also provide subjects and comprehensive information easily accessible to laypeople and, at the same time, be established in a way to meet the requirements of a wide range of groups by classifying information according to its level. Numerous different methods for delivering information should be sought such as through the provision of history lectures and the creation of virtual worlds so that a user's interest can expand.[7]

For example, we would like to propose a 'history textbook' model. This model can assist in popularizing basic Korean history and supplementing the Korean history curriculum of middle and high school students. As a means of providing the most general and popular Korean history, its basic content can

---

6. In particular, foreigners said that the biggest reasons for them to avoid Korean history sites are the lack of coordinated and easy information about Korean history and the lack of foreign language services.
7. For example, the Korea Epigraph Synthesis Image Information System developed epigraph-related contents in moving images, helping users to more easily understand epigraphs.

consist of a middle school history textbook. Information can be made available by providing successive explanations and linking related materials by appending footnotes to middle school history textbooks. In other words, the explanation of each footnote can be offered successively, in a 'summary-context-evaluation-historical' manner, and related records can be linked to materials in the Korean Studies Database, or that of museums, galleries or other popular content.[8] In addition, on the basis of the annals provided by middle and high school Korean history textbooks and world history textbooks, a function should be developed where users can link significant events in Korean history with contemporaneous events in world history if they insert the date, month, and year in the examination window. It should enable users to comprehensively see Korean history in the context of world history by providing Korean and world history annals together, and be linked to overseas sites as well.

Another proposal is a 'field study' or 'history experience' model[9] as a means providing Korean historical knowledge connected with history, travel and experience. Namely, cultural assets can be divided according to region,[10] period, event, figure, and topic; introductory essays, related introductory images, information on field study places and relevant maps with schedules and topics, transportation, and travel details can also be provided.[11] A function can be added for users to virtually experience historic relics sites or their periods.[12]

---

8. For example, a 'woojungkuk' is linked to: the summary explanation of woojungkuk at the homepage of the Cultural Heritage Administration (http://www.heritage.go.kr/index. jsp) with explanation of the historical context and evaluation by history experts, which in turn is linked to academic conferences at home and abroad, published materials through thesis titles, and a selection of articles and historical records.

9. A history experience model is a model which is required to overcome problems caused by the likelihood that users have a fixed idea about the past and that opinions that are directly provided by producers can be biased.

10. Regional classification is carried out using maps like the Electronic Encyclopedia of Korean Local Culture site of the Academy of Korean Studies.

11. For such 'Field Study Models', the following sites can be helpful: the Electronic Encyclopedia of Korean Local Culture site of the Academy of Korean Studies http://www. grandculture.net/, the 600-year Seoul History site by the Seoul Metropolitan Government http://seoul600.visitseoul.net/, Multimedia Customs Tourism Unabridged by the Jeju Special Self-Governing Province http://jejuro.go.kr/, Museum Portal of Korea by Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism http://www.korea-museum.go.kr/, Cyber Tour into Cultural Properties of Korea National Heritage Online by Culture Heritage Administration http://www.heritage.go.kr/visit/cyber_2008/index.html

12. For such a function, sites of the Museum Portal of Korea by the Ministry of Culture, Sports http://www.korea-museum.go.kr/ and Korea National Heritage Online by Culture Heritage Administration http://www.heritage.go.kr/visit/cyber_2008/index.html can be helpful.

Creating an Environment for Creative History Content Development

These new Korean history sites should be developed so that an environment conducive to the creation of Korean history-related popular content is fostered. As dramas based on Korean history have recently become more popular across the world, the general public's demand, not only for such dramas, but for documentaries, movies, cartoons, art and music related to Korean history is also on the rise. But there are no sites where popular content related to Korean history is introduced and explained, and existing Korean history-related sites are mainly made up of the historical records of politics, figures, cultural assets, and others. As a result, as shown in the survey, the group of content producers has a lower interest in and expectations of history sites than any other group.

What is more, as a variety of historical creations such as dramas, documentaries, and animations based on Korean history have recently attracted attention from the public, their questions are flooding in as to whether those creations are historically true. According to the survey, many people hope that Korean history-related sites will explain dramas based on Korean history, and that forums for discussing disputes over the distortion of Korean history and its correction will be established. However, such demands are not satisfied through existing sites. Therefore, the new Korean history sites should be established so that history information can be provided which will be used for the creation of Korean history-related content.[13] In other words, they should develop a special section for the explanation of popular content using Korean history materials, and existing historical records services and popular content should be mutually linked. For example, we would like to suggest a 'Korean history popular content' model. Basically, it would provide historical information about the background of materials related to popular content such as movies or novels. That is, popular historical content can be offered in accordance with the Korean history annals. Popular content such as movies, dramas, novels, plays, cartoons, games, music, and art would be provided with information on the historical period, figures and events. Corresponding popular content would be linked to original materials.

