Transnational Cultural Activities among Korean Immigrants in the New York-New Jersey Area: A Content Analysis

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Abstract

This study examines Korean immigrants’ transnational cultural events in the New York-New Jersey area that occurred in 2010 by analyzing articles published in two major Korean dailies.

A content analysis of the newspaper articles shows that there were 110 transnational Korean cultural events in the year. Data analyses focus on classifying transnational cultural events in five major categories by cultural genre and introducing major examples in each category. Events related to performing arts, including music, dances, musicals and plays, comprise the largest category with 47, followed by fine arts and other related fields (calligraphy, photographing and fashion shows) (N=24), food and food festivals (N=19), language and literature (N=12) and others (N=8). Music and dance performances also drew much larger Korean audiences than other types of transnational events. Thus they had a much greater impact on Korean immigrants as a whole. This study based on a content analysis of newspaper articles has the advantage over other types of studies using the personal interview or survey because it provides a general picture of the overall prevalence of transnational cultural events that occurred in a particular Korean community in the given year. It contributes to the field of immigrant studies because researchers of contemporary immigrants to the United States have neglected to study immigrants’ ethnic cultural activities in general and transnational cultural activities in particular. It also significantly contributes to studies of Korean immigrants in the United States because there is no systematic study of Korean immigrants’ transnational activities.

Key words: Korean Immigrants in the New York-New Jersey Area; Korean Cultural Activities in the New York-New Jersey Area; Immigrants’ Transnational Ties; Immigrants’ Ethnic Cultural Activities
I. Introduction

Until the early 1990s, researchers of immigrants and their children in the U.S., with a few exceptions, had focused on their incorporations in American society with some attention to their attachment to the ethnic community. However, since publication of a path-breaking book by Glick Schiller, Basch, and Blanc-Szanton (1992), social scientists have intensively examined immigrants’ transnational linkages to their countries of origin. In fact, “transnational ties,” “transnational attachment” or “transnational social fields” is one of the popular topics in the field of immigration over the last two decades. Several books and numerous articles focusing on immigrants’ and their children’s transnational linkages have been published (Faist 2000; Itzigsohn 2000; Itzigsohn et al, 1999; Glick Schiller et al 1992; Guarnizo 1998; Guarnizo et al, 2003; Landolt 2001; Levitt 20010; Ong 1999; Portes 2001, 2003; Portes et al, 1999; Smith 2006 and Yang 2006). Its popularity is demonstrated by the fact that two major social science journals specializing in international migration and ethnicity devoted special issues to immigrants’ transnational ties to their homeland, Ethnic and Racial Studies devoted a special issue focusing on the topic in 1999, and four years later International Migration Review published an extensive special issue on the same issue.

Researchers of immigrants’ transnational linkages to their home countries have examined several different forms of transnational ties: economic, political, social, cultural and religious. They have paid far more attention to the economic and political forms of transnationalism and have neglected to examine the cultural form (Faist 2000; Guarnizo 1998; Guarnizo et al, 2003; Itzigsohn 2000; Landolt 2001; Ong 1999; Portes et al, 2002; Yang 2006).
Transnational studies in the U.S. have also heavily focused on Latino and Caribbean immigrant groups, partly because presumably by virtue of their proximity to their home countries they maintain stronger transnational ties than other immigrant groups. Although there are several large Asian immigrant groups in the U.S., transnational scholars have paid little attention to Asian immigrants’ transnational linkages to their home countries (Ong 1999; Yang 2006).

This study intends to bridge this gap in research on immigrants’ transnational linkages by focusing on Korean immigrants’ transnational cultural activities that occurred in the New York-New Jersey area in 2010. Immigrants’ transnational activities involve the circular movements, the movements from their settlement country to the home country and those the other way around. Their transnational economic activities far more often involve the movement from their settlement country to their home country, that is, sending their remittances to, and run businesses in, their home country. By contrast, their transnational cultural activities in most of the cases involve the movement the other way around (Portes et al. 1999). Immigrants’ individual transnational cultural activities usually include the following two forms: their consumption of home-country cultural contents in their community through transnational media and their participation in transnational cultural performances made available in their community by the visits of cultural specialists from their home country.

Korean immigrants’ and their children’s transnational cultural activities often involve their movements to their home country, mostly at the organizational level. For example, members of Korean cultural organizations, such as Korean Writers’ Association and Korean calligraphy associations, have participated in
annual national competitions held in Korea with their artistic or literary workers, with some of them having won awards. They have also participated in literary, artistic and Korean-language conferences held in Korea. Several Korean roots education organizations have also annually sent 1.5- and second-generation children to Korea during the summer vacation for cultural tours and identity education.

But relatively small numbers of Korean immigrants and younger-generation Koreans have participated in these transnational cultural activities practiced in their home country. By contrast, as well be shown later, most Korean immigrants and a large proportion of younger-generation Koreans in the New York-New Jersey area seem to have annually participated in transnational Korean cultural activities practiced in the area. Moreover, it is more difficult to examine Korean immigrants’ transnational events that occur in Korea because they are often not reported in Korean local dailies here in New York. We need to interview many Korean cultural and roots education organizations in the New York-New Jersey area to examine Korean Americans’ transnational Korean cultural activities that occur in Korea. For these reasons, in this study I have decided to focus on Korean immigrants’ transnational activities that occurred only in the New York-New Jersey area in 2010.

