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# Diasporic Identity and Media Consumption among Korean-Chinese Diaspora: The Case of Shanghai and Tokyo

By LEE Kwangho\* and LEE Jinah \*\*

## Introduction

Television networks play a significant role in forming and maintaining a sense of national and cultural identity among citizens (Sinclair, Yue, Hawkins, Pooking & Fox, 2001). Along with the growing immigration and human mobility, digitalization and globalization of television have extended the role of traditional broadcasting in the construction of boundary-based cultural identity. Transnational satellite broadcasting and the Internet transcend borders and have enabled the diaspora to have easy access to their national television programs. This access contributes to the construction and reinforcement of their cultural identity.

This study examines the cultural meaning of transnational broadcasting to diasporic communities, focusing particularly on the Korean-Chinese diaspora. The Korean-Chinese diaspora are Korean descendants who have moved to China between the late 1800s to early 1900s for economic or political reasons. They have been maintaining their Korean culture and language as a result of the Chinese government's ethnic policy. They are mostly residing in the three Northeast provinces of Liaoning, Jilin, and Heilongjiang, and account for 87.8 percent of the Korean-Chinese in China as of November 1, 2010 (Inmin Net, July 23, 2012). According to the 6<sup>th</sup> National Population Census of the People's Republic of China, the population of Korean-Chinese amounts to 1,830,929, and has decreased by 89,668 in the past two decades. The decrease is mainly due to many returning to South Korea. Since the normalization of diplomatic ties between South Korea and China and the recent Chinese economic boom, many have moved to big cities/areas such as the Shandong Province (61,556) and Shanghai (22,257) for the purpose of economic and educational achievement. In addition to the increasing human exchanges between the Korean-Chinese community and South Korea, the reception

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of Korean broadcasting has an extremely important meaning to the Korean-Chinese in terms of understanding modern Korean society and culture. The Korean-Chinese have had quite limited access to South Korean culture and information compared to those of North Korea before the normalization of diplomatic relations between South Korea and China in 1992.

In this paper, we investigate the meaning of the Korean diaspora's media consumption and its relationship to ethnic and cultural identities in regard to the changing media and social environment surrounding the Korean-Chinese. We conducted in-depth interviews with Korean-Chinese in double diasporic context, meaning that they have moved and detached from their original diasporic communities. Previous research has focused on the Korean-Chinese living in Northeast China (e.g., Lee, Yoon & Sohn, 2002) and those who have immigrated to South Korea (e.g., Kim, 2013). This research examines the Korean-Chinese currently living away from the original ethnic residential area in Northeast China and those choosing to live in places other than South Korea such as Shanghai and Tokyo. At present, 22,257 Korean-Chinese reside in Shanghai (Inmin Net, July 23, 2012) and about 53,000 in Japan (The Hankyore, November 18, 2011). Their transnational media environment, media usage patterns, and diasporic experiences provide valuable resources for the study of the cultural meaning of motherland media consumption in the diasporic context.

## Media Consumption in Diasporic Context: Korean Diaspora and Their Changing Social and Media Environment

Transnational broadcasting has led to a great deal of discussion in both the broadcasting industry and the research field, especially in terms of its cultural and economic influences. Cultural factors including language and group consciousness have been highlighted in the formation and maintenance of cultural identity (e.g. Hall, 1997). Korean-Chinese diaspora have been maintaining their language and traditional culture due to the Chinese minority policy and through ethnic education and media in their mother tongue, Korean. Since the normalization of diplomatic relations between South Korea and China in 1992, the Korean-Chinese community has experienced drastic changes. Exchanges with South Korea have increased sharply and access to South Korean media, including spill over satellite broadcasting, has been made possible. The era of Korean satellite broadcasting started in the 1990s with KBS (Korean Broadcasting System), which started its experimental satellite broadcasting on July 1, 1996. The Korean-Chinese have easy access to Korean culture as a growing number of households watch South Korean satellite broadcasting. However, it is illegal to install a satellite antenna in a Chinese household to receive reception of foreign satellite broadcasting. The Korean-Chinese community has three kinds of media layers that include the Chinese national media,

the Korean-Chinese ethnic media, and the South Korean media. Patterns of media use among the Korean-Chinese might differ according to their ethnic identity, socio-economic status, gender, generation, Korean and Chinese language skills, as well as their cultural relationship with South Korea etc. (Lee, Yoon & Sohn, 2002). Lee, Yoon & Sohn(2002) examined the reception of South Korean satellite broadcasting in the Yanbian area and suggested that one of the most important motivations for viewing South Korean TV for the Korean-Chinese lies in cultural proximity. The existing Korean-Chinese ethnic media operating in Northeast China including the Heilongjiang, Jilin, and Liaoning Provinces has been a significant cultural and educational institution for the Korean-Chinese and is facing challenges from both the South Korean media and the Korean language print media, published for Koreans working and residing in China.

