

KOREAN WAVE AND KOREAN STUDIES IN OCEANIA AND SOUTHEAST ASIA: YESTERDAY, TODAY AND TOMORROW

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1. THE KOREAN WAVE IN ASIA

The rapid expansion of the Korean contemporary culture and cultural products throughout East Asia since the mid-1990s has been named as 'the Korean Wave'. The Korean contemporary cultural products had been spread firstly to countries with the Confucius traditions, but later to countries with other cultural backgrounds. In Northeast Asia, the Korean contemporary cultural products gained popularity in China and Taiwan in the late 1990s and then in Japan in the early 2000. In Southeast Asia, the trend started with Vietnam in the late 1990s and spread to other countries such as Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia where Confucius traditions are less apparent. Although it is an early stage, the competitiveness of the Korean films gained recognition in Europe and the US, consequential to the robust growth of the domestic film market.

Among these areas, Southeast Asia warrants special attention. The Korean Wave in Southeast Asia has not only ended the doubts and debates that Confucian cultural background is the only key factor of its development. In addition, it also confirmed that competitiveness of Korean cultural products in fact spread through the entire region of East Asia regardless of Confucian traditions as a metaphor of the Korean Wave.

In Southeast Asia, there have been mutual positive influences between the Korean Studies programs and the Korean Wave. The Korean Wave created positive image of Korea along with the economic success of Korea among the general public as well as among the student communities. The Korean Studies programs in turn stimulated interests in the Korea Wave among the society. Although the Korean Wave is less influential in Australia, it has made an important contribution to the growth and expansion of the Korean Studies program, through overseas students from the countries such as China and Southeast Asia, where the Korean Wave is significant.

2. WHERE WE ARE.

In Australia and Southeast Asia, the environment for Korean Studies has never been more favourable than the past 10 years, thanks to the Korean Wave. With this as background, let us look at the current status of Korean Studies in Oceania and Southeast Asia.

The history of Korean Studies and Korean language education in Australia can be divided into three periods: (1) The “embryonic” period until the end of 1980s; (2) The “rapid growth” period in the 1990s, when the number of universities offering programs in Korean Studies and Korean Language education increased rapidly, and support from the Korea Research Foundation (KRF), The Academy of Korean Studies (AKS) and the Korea Foundation (KF) and other institutions increased accordingly; (3) The period of “stabilisation and stagnation” since 2000.

Until now, Australian universities have received the supports from Korea in three categories: creation of teaching positions, grants for research projects and conference funding.

Creation of teaching positions in most of the leading universities, including two chairs in Korean Studies. The universities which offer the Korean Studies teaching programs are shown in Table 1. Thanks to the creation of teaching positions, it was possible to create and offer various teaching programs in Korean language and studies and Strengthen the status of Korean Studies in the institutions. Yet, these benefits have remained relatively parochial, not spreading to wide areas.

Table 1, Universities in Oceania and Southeast Asia with Korean Program

Country	NO of Universities offering Korean Programs	Leading Universities
Australia	7	University of New South Wales, Sydney University, Australian National University, Monash University, Curtin University of Technology, Griffiths University, University of Queensland
New Zealand	1	University of Auckland,
Vietnam	8	USSH Hanoi, USSH Hochiminh city
Thailand	16	Chulalongkorn University, Burapha University, Prince of Songkla University, Srinakaran Wirot University, Silpakorn University
Malaysia	5	University of Malaya, UKM, UPM, UITM
Indonesia	3	University of Indonesia, Gadjah Mada University

The second category is the support towards various projects, including scholarships, opportunities for in-country training for students and scholars,

development of teaching material, academic conferences and various research projects. Thanks to these support for research projects, Tangible outcomes have arisen from individual research projects. However, most of the individual projects take place sporadically and have not lead to subsequent research projects.

In Australia, three Korean Studies research centres have been operating. (1) Korea-Australasia Research Centre at the University of New South Wales has conducted interdisciplinary research projects in wide areas such as social sciences, business and economics, language education and other humanities. (2) ANU Centre for Korean Studies at the, Australian National University has focused mainly on research in history and religion and (3) Australian Centre for Korean Studies, Griffiths University focuses mainly on economic research. In August 2008, a new Korea Institute was established at the Australian National University which includes former ANU Centre for Korean Studies.