To examine the extent to which members of a particular immigrant group consume or depend upon cultural materials from transnational ethnic media, such as dramas, dances and popular songs, for their recreational activities, we should conduct a survey study. We can ask the respondents how often and how many hours per day they watch ethnic media and what are popular cultural programs they watch. To examine the extent to which immigrants engage in transnational cultural activities in host cities, we could use a survey
study. But a content analysis of ethnic newspaper articles focusing on transnational cultural activities performed in the community in a given year seems to be a better research method. This method would produce more interesting findings about different types of transnational cultural activities performed in an immigrant community in a given year. For this reason, I have utilized this content analysis technique.

I have used articles published in Korea Central Daily New York and Korea Times New York, the two major Korean dailies in the New York-New Jersey area in 2010. These dailies seem to have reported the predominant majority of major Korean immigrants’ Korean cultural activities, including transnational cultural activities. I define Korean immigrants’ transnational Korean cultural activities as those performed or exhibited by one or more Korean individual visitors or an organization from Korea mainly for Korean Americans in the area. When Korean visitors performed, exhibited or displayed Korean cultural products mainly for the non-Korean audience, I have not included these cultural events because this paper focuses on Korean immigrants’ participation in transnational cultural activities. Also, I have not included Korean visitors’ musical performances of classical music or their exhibitions of Western paintings, even if the majority of the audience consisted of Korean Americans because performances of classical music or exhibitions of Western paintings do not belong to Korean cultural activities.

This study is part of a broad study that examines New York Korean immigrants’ Korean cultural activities and their effects on New Yorkers the author has been involved in over the last two and a half years. For this broad study, two research assistants and I have personally interviewed over 50 Korean cultural organizations, other ethnic organizations, Korean language
In analyzing Korean immigrants’ transnational cultural activities, I have focused on the following factors. First of all, I have classified transnational cultural activities into different genres to see what types of events are more prevalent than others. I have classified transnational Korean cultural activities into five categories: (1) Korean performing arts (music, dances, plays, and movies), (2) fine arts, calligraphy, ceramic arts and photography, (3) food and food festivals, (4) literature and language, and (5) others. Second, I have paid special attention to particular Korean organizations in the New York-New Jersey area or Korea that arranged or sponsored transnational cultural events. Third, I have discussed the magnitude of the impact of each genre of cultural events in terms of the size of participants in them and the popular culture vs. high culture. When the cultural component belongs to popular culture as in the cases of music/dance performances and food festivals, it can have a greater impact on the entire Korean immigrant population. But transnational cultural activities involving fine arts and literature are likely to impact only particular segments of the Korean immigrant population. Content analyses of mass media materials can take either a quantitative or a qualitative approach. I have taken a qualitative approach, focusing on illustrations of different forms of transnational cultural events that occurred in 2010 based on articles published in the two major Korean ethnic dailies.
II. Findings about Transnational Cultural Activities

Table 1 indicates that there were 110 transnational Korean cultural events in the Korean community in the New York-New Jersey area in 2010. I counted seven transnational cultural entries involved in two major Korean cultural festivals because I used cultural genres rather than cultural events as the unit of analysis. Therefore, the total number of transnational cultural events in 2010 was 105. This means that Korean immigrants had about one transnational cultural event every three or four days. Since some transnational cultural events are believed to have been unreported by the media, the actual number may have been larger than this number, well over 110.

Immigrants’ transnational activities are determined partly by the population size of the community and the convenience of air travels to the home country. The New York-New Jersey Korean community is the second largest Korean community in the U.S. next to Southern California, with about 250,000 Korean Americans in 2010. KAL and ASIANA have established direct flights from New York to Seoul for many years, although it takes substantially longer to fly from New York to Seoul than to fly from Los Angeles. No doubt, this convenience of air travels to Seoul has facilitated New York Korean immigrants’ “transnational cultural activities,” as defined in this paper, which involves the visits of singers, dancers, painters, writers and other people from Korea to the city for their cultural performances or exhibitions of their cultural products. Another important reason seems to be New York City’s proximity to other major Korean population centers, such as the Baltimore-Washington-Northern Virginia area and the Toronto area. Many Korean music and dance specialists and groups took the U.S. Northeastern tours, with the New York-New Jersey
area often becoming their first stop of the longer tours. The third, and probably the most important reason Korean immigrants in the area had access to many transnational cultural events seems to be the popularity of New York City as the global center of arts activities (both performing and fine arts). As will be shown later, many Korean artists and arts organizations in Korea initiated to perform their artistic talents and exhibit their artistic products in the New York area.

(Table 1) Classification of Transnational Cultural Activities into Cultural Genres

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Genre</th>
<th>Performing Arts (Music, Dance, Plays &amp; Musicals)</th>
<th>Fine Arts (Painting, Calligraphy Photographing &amp; Fashion Shows)</th>
<th>Food &amp; Food Festivals</th>
<th>Literature &amp; Language</th>
<th>Others</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>110</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>%</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. Performing Arts

As expected, cultural events related to performing arts involving music, dances, plays and musicals comprise the largest category with 47, accounting for about 43% of total transnational cultural events. This number includes five events involving famous Korean filmmakers’ visits to New York and their meetings with Korean fans. Newspaper articles report that many Korean-made films were shown at the Korean Cultural Service of New York or American

1) The Korean Cultural Service or the Korean Cultural Service of New York is the major Korean government organization that promotes Korean culture in the tri-state (New York, New Jersey and Connecticut) area. It has Gallery Korea, a large exhibition hall, where many Korean paintings, photos, and other fine arts works have been exhibited. It has also shown Korean
theaters in Manhattan in 2010, I have myself watched some of these Korean movies. But I have eliminated them from Korean immigrants’ transnational cultural activities. Excluding filmmakers’ visits to New York City and contacts with Korean fans, 42 performance events involving singers, dancers and other types of performers or their groups from Korea occurred in the given year.