---

13. For this, the Life History Museum site can be helpful.

Easy Access to Various Subjects

The new Korean history sites should be set up so that ordinary people can have easier access to a variety of subjects. The information provided by existing Korean history-related sites is chiefly made up of the political history of the Joseon Dynasty or the period in which the "open door policy" was adopted. Concepts are delivered primarily through text. As a result, the information on ancient or modern history is insufficient, and historical information on specific topics except for those of politics and historical figures is inadequate, too.

The survey demonstrated that demand for more information from Korean history sites is high. Middle and high school students pointed out that as Korean history sites are far removed from real life, they cannot easily understand what is going on right now in Korea, and foreigners[14] said that information on political, economic and social issues of contemporary Korea is not adequately provided. Most respondents are dissatisfied that they cannot easily get information on current issues like the dispute over the Dokdo islets, the Dongbei Project, and foreign relations, and that they cannot figure out various opinions of scholars on such issues through history sites. They also demanded up-to-date information on international relations, everyday life, religion and art.

Consequently, the Korean history sites developed in the future should be produced so that new interests can be addressed. That is, the content and interpretation of ancient history and current matters of interest, which are not sufficiently provided for in existing Korean history sites, should be extended.[15] On top of that, information on specific topics like Korea's music, art, publications, food, costume, architecture, and science should be provided, and the link to related articles or sites should be made available when providing historical records. Information search services should be

---

14. Foreigners called for easier and more convenient Korean history information through Korean history sites. Specifically, they pointed to difficulties with membership procedures of Korean history sites, articles being downloaded, and materials being sent to overseas by home-delivery service. They also expressed their expectation that all the databases at home and abroad can be systematically linked to each other.
15. As a result, a special section for introducing Korean history research trends needs to be opened because many users want to find up-to-date information on Korean history studies in the Korean academic world (including North Korean academic world), and research trends in Korean history overseas.

made in a way that enables users to have easy access to information they want by developing a wide range of paths where key words, dates, and regions are systematically linked.

For example, we would like to suggest adoption of an 'everyday life' and an 'international relations' model which have recently attracted a lot of attention. At an 'everyday life ' corner, varied information from past to present on everyday topics and lives is provided. The classification method is that classification by period and the classification of costume, music, residence, ritual, and game culture intersect with each other.   Explanations, historical records, pictures, images, and related institutes would be linked to topics. At an 'international relations corner', information on international relations of each period and each nation is provided, and information on the causes, course, consequences, effects, and interpretations of major wars can also be provided.

Providing a Foundation for Two-way Mutual Communication

Fresh Korean history sites should be developed so that two-way mutual communications between users and users, users and providers, and providers and providers are available. Existing Korean history sites don't provide any method in which users can ask a question, bring up a discussion topic and/or call for a correction concerning Korean history. The group of specialized history researchers is also prevented from offering recent research achievements. Further, existing content is not supplemented and corrected. The Korean history content of overseas sites doesn't in the least represent recent research achievements and interests.Survey respondents criticized the one-way style of Korean history sites and the resulting rigidity and partiality of their content. They say existing Korean history sites are intended only for Korean people and they are a fixed, passive, repetitive, isolated, exclusive and past-oriented means of information delivery.

Therefore, the Korean history sites developed in the future should secure talented and creative full-time staff to plan, manage, coordinate and correct the content of their sites, and increase the number of staff in charge of running sites. A program should be developed in which module production, correction of annals and history maps are available all the time. The content and systems of history sites should be continuously corrected and strengthened by arranging an annual and midterm development plan for sites and providing an evaluation method. With those new systems, new Korean history sites should

provide a wide range of historical interpretations and viewpoints, and a corner should be established where questions can be raised and discussions brought up about historical dramas, domestic research, overseas research, ideological partiality, content, and their correction can be suggested.

So, we would like to suggest a 'two-way communication' model.[16] A participation section, question section, discussion section, and corners for content-sharing and image lectures would be set up, where users can communicate with other users and producers.[17] The question section, discussion section, and content-sharing corner can be classified according to topic and era. In particular, a frequently-asked question room can be established for those questions or other important current affairs. At an image corner, users would listen to various lectures on Korean history through image. The corner could be developed so that the application for and introduction of lectures would be available, which should help users understand those lectures through statistics, graphs, maps and voices.