In addition, Korean Studies Association of Australasia (KSAA) was established in 1994, and biennial conferences have been organized since 1999, where scholars in the region participated and presented academic papers.

Overall, Korean Language programs in Australia have been working relatively well in the universities. However, several areas warrant attention in the areas of research:

The first is a need to conduct long-term research projects. Most of the existing research projects were conducted sporadically, without a long-term perspective. Second, small research projects have not been used to secure large scale research funds from the Australian government. Third, in most institutions, there have not been effective links between education and research in Korean studies.

In Southeast Asia, Korean Studies entered its embryonic period in the 1990s, as Korea emerged as an important trade and investment partner. In this region, the countries that demonstrated leadership in Korean studies and Korean language education are Thailand, Vietnam, Malaysia and Indonesia. As of September 2007, 31 universities in these four countries have introduced the Korean Language/Studies teaching programs as shown in Table 1.

The current status of Korean Studies in Southeast Asia (Vietnam, Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia) can be summarised as follows. (1) Apart from Vietnam, the number of students majoring in Korean language and Korean studies is relatively small. (2) In most universities outside Vietnam, Korean Studies are struggling between Japanese and Chinese studies, which have long histories and efficient networks. In most universities, research projects in Korean studies have not been very active. (3) There is an absolute shortage of qualified teachers in the universities, although a number of postgraduate students who studied in Korea have returned and joined as teaching staff.

Universities in Southeast Asia have received a significant amount of support from the institutions in Korea as follows. (1) The major area for support has been the provision of lecturers and teachers for Korean language program. So far, substantial efforts have been made by local universities to raise lecturers in Korean Language, most of who have been sent to Korea to receive postgraduate education. (2) In some cases, research support was given to selected universities while conference support was also given so that scholars may visit Southeast Asian countries.

Compared with the current status of Korean language teaching, there has been a relative shortage of research projects and research outcomes in Korean studies in Southeast Asia. Furthermore, there has been a shortage of scholars conducting research on Korea as their primary field of research area. A relatively small number of research projects on Korea have been conducted jointly between scholars in Southeast Asia and outside the region. The links between research and teaching needs to be developed. Active research programs will enrich the contents of Korean studies education, and will help to produce the next generation of scholars majoring in Korean Studies, outside the language education.

Korean Studies Association of Southeast Asia (KSASA) was established in 2005, with the joint initiatives of 8 universities in the region including USSH Hanoi, USSH Hochiminh City and KAREC-UNSW. KSASA have been holding its biennial conferences and the 3rd KSASA conference was held in Bangkok in October 2008.

3. WHERE WE WILL BE

What is the desirable path for growth of Korean Studies in the region for the next decade?

Institutions in Southeast Asia and Oceania and those in Korea might adopt different strategies for the promotion and growth of Korean Studies. Institutions and Government Agents in Korea have provided supports to overseas Korean Studies, but the main focus of efforts might have been to replicate Korean Studies in Korea at an overseas location. This might be summarised as “globalisation of Korean Studies”. However, Korean Studies in different locations in the world might reflect differences in the local culture and society. Therefore, expansion of overseas Korean studies from a local point of view can be summarized as “Localisation of Korean Studies” in each region/country. This view emphasizes the establishment and growth in each country/region, for localisation of Korean studies in the region.

When Korean studies are globalised, we will see many international research networks developed in the region. International collaborative research projects will be designed, and there will be exchange of students across the countries, both undergraduate and postgraduate. Korean Studies Associations will prosper covering

many countries in the region, which offer various international conferences in diverse disciplines along with international conferences organised by individual institutions. Many research articles will be submitted to academic journals in Korean studies, and many books will be published in international languages.