The vast majority of Korean immigrants’ transnational cultural activities involving music/dance performances can be divided into the following two subcategories in terms of who or what groups brought or invited them to the New York-New Jersey area for their performances. First, well-known Korean music, musical and dance groups were invited to perform in New York City by American organizations or themselves initiated to take tours to New York City and other North American cities for their performances. Entertainment companies often seem to bridge these groups with Lincoln Center, Carnegie Hall, and other places of performance. Second, many Korean ethnic organizations invited individual singers and/or dancers or groups for their cultural festivals, other cultural events or benefit galas. I will provide a few examples of each subcategory of transnational cultural activities.

On January 28, Normmarch, a famous new-wave pungmul team in Korea, performed *pungmulnori* for one hour at Flushing Town Hall for the opening ceremony of the Lunar New Year festival for about 600 elementary school children in Queens (W, Park 2010a). World Music Institute, a leading national presenter of music and dance around the world, invited the team for

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films regularly, now every week. It has invited many Korean celebrity musicians and dances for their performances and lectures. It has sponsored many Korean cultural and food festivals. 2) The Flushing-Bayside area is the largest Korean enclave in the New York-New Jersey area where about 50,000 Korean Americans are concentrated. At Flushing Town Hall, major Korean cultural activities go on every month. For more detailed information about the Flushing-Korean enclave, see Min and Joo’s 2010 article.
performance. After the performance, all five original members of the team had a question-answer session with participants. With its Flushing performance, the team started the tours to the U.S. East Coast. One week later, it had performance at Symphony Space in Manhattan. In February, the National Dance Company of Korea, the oldest (since 1962) and largest governmental organization established to promote Korean traditional dances, performed “Choom, Chunghyang,” the Korean brand dance, at Lincoln Center (W. Park 2010b). In April, two major Korean pungmulnoi teams, Tori’s and Ullim Ensemble, presented performances combining traditional music with contemporary styles at Symphony Space in Manhattan (W. Park 2010c). Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism organized their performance tour while Korea Times New York sponsored it. In June Wonder Girls and Little Angels started their North American tours, performing in New York first time.

There were several transnational music/dance performances organized by Korean ethnic organizations in New York in 2010 in which one or more musicians and dancers in Korea participated. For example, Korean Traditional Performing Arts Association (of New York) held its annual World Korean Traditional Performing Arts Competition at Plymouth Church in Flushing on May 29 (Shim 2010). Five well-known performing arts specialists in Korea served as judges for the competition in which eighty teams participated. After the formal competition, some of these visiting judges from Korea performed in front of about 1,000 attendees, almost all of whom were Korean Americans. Moreover, Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism, and Overseas Koreans Foundation respectively provided meager financial support for the event. In commemoration with the fiftieth anniversary of the foundation of the association, the Korean-American Association of Greater New York
established MOU with the Korean Association of Germany for mutual cooperation. The two organizations also co-organized a concert, “Korean Voice,” at Lincoln Center in commemoration of the 60th anniversary of the Korean War and the 50th anniversary of the foundation of the Korean-American Association (Ahn 2010c). The Korean Women’s Choir in Germany sang several Korean folk songs and lyric operas (gagok) at the concert. In late November, Korea Central Daily New York organized a Ju Hyunmi concert at Dae Dong Manor in Flushing (Shin 2010). The audience consisting entirely of Korean immigrants filled the 700-people capacity hall.

Music and dance performances can have a significant transnational cultural impact on Korean immigrants, not only because they occur in the Korean community frequently, but also because they draw much larger Korean audiences than exhibitions of artistic works by Korean painters or photographers. In particular, the Korean Harvest and Folklore Festival at Randall’s Island Park organized by Korean Produce Association to celebrate chuseok drew more than 200,000 people for two days (October 9 and 10), mostly Korean immigrants and their children. One of the most popular programs of the festival was the finale evening music performances by several top singers from Korea, including Sohn Dambi, Kim Sehwa and Yim Byungssoo (W. Park 2010d). Performances by Busan Cultural Foundation’s Jungshinhae Performing Group and Killer Monkey B-Boy at the folk market, following the annual Korean Parade at K-town on October 2, also drew an incredibly large audience (Korea Times New York 2010b).

Most other performances made by Korean celebrity singers and dancers at Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center or Queens College’s Auditorium are smaller, but still draw 700 to 1,000 Korean participants. Otherwise, the organizing group
cannot afford to cover the visiting entertainers’ travel expenses. Even smaller-
scale performances, including dinner shows with one or few Korean singers
made at hotel ball rooms, usually draw more than four hundred Korean
participants. Performances of classical music and orchestras by visiting Korean
musicians, which are not included in this table, draw more non-Korean
participants than those of Korean songs. But the predominant majority of
participants in performances of Korean songs, dances, and musicals by visiting
Koreans are Korean immigrants. Therefore, performances by visiting Korean
musicians and dancers in this area have a far more significant impact on
Korean immigrants’ transnational cultural lives than other types of transnational
cultural activities.