According to Anderson, in the era of transnational media, the national identity is based on an imagined community that is mostly constructed through a shared media experience (1983). The transnational global media, including satellite television and Internet, has further extended people's experience and reconstructed their identity. Diasporas are "in the context of this intersection of connectivity and cultural reinvention and reconstruction that media technologies and diasporic media become crucial factors in the reproduction and transformation of diasporic identities" (p.52) as noted by Tsagarousianou (2004). Previous research that has investigated media use in a diasporic context such as Korean immigrants in the United States (Lee, 2004), and Chinese immigrants in both the United States (Shi, 2005) and Australia (Yue, Hawkins, Pooking & Fox, 2001) indicates similar tendencies in the diaspora's media use. Immigrants tend to rely on their homeland's media for both information and entertainment due to language and cultural proximity, which led them to the formation and reinforcement of their ethnic identity.

According to Shi (2005), diasporic members generally have to adjust their media consumption habits according to the availability of media resources and find new ways to get information when they have only limited access to ethnic media content within the given ethnic media environment. However, the old media consumption habits are also persistently maintained. In comparison to ethnic media, interviewees of the study use English-language media less often and less eagerly due to cultural and linguistic barriers in understanding and appreciating the contents as this might prevent them from enjoying it. Shi (2005) found that the foremost role of ethnic media to diaspora members is "pastime." Her interviewees said that since Chinese media is in their mother tongue, they do not need to make any special efforts to comprehend and hence feel relax and entertained while consuming the media's content. It is also an important role of ethnic media to satisfy an "epistemic desire" (Naficy, 1993), which is the desire to keep updated about current events, issues, fashion, and the mentality of people back home. It provides common

reference points to be able to use while socializing with people back home, or with other diaspora members in their residing country that is serving as a ground where national or ethnic identities are negotiated, reinforced, or reconstructed. This enables them to maintain ethnic cultural capital, which is also noted as an important reason for consuming ethnic or motherland media.

The Korean-Chinese diaspora of the present study might show similar patterns of media use and the same motivations for consuming the Korean-Chinese ethnic media or in some aspects, Korean media. On the other hand, the results might differ from other diasporic members who migrated from their home country directly to the place where they now live because Korean-Chinese moved not from their home country, but from a place of having been displaced once. Additionally, motivations and patterns of media use vary according to demographic characteristics. Generational divide in media consumption exists among members of diaspora, and so does the gender aspect of media use, especially regarding dramas. Television drama viewing has been traditionally analyzed in terms of gender context (e.g. Fiske, 1987). In this study, we investigate generational and gender reactions to Korean media among Korean-Chinese diaspora in Shanghai and Tokyo, focusing on their motivation for consuming Korean media and its cultural meaning to the Korean-Chinese in a double diasporic context.

## Research Purpose and Method

In March and July 2013, we conducted in-depth interviews with ten Korean-Chinese residing in Shanghai or Tokyo in regard to their media use and diasporic identity. The interview was conducted in Korean and recorded for the analysis under consent of interviewees. The interview questions were open-ended and semi-structured and the interviews lasted between 40 minutes and two hours, with the average interview being over one hour. Based on the aforementioned theoretical review and changing media environment of the Korean-Chinese, participants were asked about their media consumption and identity, including the extent of which Korean-Chinese view Korean television, which contents they prefer to watch, and the reason why they watch Korean television. The focus was particularly on the cultural meaning it had in their everyday lives and its relationship to their cultural identity.

As indicated in Table, participants consisted of seven females and three males whose ages ranged from 21 to 65. Seven participants were living in Shanghai, including three Korean-Chinese who were residing in Tokyo for educational and economic purposes. The other three are graduate or undergraduate students in Tokyo who have come to Japan to continue their studies.