Yet, this “Globalisation of Korean studies” can only be achieved through “Localisation of Korean Studies” in each country. Teaching programs and research projects in Korean studies can be supported by the KRF and KF in the initial stage. However, it cannot be sustained long term by relying only on visitors from Korea. Therefore, localisation of Korean studies means, firstly, development of researchers and teachers based in each country, and secondly successfully locally bringing up the next generation of researchers and teachers. We are just about to taste the fruit of our ten years’ effort. In particular, the second generation of scholars and teachers would play a very important role in countries where English is not the first language. The role of those who are bilingual in Korean and their mother tongue will be doubly important.

The other dimension of localisation would include various aspects of the status of Korean studies in each country, including the recognition of Korean studies as an academic discipline, the breadth and depth of research output, the number and quality of research students and the number of teaching units and staff members at educational institutions.

These globalisation and localisation processes of Korean studies are reinforcing each other. Without localisation, international exchanges will be only in one direction, hence globalisation cannot be achieved in a true sense. On the other hand, localisation can be achieved and reinforced through globalisation.

As the two processes reinforce each other, strategies are indispensable. Countries on a large scale and individual universities on a smaller scale can have different development paths in Korean studies depending on the strategies adopted, and the practical plans made for each step. The resources given by the provider of research grants and supports such as the AKS and the KF, will be a lot more efficiently used if they are utilised with appropriate strategies.

While Korean studies in Korea tend to focus more on “History, Literature and Philosophy” researching on the concept of “Korean-ness”, Korean Studies outside Korea should be defined as an academic discipline as a “regional study”, as is the case with “Chinese studies” and “Japanese studies”. The main interests in Korean studies of the local governments and universities might lie more in social sciences and ‘business’ side of Korean studies as well as languages and Humanities, which, they might believe, will make more direct contributions to the international and business relations with Korea, such as politics and public administration, economics and

management, culture and culture industries. Language education and Humanities – Based Korean Studies must be the cornerstone of Study of Korea, but the Korean Studies as a ‘Regional Study’ should encompass a lot wider disciplines.

Countries in the region endeavour to build human resources and upgrade the research potentials with a view to contribute to their policy formation and international relations, through research and education in the social sciences and business side of Korean studies, rather than merely focusing on the “humanities-based Korean studies.” On the other hand, students of Korean studies are mostly interested in the business side of Korean studies, which they believe are directly related to the job prospects. This social sciences and business-side of Korean studies might be referred to as ‘Applied’ Korean Studies.

These two trends conflict with each other due to the differences of their focus. As noted before, the infrastructure and human resources in the ‘humanities-based’ Korean studies have been given more emphasis, although they are still relatively underdeveloped compared with the international standards. However as far as the research and educational base in “Applied” Korean studies, most institutions experience severe shortages in both human resources and research expertise. In general, the Korean studies educational programs in Australia have shown stagnation, due to the underdevelopment of courses on “Applied” Korean studies, such as business, international relations, cultures and so forth. Consequently, the Korean studies educational programs are not well developed compared with Japanese and Chinese studies, which include both language courses and applied subjects. Some Korean studies programs in the region experience a sluggish growth in enrolments, if not a reduction, due to uncertainties in job prospects, partly resulting from inadequate human resources and infrastructures in ‘applied’ Korean studies.

So far, policies for globalisation of Korean studies have contributed mainly to the expansion of “Humanities-based” Korean studies. Yet, the geographical differences (in particular those between North America and Southeast Asia) have been overlooked. Consequently, Korean studies in Southeast Asia have not been effectively linked to Korean studies on a global scale, and remain relatively isolated from the rest of the world.

The two trends of “globalisation” and “localisation” need to be reconciled through systematic efforts, so that synergies between these two trends can be created for development and expansion of the research and educational base in Southeast Asia and Oceania. Therefore, a new paradigm of ‘glocalisation’ needs to be adopted, combining ‘globalisation’ efforts of the Korean institutions and “localisation” needs of local institutions and governments. The harmony between these two trends will help to induce growth and expansion of Korean studies in the region, in terms of both

quantity and quality. In order to alleviate the mismatch between globalisation and localisation efforts, a first step is to satisfy the “local internal conditions” and to align the trend with the “globalisation” efforts of the institutions in Korea.