2. Fine Arts, Calligraphy, Ceramic Arts, and
Photographing

Table 1 indicates that there were 24 cases of transnational cultural activities
related to Korean (1) fine arts, (2) calligraphic works, (3) ceramics, (4) photos
and (5) fashion shows. Events related to the first four categories mostly
involve visiting fine arts specialists from Korea for exhibitions of their artistic
works at the galleries at the Korean Cultural Service of New York and other
places. For example, Choi Byung Hwa’s photos of the De-militalized zone in
Korea were exhibited at the U.N. gallery between June 28 and July 9. In
October, the Korean Cultural Service of New York had a two-week exhibition
of paintings by major Korean painters in their 50’s through 70’s at Gallery
Korea (Kim, 2010). At the closing ceremony, the director of Korean Museum
of Hand-Crafted Dolls, Park Chan Soo, performed his mokgak dance. Between
November 18 and January 8, 2011, mine paintings by Hwang Jaehyong, the
Taebaek Mine artist, were exhibited at Kanaan Art Gallery.

Some events related to Korean paintings were invited lectures by well-known Korean painters mainly for the Korean audience. There were also four exhibitions of Korean ceramic and hand-crafted products brought from Korea. A unique and interesting transnational cultural event related to fine arts in 2010 in the New York area was the installation of four totem poles (jangseung) and an installment ceremony at Queens College in October. Jangseungs were installed at the entrances of old Korean villages to defend them from enemies and evils. We can still see jangseung in some neighborhoods in Seoul. In October 2010, Seoul Tourism Organization had the totem poles installed at Queens College in an effort to promote tours to Seoul using traditional Korean folk culture. The organization brought a jangseung carving artist, Jong-Heung Kim, from Korea. Queens College faculty, staff and student members, along with many Korean community leaders, enjoyed Mr. Kim’s shamanistic the jangseung carving and installment performances that involved dances similar to Native-American dances. Queens College has the only college or university in the United States that has jangseung.3)

New York City is the center of fashion industry. As such, there were five fashion shows organized by Korean fashion designers in the New York-New Jersey area in 2010. The first major Korean fashion show in the area was “Concept Korea: Fashion Collection of 2010” held at the New York City Public Library on 42th Street. The seven top Korean designers selected by Ministry of Culture, Sports and Tourism displayed their works for two days on February 13 and 14 (Korea Times New York 2010a). After the opening

3) Two other places in the U.S. that have jangseung are Smithsonian Institute in Washington, D.C. and Sedona, a small city in Arizona famous for its array of red sandstones.
ceremony on February 13, Korean fusion food, prepared by Jean Georges Vongerichten, a celebrity chef, was served for the participants. The opening ceremony ended with a music performance by Bi (Rain), a Korean celebrity singer. Since the Korean government agency prepared the fashion show to publicize Korean fashion illustrations to the world, the show was combined with Korean fusion food services and a music performance by a famous Korean singer. The largest Korean fashion show held in the year was the international fashion show organized by Korea Fashion Illustration Association and prepared by a fashion design professor from Dong Duck University. Fifty-eight designers from Korea participated in the show held at Chelsea West Gallery in Manhattan between July 23 and 28.

Compared to events related to performing arts, exhibitions of artistic works and lectures on them have a limited impact on Korean immigrants’ transnational ties. This is so partly because the numbers of Korean immigrant and Korean American participants in these events are usually much smaller than their numbers in music and dance performances. The numbers of participants in opening ceremonies for Korean artistic and fashion exhibitions are fairly large, but in most other cases they do not reach the 100 mark. They usually last more than one week, but Korean visitors to the exhibitions each day after the opening ceremonies are usually small in numbers. Big Korean fashion exhibitions taking place in Manhattan draw many people, but they target non-Korean spectators to globalize Korean fashion illustrations by holding exhibitions in American galleries or public places like the New York

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4) Jean Georges Vongerichten is a French-originated American chef who made a documentary film, *Kimchi Chronicles*, with his half-Korean wife in Korea. By serving Korean fusion food at his own restaurants, by introducing Korean food through the American media and making this film, he has been playing an important role in publicizing Korean food to Americans.
City Public Library and the U.N. Plaza. Exhibitions of artistic, fashion and ceramic works also have a limited impact on Korean immigrants because, unlike music and dance performances, they attract a particular segment of the Korean American population—well-educated and artistically oriented people. They do not belong to popular culture.

3. Food

There were nineteen Korean transnational cultural events involving food in 2010. Four of these transnational cultural activities are related to the efforts of Korean Food Foundation to promote Korean food globally. Korean Food Foundation is a semi-government organization launched in 2009 in Korea to promote Korean food around the world. Korean Food Foundation advised the Korean Restaurant Association of New York to establish the Korean Cuisine Globalization Committee in early January, 2010. About 60 Korean restaurants, usually large ones, out of about 400 Korean restaurants in the New York-New Jersey area, have joined the Committee. In close coordination with the Korea Agro-Fisheries Trade Corporation (Nongsusanmul Yutonggongsil), the Committee did a number of things in 2010 to promote Korean food to New Yorkers. In July, it organized Korean Food & Culture Festival, the largest Korean food festival in the city, in Central Park in which approximately 50,000 people, mostly non-Koreans, participated (Ahn 2010b). The food festival was combined with Korean cultural activities, such as samulnori, taekwondo and trying hanbok (traditional Korean dress). The Korean Cultural Service of New York, the Korea Agro-Fisheries Trade Corporation, and other Korean government agencies have sponsored the festival. With the support by Ministry of Food, Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, and the Korea Agro-
Fisheries Trade Corporation, the Korean Cuisine Globalization Committee provided 8-day free workshops at Kumgangsan Restaurant in Flushing for about 100 cooks, waitresses, and managers of Korean restaurants in early November (H. Choi 2010).