Conclusion

This article examines the problems and limits of current Korean history-related sites by analyzing Korean sites dealing with history and surveying both Koreans and foreigners who use them. On the basis of the survey, we analyzes users' tendencies and expectations, and then, based on the survey results, we suggest future directions for user-oriented sites to be developed in conformity with users' expectations.

First, new Korean history sites should be developed in a way that provides coordinated information for laypeople. They should also provide subjects and coordinated information to which common people can have easy access and at the same time, be established in a way to meet the requirements of a wide range of groups by classifying information according

---

16. This model would benefit from the UCC participation plaza corner of the Korea National Heritage Online site http://www.heritage.go.kr/index.jsp and the question corner of the North-east Asian History Foundation http://www.historyfoundation.or.kr

17. It would be a good idea to reward users who share materials or roll out user events in order to attract their participation. For the management of a discussion room, one can refer to the management rules of 'Wikipedia historian' of Wikipedia. On the Wikipedia web site, small communities are set up under discussion rooms. Community managers are replaced after a certain amount of time.

to its level. Additionally, numerous methods for providing content should be explored such as history lectures for ordinary citizens, electronic books, 3D images, pictures, images in motion, and creation of virtual worlds so that users' interest can be enhanced.

Second, new Korean history sites should be developed so that an environment conducive to the creation of Korean history-related popular content is fostered. The popular content should provide information on the background period, figures and events of the movies, dramas, novels, plays, cartoons, games, music, and art. Corresponding popular content should be linked together to augment the users' experience.

Third, the new Korean history sites should be set up so that ordinary people can have easier access to a variety of subjects. That is, the content and interpretation of ancient history and current matters of interest, which are lacking in existing Korean history sites, should be extended. Additionally, information on specific topics like Korea's music, art, publications, food, costume, architecture, and science should be provided, and links to related articles or sites should be available when providing historical records.

Fourth, the new Korean history sites should be developed so that two-way mutual communications between users and users, users and providers, and providers and providers are available. They should provide a wide range of historical interpretations and viewpoints, and a corner should be established where questions can be raised and discussions brought up about history dramas, domestic research, overseas research, biased content, then the correction of such content should be made.

References

Kim, Chang-Il. 2009. Hangukminsokbaekgwasajeonui pyeonchan banghyanggwa jeonmang (Directions for compilation and future prospects of the Encyclopedia of Korean Folk). *Silcheonminsokhakyungu* 13: 211-248.

Kim, Hyun-Joo. 2005. Chodeung yeoksa hakseupeul wihan website gaebal hyeonwhang (Websites for elementary history classrooms). *Journal of the Korean Association of History Education* 1: 271-295.

Kwon, Tae Kyung, 2003. Interneteul tonghan yeoksa ihaewa yeoksa gyoyuk (History through the Internet – understanding and education). *Journal of Student Guidance* No. 7: 47-66.

Lee, Nam-Hee. 2003. Inmunhakgwa jisikjeongbowha: jisikjeongbo jawan kwanlibeopgwa hanguk yeoksajeongbo tonghap siseutemeul jungsimeuro (Humanities and knowledge information: focusing on the law concerned with knowledge information resources and Korean history information). *Humancontent* 1: 117-130.

Moon, Byung Chae, and Hyun Wook Park. 2003. GIS gibanui munwha database guchuk bangan yeongu (A Study of the model for constructing a cultural database system). *The Journal of GIS Association of Korea* 1(2): 185-201.

Oh, Pill Woo, Duk Hui Koo, Yung Sik Kim, and Tae Young Kim. 1999. VRMLeul iyonhhan waep giban gasang hyeonsil yeoksa hakseup koseuwaeeoui seolgye mit guhyeon (Design and implementation of web - based courseware for virtual history learning using VRML) *Journal of Korean Association of Computer Education* 2(1): 114- 123.

Park Soon-Joon. 2004. Yeoksagwa meoltimidieo gyosuhakseupjaryo gaebal: junhseyureopui seongdanggwa seongchae tambang (Development of Multimedia Teaching and Learning Sources for Historical Education: In Search of Cathedrals and Castles in Medieval Europe). *Humancontent* 4: 144-171.

Park, Min-jeong, and, Chong-Kyung Lee. 2000. Interneteul whalyonghan yeosasueupmohyeong yeongu (How to use the Internet in history class- A case of world history class in middle school), *Journal of Research Institute of Curriculum Instruction* 4(1): 75-94.