Therefore, one of the first steps for harmonious adjustment between the two trends would be to create research projects in Applied Korean studies. Korea-Australasia Research Centre (KAREC) has been awarded a Korean Studies Institution Grant (KSIG) in August 2006, trying to establish a regional network linking Oceania and Southeast Asia. Under the scheme of KSIG, KAREC and the leading universities in Southeast Asia has conducted collaborative research projects.

4. WHAT DO YOU HAVE?

If glocalisation of Korean Studies in the region is our goals, how do we get there? What options are available to us?.

Most of us here in this room belong to a university, which has a Korean teaching unit and/or a research centre for Korean studies. Therefore, the first source of support is our universities, albeit their degree of commitment might vary. The second source is the governments and other private foundations. In Australia, both the Korean and the Australian governments have been generous supporters of Korean Studies in the region. The Australia-Korea Foundation and Australian Research Council have also provided research grants in Australia. In each of the countries in Southeast Asia, the governments have provided similar support. There are other organizations which support Korean studies such as Korea International Cooperation Agency (KOICA). KOICA has been despatching teachers of Korean language and studies.

The third source of support is what has been created by ourselves. The Korean Studies Association of Southeast Asia (KSASA) and The Korean Studies Association of Australasia (KSAA) provide excellent opportunities for reporting research output and promoting collaborative research projects. The last source is the corporate sector which supports various research projects and cultural events.

Although each at the above institutions provides support and forums for Korean studies in the region, we still experience a shortage of resources and limited opportunities, as mentioned before. We, therefore, compete not only in our pursuit of excellence in producing high quality research material and highly qualified graduates from our institutions, but also in getting access to recourses.

Competition to a certain extent is both necessary and desirable. Each university should compete with one another in terms of academic standing and student recruitments. We all compete both on an individual scale and on an institutional scale, to produce high quality research output. On the other hand, we are not only competing among ourselves. We compete with scholars in other disciplines. We also compete as

a group with the scholars in Korean studies based in other regions, especially in North America. As it is true that we all are responsible for our own success, the onus is on us as individuals, as far as our future and success is concerned.

Given the limited resources, the vast amount of tasks to achieve and fierce competition in this region, what is the way forward for us? Here comes our second paradox, a paradox of cooperation and competition. In Korea and North America, Korean studies has been established in Korea its momentum for growth and development. Therefore, the competition might be enough to create stimulus and energy for future growth. Yet, in our region, where Korean studies still suffer from a severe shortage of resources, competition as our only option might not warrant a rosy and prosperous future. To achieve globalisation and localisation of Korean studies in each of the countries in our region, we certainly need a lot more than individual efforts based on a competitive spirit.

Cooperation and collaboration, therefore, is the key to our strategy. We need to collaborate among us in the region and with those outside the region to achieve globalisation and localisation of Korean studies. That is why cooperation and competition is so important to all of us, as it will enable us to achieve a lot more mileage with the same amount of resources.

5. HOW TO GET THERE?

What are the possible areas of cooperation? Let me begin by summarising some of the points identified by our colleagues today.

<Universities and Research Centres>

The first area is teaching collaboration. We can develop teaching curricula and materials together, exchanging resources and experiences while sharing costs and risks. It was also suggested that we could share teachers and even students.

The second area is collaborative research projects. Collaboration can be established in terms of across different disciplines, across different universities, and across different countries. Considering the paucity of the number of scholars in each discipline within Korean studies, this is extremely important.

The third area of cooperation is professional training, including continuing education after the students' tertiary studies. Diverse areas can be covered, including training of secondary school teachers of the Korean language and short-term courses for the business sector.

For these types of cooperation, research centres in the region can play catalytic roles in designing collaborative projects, pooling the resources and applying for funds

together. KAREC, UNSW has been working hard for the past eight years to create synergy of cooperation among the leading institutions in Oceania and Southeast Asia.

<Academic Conferences>

On the other hand, we have two major international academic conferences relevant to our region, Korean Studies Association of Southeast Asia (KSASA) Biennial Conferences, Korean Studies Association of Australia (KSAA) Biennial Conference, and Pacific-Asia Conference on Korean Studies (PACKS), both of which have been supported by the Korea Research Foundation. The venues of the KSASA and KSAA conference will rotate among major cities in Southeast Asia and Oceania respectively, while PACKS locations move across a wider region. Yet, we need to invest our energy and resources into these conferences, because these can and do provide us with valuable opportunities to report our research findings and encourage further research.