Four of the Korean food-related cultural events involved exhibiting and selling for discounted prices specialty agricultural and food items originating from particular Korean provinces or cities, Korean Produce Association has added exhibitions of Korean agricultural products originating from particular Korean provinces to its annual festival (the Korean Harvest and Folklore Festival) since 1997. In 2010, eight food producing companies from Kyungsang Bukdo and Gwangjoo-si participated in the festival with their specialty products (Kwon 2010). Also, Korean Produce Association’s largest Korean cultural festival included free services of *jonjoo bibimbap* (mixed vegetables with rice, meat and eggs from the Jonjoo area) for about 1,000 people. Top ten chefs from Jonjoo City visited New York to make famous *jonjoo bibimbap* with special ingredients directly brought from the city in front of the participants in the festival (Kwon 2010). In early September, a Hanyang Mart store located in Ridgefield, a Korean enclave in Bergen County, NJ, sold about 50 special grocery items from twelve grocery manufacturing companies in Kangwon-do for special discount prices. A few officials from the Kangwon-do provincial government visited the New York-New Jersey area to publicize their local agro-fishery products. They cut the tape at the Hanyang Mart store for special sales (D. Kim 2010b). The Kangwon-do provincial government established MOU with Hanyang Mart and the Kangwondominhe in New York with the agreement that it would export special grocery items

5) Hanyang Mart is a major Korean supermarket chain in the U.S, Northeast area.
worth two million dollars to the supermarket chain.

Three of the food-related cultural events that took place in 2010 were (1) “2010 Seoul Gourmet Week,” a Korean food festival held at the U.N. Plaza restaurant for U.S. representatives, (2) “Korean Wine Night” organized by Korean employees at U.N., and (3) the meeting of leaders of the Chogye Order from Korea with Korean immigrants at Dae Dong Manor in Flushing. The Seoul City government and Seoul Tourism Organization co-organized “2010 Seoul Gourmet Week” held at the U.N Plaza restaurant between October 18 and 22 (Ahn 2010d). It is known that Seoul City was the first city that organized a major food festival at the U.N restaurant. Six famous chefs from Korea visited New York City to prepare vegetarian food, royal food, and street food for U.N. representatives, while many Korean immigrant women voluntarily participated to help prepare food. Although the majority of the attendees in the U.N. food festival were non-Korean U.N. representatives, I found, Korean immigrants comprised a large proportion of the participants. In the same month, leaders of the Chogye Order in Korea had vegetarian dinner meeting with Korean immigrants at Dae Dong Manor in Flushing. Local Korean Buddhist women prepared vegetarian food, and the vast majority of the participants were Korean Buddhist immigrants. An association of U.N. Korean employees, called “Korean Cultural Service,” organized “Korean Wine Tasting Nights” at the U.N. Plaza with support by the Korea Agro-Fisheries Trade Association (Ahn 2010a).

Four food-related Korean cultural events in 2010 were establishments of two additional stores of Paris Baguette, a franchise Korean bakery business, and two Korean chicken franchise businesses, Kyochon and Bon Chon, Since each of these main Korean franchise businesses was established with a big opening
ceremony with an owner from Korea and a large number of Korean immigrants participating in it, I consider their establishments as food-related transnational Korean cultural events. Kyochon had established two stores in the Flushing Korean enclave several years before. It established the third store in K-town\(^6\) in Manhattan on the 32nd Street between Sixth and Fifth Avenues in March, In August, Bon Chon also established a branch in K-town in Manhattan, leading to strong competition between these two Korean franchise stores (Ostrand 2010). It was the fifth Bon Chon store in Manhattan.

Paris Baguette is the largest franchise bakery business in Korea with over 1,400 stores accounting for the majority of bakery shops in the country. A shop established in Palisades Park (a Korean enclave), New Jersey in 2007 was the first Paris Baguette franchise in the New York-New Jersey area. Its second shop was opened in Fort Lee, another Korean enclave in Bergen County. The franchise opened the third store in Flushing in April, 2010, with the fourth store established in K-town in Manhattan in August in the same year. The majority of customers in these Korean chicken and bakery franchise stores are non-Korean New Yorkers, But Korean customers comprise significant proportions of the customers, as they are located in Korean enclaves. These contemporary Korean franchise food businesses do not serve traditional Korean cuisines. But they have special meanings for Korean immigrants, partly because they originated from Korea and partly because

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\(^6\) K-town indicates a Korean business district on 32\(^{nd}\) Street between two blocks (Broadway and Madison Avenue) in Manhattan. I counted 106 Korean stores located in K-town in 2011, including about 30 Korean restaurants. Korean restaurants in Ktown are so popular that after 6 p.m., customers have to wait more than half an hour to get into any Korean restaurant there. About 70% of customers at Korean restaurants located in K-town are non-Koreans. Thus Korean restaurants in K-town play an important role in globalizing Korean food,
their cuisines represent tastes of contemporary Korean foods. Korean immigrants prefer Korean franchise chickens to KFC (Kentucky Fried Chickens) because they are not greasy and also include many tasty ingredients. For the same reasons they are attractive to non-Korean New Yorkers (D. Kim 2010a).