Ryu, In-Young, Eun-Young Ahn, and Tae-Won Kim. 2009. Gasang hyeonsileul iyonghan yeoksa hakseup kondaencheuui guhyeon (Implementation of historical educational content using virtual reality). *Journal of Digital Contents Society* 9(8): 32-40.

Ryu, Jun-Beom. 2008. Yeoksajaryo jeonsanhwawa saryo bipan (Computerizing historical materials and critiquing historical documents). *Critical Studies on Modern Korean History* 20: 375-395

Culture Content Site(http://www.culturecontent.com/)
Cyber Chosun Dynasty(http://www.1392.org/)
Digital History Reader(DHR) (http://www.dhr.history.vt.edu/)
EncyKorea (http://www.encykorea.com/EncyKorea.htm)
HISTOPIA(http://www.histopia.net/zbxe/home)
History and Sociology Exploration by Haesuk Kim(http://khskk7.com.ne.kr/)
History Education by Changho Lee (http://chang256.new21.net)

History Love by Kunho Park(http://guno.pe.kr/)

History Special(http://www.kbs.co.kr/history/collect.shtml)

History Stories by Golmal (http://history.new21.net/history.php3)

Integrated data System for Korea's Historic Figures (http://people.aks.ac.kr)

Korea Epigraph Synthesis Image Information System(http://gsm.nricp.go.kr)

Korean History Database (http://db.history.go.kr)

Korean History Dictionary(http://yoksa.aks.ac.kr/jsp/cc/Directory.jsp?gb=1)

Korean History On-line(http://www.koreanhistory.or.kr/)

Korean History & Culture Research Database (http://www.excavation.co.kr/)

Korea National Heritage Online (http://www.heritage.go.kr)

Korea 100-year History Picture Museum (http://www.nojum.co.kr/)

Life History Museum(http://life.ugyo.net)

Modern Korea-Japan Diplomatic Materials (http://siminlib.koreanhistory.or.kr)

Modern Korean Textbook Site(http://home.knue.ac.kr/~history)

The Multimedia Jeju Customs Tourism Unabridged(http://jejuro.go.kr/)

Museum Portal of Korea (http://www.korea-museum.go.kr)

National Archives of Korea(http://busan.archives.go.kr/)

Northeast Asian History Foundation(http://www.historyfoundation.kr/)

Sociology Class by Yongho Ko (http://very.good.to/)

Seoul City Culture Information Network, Seoul History Compilation Committee (http://history.seoul.go.kr/)

The Annals of Choson Dynasty(http://sillok.history.go.kr)

The Daily Records of Royal Secretariat of Chosun Dynasty(http://sjw.history.go.kr)

The Electronic Encyclopedia of Korean Grand Culture (http://www.grandculture.net/main/main.asp)

The History of Korean Independence Movement Online (http://search.i815.or.kr)

The Merits Electronic History Material Site (http://e-gonghun.mpva.go.kr)

The Oral History of Korean Arts (http://oralhistory.arko.or.kr/oral/main.asp)

The Research Group for the People without History in the 20th Century (http://www.minjung20.org/main/)

Ugyo Net (http://www.ugyo.net)

Women's History Knowledge System(http://www.womenshistory.re.kr:7070)

Jeong Mi-Ryang received her doctoral degree in pedagogy from the Academy of Korean Studies in 2006 with a dissertation on "The Liberal Culture Movement by Korean Students in Japan in the 1920s". She is now a senior researcher at the Academy of Korean Studies. She has published journal articles including "The Japanese Support Project for Korean Students in Japan and its features in the 1920s" and "The Education of Koreans in Manchuria and their Experience during Japanese Colonial Rule."

Kihl Tae-Suk received her doctoral degree in literature from the Korean literature department of the Yonsei Graduate School in 2002. She now works as an adjunct professor for the Culture and Art Graduate School at Sang Myoung University where she teaches students about digital storytelling. She has published recent articles such as "A Proposition of Incorporating Time and Space in a Virtual World" and "The Past and Contemporary Meaning of the *Hangiltujaengnorae* (Independence Songs against Japanese Imperialism)".

Abstract

This article examines the problems and limits of current history-related sites by analyzing Korean domestic sites dealing with history, surveying both Koreans and foreigners who use them, then analyzes users' tendencies and expectations on the basis of the survey, and suggests new directions for development of user-oriented history sites. The user-oriented history site, which is opened in conformity with the requirements of the general public, is expected to raise their usage rates and satisfaction when they log on to the site, and furthermore be a stepping stone on which cultural content like art, film, games, and characters will be created.