Therefore, I would like to encourage scholars in Korean studies in each region to become members of KSASA and KSAA, attend the conferences, and try to participate in PACKS as well. Participation in such conferences will certainly help each and every one of us to achieve globalisation and localisation of Korean studies, by meeting scholars doing similar research, and listening to different research ideas.

Yet, we should not try to remain an enclave of Koreanists in Australasia, by pursuing only parochialism among us. Korean Studies should grow hand in hand with other areas of study. To this end, participation at conferences such as Asian Studies Association of Australia (ASAA) conference should to be encouraged. Furthermore, Koreanists should also try to participate at conferences in each discipline, to broaden their perspectives and extend their influence.

<Government>

For the past 20 years, both the governments of countries in the region, including Korea have been generous supporters of Korean Studies in the region.

The AKF and KF will continue to provide support and furthermore AKS will also work as the global hub of Korean Studies as a strategic partner. Sharing the information on Korean studies with other institutions such as KOICA, will assist all the institutions to build strategic plans, and make efficient use of limited resources. Each university and research centre would need different types of support, depending on their stage of development and their educational, social and cultural backgrounds.

These institutions could also consider the ways that might best assist us to achieve glocalisation of Korean studies, in their evaluation of research grants and applications. Perhaps, collaborative projects would help serve this purpose might be given some priority.

<Postgraduate Students>

As mentioned before, for both glocalisation of Korean studies, each country cannot rely solely on the scholars who are trained in other countries. For Southeast Asian countries where English is not the official language, the problem is more acute. Therefore, special attention needs to be given to bringing up a future generation of scholars in the region.

For this purpose, priority areas of support are listed here. First, creation of generous scholarship will be one of the priority areas of support. Postgraduate studies, particularly a PhD study, require substantial energy and resources. Therefore, we need to work together to create PhD scholarships for the future generation of scholars in Korean studies. We can also try to utilise the existing links among the Universities in Australia and New Zealand, the universities in Southeast Asia and the universities in Korea. We should also encourage students to visit Korea both short-term and long-term.

Second, we should encourage research students to participate in conferences. The KSASA, KSAA conferences and PACKS will give these future leaders precious opportunities to be exposed, challenged and stimulated. Today's research students are the only group of people from whom tomorrow's leaders in Korean studies will come. And if we are aiming at localisation as well as globalisation of Korean studies in the region, this is extremely important.. As far as resources permit, we need to encourage research students as much as possible, as KSAA and KSASA has been trying so far. For example, we can create a separate forum for postgraduate research students, or give prizes for the best theses in Korean studies in the region.

6. HERE AND NOW FOR THE FUTURE

In this paper, I used two principles as a backbone of the future direction of Korean studies in the region: globalisation and localisation (glocalisation); and cooperation and competition.

Yet, both of these are not easy. While we need to bear the costs today, the benefits will appear after a long period of time. So, only when all of us are committed to the cause and persevere together, can we taste the fruit in the future.

To achieve glocalisation, we need to consider carefully how we should balance our budgets in funding the activities which will show the short-term results against the activities which will help to bring up future generations of Korean studies specialists. Strategic planning is urgently needed at both the funding institutions, and the receiving institutions. KAREC has been working hard and will continue to strive for this cause, but strategic planning on this front requires a lot wider efforts than KAREC can provide alone.

Considering the limited resources available to us, we should also think carefully how we can utilise them through cooperation, while competing with each other in the pursuit of excellence. Cooperation and collaboration, therefore, is another key to our strategy. We need to collaborate among us in the region and with those outside the region to achieve globalisation and localisation of Korean studies.

No one needs to teach us how to compete, as competition is built in our system and our thinking. However, as cooperation doesn't come naturally, it needs to be created by ourselves. No one else will teach us to cooperate. So we need to learn how to work with other scholars and institutions. And, to cooperate with those from other cultural and social backgrounds, we need to be patient and persevering, and most importantly we need to be humble towards one another.