Although I have not discussed it in this paper, Korean immigrants in the New York-New Jersey area have organized many food festivals to promote Korean food to New Yorkers during recent years. By doing so, Korean immigrants in New York have played an important role in globalizing Korean food, which is beyond the scope of this paper. However, few of Korean food festivals prepared by Korean ethnic organizations have included transnational components because they do not need aid from their home country in preparing Korean cuisines. Indeed, many Korean restaurants in the New York-New Jersey area serve as authentic Korean cuisines as Korean restaurants in Korea because their chefs have been usually brought from Korea.

As noted above, most transnational Korean cultural activities involving Korean food in 2010 were closely related to Korean government agencies’ efforts to globalize Korean food. Especially since Korean Food Foundation, a semi-government organization, was established in 2009 to publicize Korean food to global markets, three Korean government agencies—Ministry of Food, Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries, the New York Center of the Korea Agro-Fishery Trade Corporation, and the Korean Cultural Service of New York—have been actively involved in promoting Korean food to New Yorkers, often using Korean restaurants as servers of Korean cuisines and Korean individual immigrants as consumers of major food festivals (since non-Korean customers alone are not enough). In a way, Korean government agencies have used
Korean immigrants as intermediaries in globalizing Korean food to New Yorkers. This has, in turn, strengthened Korean immigrants’ food-related transnational cultural activities. Also, the movement of Korean franchise businesses to the New York-New Jersey area has contributed to Korean immigrants’ transnational connections to Korea.

Since food also belongs to popular culture, food-related transnational activities are applicable to all Korean immigrants and a large proportion of younger-generation Koreans. Overall, although a smaller number of food-related transnational cultural events occurred in 2010 than those related to fine arts, calligraphy and ceramic arts, they had a greater impact on Korean immigrants. In particular, transnational food-related cultural events included in major Korean cultural and food festivals, such as tasting jonjoo bibimbap and exhibitions of Korean provincial specialty agro-fishery products at the 2010 Korean Harvest and Folklore Festival organized by Korean Produce Association, impacted an exceptionally large number of participants in the festivals.

4. Literature and Language

Table 1 reveals that twelve Korean transnational cultural events belong to the genre of literature and language. All, with the exception of two cultural events, are related to Korean writers’ literary activities. The other two cultural events were related to the Korean language. One event was Korean government agencies’ donation of books to an elementary school with many Korean students. Korean government agencies, through the Korean Consulate General of the Greater New York, donated 1,200 Korean-language books to PS 32, an elementary school in Queens that adopted Korean as a foreign
language. The other event that has the transnational cultural component related to the Korean language is the report by the Director (Suk Lee) of Korean Education at the Korean Consulate General of Greater New York about the financial support by the Korean government for the Korean-language education. Ministry of Education, Science and Technology gave the Korean Consulate General of Greater New York $130,000 in the 2010-2011 academic year to support the elementary and secondary schools in the tri-state area that offered classes for the Korean language (Lee 2010). In order to encourage American schools to adopt Korean as a foreign language, the Korean government began to support American schools a much greater amount of money beginning in the 2010.

Most of the other ten literary events can be divided into three categories: (1) one or two writers or Korean literature professors from Korea being invited to give lectures for members of Korean Writers’ Association of America, (2) several writers from Korea visiting the New York area to participate in international symposiums on Korean literature, and (3) Korean writers in the New York area receiving literary awards in poetry, novels and essays from two literary competitions targeting overseas Korean writers in Korea. Kyunghee University’s Cyber College and Overseas Koreans Foundation have respectively established overseas Koreans’ literary awards.

Members of Korean Writers’ Association of America, the association of Korean immigrant writers in the Northeastern area established in 1989, have been very active in publication of their literary works, organizing literary seminars, and encouraging Korean immigrants to engage in literary works by establishing the annual new writers’ awards. Many of their literary activities have involved transnational connections with South Korea. In 2010, they
invited two people from Korea to their literary seminars, a writer in the June seminar and a professor in the July seminar. Members of Korean Writers’ Association of America also had a literary symposium with members of Korean Essayists Association at Gallery Korea in October (S. Park 2010). Three events involved three separate award ceremonies for recipients of overseas Koreans’ literary awards from the Kyung Hee University’s Cyber School and Overseas Koreans Foundation. Representing Overseas Koreans Foundation, the Korean Consulate General of the Greater New York gave awards twice in 2010 for those who received literary awards from OKF. On November 30, the Kyung Hee University’s Cyber School’s representative and the President of the Korean Association of Literary Critics held an award ceremony at Dae Dong Manor to give awards to eight recipients of Kyunghee University’s Overseas Koreans’ Literary Awards in the New York-New Jersey area (J. Kim 2010b). Kyung Hee University established the “Overseas Koreans’ Literary Awards” in 2007 in collaboration with the Korean Association of Literary Critics.

Two literary cultural events focus on Shin Kyung-sook, the author of Please Look after Mom (Umma-leul Butakhae). This is probably the most widely known novel ever written by a Korean writer. Shin and her husband, a university professor and also a writer, stayed at Columbia University during the husband’s sabbatical year between September 2010 and August 2011. Shin’s novel has been translated into eighteen different languages. One article published in Korea Central Daily New York on October 26 reports that about

7) The book focuses on the loss of family ties and the difficulties of elderly people left alone in South Korea that has gone through radical changes with fast economic growth. Shin won the 2011 Man Asian Literary Prize for this book. She is the only woman writer who has received this award. See Janet Maslin’s review of the English translation of her book in The New York Times.
50 members of a Korean literature class of the Cultural Center at Korea Central Daily New York had a meeting with Ms. Shin, her husband and another well known Korean writer at a private home in New York in October (Korea Central Daily 2010). The other article covers the content of her book, *Please Look After Mom*, and the author’s background with the news that an English translation of her book will be published by Random House in 2011 (S. Choi 2010).

The following two transnational cultural events surrounding Shin Kyung-sook that occurred in 2011 were not included in Table 1. But I introduce them here because they are perfect examples of transnational cultural activities related to home country writers. After an English translation of her book (*Please Look after Mom*) was published in March 2011, the Korean Consulate General of Greater New York held a book-signing party for her with about 200 distinguished guests—almost all Korean immigrants—invited (S. Park 2011). One week later, Korean American Community Foundation, the largest community foundation in the New York-New Jersey area, prepared a meeting between the author Shin and about 150 Korean parents and students at Arcade Gallery in Manhattan (Kim 2011). Shin read the first page of her book to the participants.

Korean Writers’ Association inviting well-known writers in Korea for lectures and co-organizing symposiums in New York by inviting Korean writers are transnational extensions of their professional activities. No doubt, these are important transnational activities for the members. But they do not have an impact much on the general Korean immigrant population. However, the celebrity novelist, Shin Kyung-sook’s and her husband’s visits to Columbia University for their sabbatical stay and events celebrating publication of an
English-language translation of her globally recognized book in New York, along with articles about her book in Korean dailies and TV programs, had a broad impact on the Korean immigrant population in the area. There were probably few Korean immigrants in the area who did not hear about her book.

5. Others

Table 1 shows that there were eight other Korean cultural events with transnational elements that I classify in other category. Each of these eight events is unique and very interesting. But I can introduce only three of them here due to a space limitation. Busan City participated in the 2010 Korean Parade held in Manhattan in early October. It arranged Busan Cultural Foundation to organize a 200-member procession, with members in traditional robes, for the festival to reproduce Chosun Tongshinsa, the Chosun diplomatic missions dispatched to Japan about 400 years ago (Korea Times New York 2010c). The 200 members practiced it in Busan several times and visited New York to show it in Korean Parade for Korean Americans and non-Korean New Yorkers. Also, the flower car representing Seoul Tourism Organization in the same parade carried a large-scale replica of Soongremun, the number one Korean national treasure symbolizing Seoul, to publicize tourism to Seoul. The third event was taekwonsibijisin talgongyeon at the Korean Harvest and Folklore Festival organized by Korean Produce Association (Kwon 2010). This is a performance created in Korea by a famous Korean producer, Choi Sori, by combining taekwondo and mask dances (talchoom). Members of the Korean Taekwondo Association and Choi-sori himself participated in the festival for the performance. Two other transnational cultural events classified
in others involved participation of taekwondo masters from Korea in taekwondo demonstrations organized by Korean Taekwondo Association in New York.

III. Summary and Conclusion

A content analysis of articles published in two major Korean dailies reveals that there were 110 transnational Korean cultural events in the New York-New Jersey area in the year of 2010. Given that some events may not have been reported in Korean dailies, a slightly larger number of transnational Korean cultural events than 110 are likely to have occurred in the year. The settlement of a large number of Korean Americans (more than 250,000) in the area, the close proximity of the area to other Northeastern Korean centers, and New York City as the most influential global arts center all seem to have contributed to the frequency of transnational Korean cultural events in the area.

Classifying transnational Korean cultural events by the genre of culture and introducing representative examples in each cultural genre shed light on the nature of, and contributing factors, to their occurrences. Cultural events related to performing arts, excluding Korean films, comprise the largest category of such cultural events, accounting for 43% of the total events.

The vast majority of these events were performances of traditional Korean music and dances by famous artists or groups from Korea at Carnegie Hall, Lincoln Center and other places. In terms of which side initiated the visits of celebrity Korean artists to the New York area to make their performances accessible to Korean immigrants, we can divide these transnational performing
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Transnational cultural events are categorized into two types. For one type, Korean artists or groups seem to have initiated their North American or Northeastern performance tours with the aid of entertainment companies. The New York-New Jersey area appears to be the usual first stop of their Northeastern tours.

For the other type, Korean ethnic organizations invited Korean individual entertainers or groups for their cultural festivals, events, or donation efforts. Music and dance performances by celebrity Korean singers and dancers are not only more prevalent, but also draw far more Korean American participants than other types of transnational cultural events. Thus, they have a much greater impact on Korean immigrants' and even younger-generation Koreans' transnational cultural lives.

Transnational cultural events pertaining to paintings and related fine arts are smaller in number than those related to performing arts. Moreover, only small numbers of well-educated Korean immigrants interested in fine arts can participate in exhibitions of their works or their lectures. In addition, Korean painters and other fine artists more often initiate the exhibitions of their works in New York for their influence and professional achievements than they are invited by Korean organizations. Thus, their impact on Korean immigrants' transnational cultural activities is limited. Similar things can be said of Korean writers' occasional visits to the Korean community in New York. The importance of transnational cultural events related to Korean fine arts and literature is that Korean immigrant artists and writers can occasionally contact and learn about those in the same literary and artistic fields in Korea without visiting their home country.

Many Korean immigrants participated in a few food-related transnational events included in major Korean festivals in the New York area. But most
Other events had much to do with Korean government agencies’ efforts to globalize Korean food and Korean food franchise businesses’ effort to globalize their markets using the big stage of New York City. In their efforts to globalize Korean food and food businesses in this important strategic city, both groups need Korean immigrants’ aid as participants in food festivals and as customers of their food franchise stores. Both Korean government agencies and food franchise businesses are likely to further expand their efforts to popularize Korean food and businesses in the city in the future. Korean immigrants and even many second-generation Koreans will happily give helping hands to these efforts because the popularization of Korean food in the city also will strengthen their ethnic pride.

This study makes a significant contribution to studies of immigrants’ transnational ties. When we personally interview staff members of Korean cultural and other ethnic organizations, we can get information about their transnational cultural activities at the organizational level. But, with personal interviews alone, we cannot get systematic information about the number and types of transnational cultural events that occurred in a particular community in a given year because we do not know what organizations held such events before we start research. This study based on a content analysis of Korean ethnic newspaper articles provides very systematic information about the overall prevalence of transnational cultural events that occurred in the New York-New Jersey Korean community in 2010. Researchers of immigrant transnationalism have neglected to study immigrants’ or immigrant organizations’ transnational cultural activities. Moreover, to my knowledge, no researcher has content-analyzed ethnic media materials to study immigrants’ transnational activities, let alone ethnic associations’ preparations of
transnational cultural events. When Korean immigrants participate in transnational cultural events organized by Korean ethnic associations or government agencies/cultural organizations in Korea, they become Korean immigrants’ individual transnational cultural activities. Thus this study shows that organizational- and individual-level transnational cultural activities are not as clearly separable as some researchers may believe.

This study also significantly contributes to studies of Korean immigrants in the United States. As shown in my comprehensive review of the literature on Korean Americans (Min 2010), more than one hundred books and several hundred journal articles and book chapters focusing on Korean Americans, mostly focusing on post-1965 Korean immigrants, have been published. However, there are few studies that have touched on Korean immigrants’ cultural activities, with the exception of those emphasizing their emphasis on children’s education and filial piety. Moreover, there is no systematic study of Korean immigrants’ transnational ties. This study provides a general picture of the prevalence and types of transnational cultural events involving both organizational and individual levels that occurred in the Korean community in the New York-New Jersey area in 2010.
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<요약문>

뉴욕·뉴저지 지역의 동포이민자들의 모국과 연관된 초국가적 한국문화행사

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본 연구는 뉴욕지역의 두 한국 신문 기사를 분석해서 2010년에 뉴욕·뉴저지 지역의 한인사회에서 일어난 동포 이민자들의 모국과 관련된 초국가적 한국문화 행사의 경과를 검토하고 있다. 신문기사의 내용분석에 의하면 2010년에 이 지역에서 110개의 초국가적 한국문화행사가 있었다. 자료분석은 초국가적 문화행사를 다섯가지 장르로 분류해서 각 부류에 속한 문화행사의 중요한 예를 드는데 중점을 두고 있다. 음악, 춤, 뮤지컬 및 연극을 포함한 공연예술에 속한 초국가적 문화행사가 43건으로 가장 많았다. 미술과 이와 관련된 서예, 사진촬영 및 패션쇼가 24건으로 2위를 이었으며, 음식 및 음식축제가 19건, 언어와 문학에 관련된 것이 12건, 기타가 8건이었다. 음악, 무용공연에 관련된 초국가적 연주행사는 다른 초국가적 문화행사에 비해서 숫자가 많았을 뿐 아니라 각 행사가 아주 많은 한국인 관중을 동원했다. 따라서 동포이민자 일반인에게 아주 큰 영향을 끼칠 수 있었다. 신문기사 분석에 근거한 연구는 개인 면담이나 설문조사연구에 비해 특정한 해, 특정한 한인사회에서 일어난 동포 이민자의 모국과 연계된 초국가적 문화행사가 얼마나 많았는가에 관한 전체적인 윤곽을 제시할 수 있는 장점이 있다. 미국의 이민 연구 학자들이 이민자들의 문화활동에 관한 연구를 소홀히 했으며, 특히 이민자들의 초국가적 문화활동을 통한 이해가 어렵기 때문에 본 연구는 미국 이민자 연구 분야에 공헌을 할 수 있다. 또한 재미동포 이민자들의 초국가적 연계에 관한 연구도 거의 전무상태이기 때문에 본 연구는 재미동포 이민자 연구에도 중요한 공헌을 한다.
주제어: 뉴욕・뉴저지 지역의 동포이민자, 뉴욕・뉴저지 지역의 한국문화행사, 이민자들의 모국과의 초국가적연계, 이민자들의 자기문화활동

논문접수일: 2012. 9. 28
심사일: 2012. 10. 3
게재확정일: 2012. 10. 11

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