Table Participants' Demographic Characteristics

Participant	Age	Occupation	Place of residence	Hometown	Experience of residence
Mr.A	50s	Professor	Shanghai	Heilongjiang	Tokyo
Mr.B	50s	Businessman	Shanghai	Heilongjiang	Tokyo
Mr.C	60s	Owner of Korean restaurant	Shanghai	Jilin	—
Mrs.D	40s	Professor	Shanghai	Jilin	—
Mrs.E	40s	Homemaker	Shanghai	Heilongjiang	Tokyo
Mrs.F	50s	Homemaker	Shanghai	Jilin	Seoul
Ms.G	20s	Undergraduate student	Shanghai	Jilin	—
Ms.H	20s	Graduate student	Tokyo	Jilin	—
Ms. I	20s	Undergraduate student	Tokyo	Jilin	Dalian
Ms. J	20s	Undergraduate student	Tokyo	Jilin	Seoul

### Diasporic Identity and Media Use of the Korean-Chinese in Shanghai

The Korean-Chinese mainly reside in the three Northeast provinces of Liaoning, Jilin, and Heilongjiang, but the population is gradually decreasing. As mentioned above, this is mainly due to them returning to Korea or moving to big cities for economic and educational reasons. Shanghai is one of the cities the Korean-Chinese have chosen as a new place of residence. Mr. A has settled down in Shanghai after studying in Tokyo for ten years. He is from Heilongjiang, and is a second generation Korean-Chinese. He used to read the Heilongjiang Newspaper, but now he does not read or watch Korean-Chinese ethnic media anymore. He started to watch Korean TV, especially KBS 9 news since settling down in Shanghai. He was more interested in Chinese news than Korean news when living in Japan. He is interested in Korean politics including the relationship with North Korea. When he lived in his hometown of Heilongjiang, he listened to Korean songs on cassette tapes and he still vividly remembers his feelings when listening to Korean songs for the first time. The government had prohibited listening to Taiwanese and Korean songs for a long time. His generation enjoyed listening to Korean songs in the 1970s and 1980s. He still sings old Korean songs when he goes to Karaoke with Korean-Chinese friends.

In contrast to his good memories about Korean culture, he expressed his regrets about South Koreans' attitude toward the Korean-Chinese in recent times. He sometimes visits Korea for business and is very disappointed that there is an unfavorable attitude toward the Korean-Chinese in Korea. However, he thinks he could stay in Korea long-term because he feels familiar with the Korean culture as a

Korean descendant. His Korean-Chinese wife also enjoys watching Korean dramas and wants to visit Korea. However, they do not want to immigrate to Korea since they identify themselves as Chinese citizens. They very strongly said the following:

“The opportunity to rise to a high rank seems limited to minorities such as Korean-Chinese, but there is no discrimination in China, at least unlike in Korea. My families and relatives lead a good life in Northeast China, my hometown. I have already experienced in living Northeast China, Tokyo, and Shanghai. I can stay in Korea, Japan, and China in the future, but I will choose China as the place of the residence and I feel the most comfortable when I am in China” (Mr. A).

While he has a strong sense of Chinese national identity, he is quite proud of being Korean-Chinese as well. He said that the Korean-Chinese are highly educated as a whole. His children understand Korean, but they are not able to speak it. He wants them to speak Korean fluently, but they do not have an interest in learning the Korean language. He thinks that it cannot be helped and that it is more important for them to use Chinese and succeed in China as Chinese citizens.

Mr. B, a second generation Korean-Chinese, is from Heilongjiang and was also educated in Korean-Chinese ethnic schools. He worked for the ethnic media for several years after graduating from the Korean-Chinese ethnic university. He went to Japan for graduate school and worked in Tokyo for about ten years. He came back to China in 2002 since he thought there were more opportunities in China and he was concerned about his daughter’s education, including her Chinese proficiency.

It was interesting that he chose to live in Shanghai. He said he never considered going back to his and his wife’s hometown of Heilongjiang, a place that is not the political or economic center of China. He decided to settle down in Shanghai because of his business even though he had never lived there before. He settled after looking in big cities such as Beijing, Dalian, and Shanghai. During the interview, he emphasized the increasingly important role China plays on a global level. He thinks he would be able to live in Korea and Japan, but he will return to China eventually, particularly for the reasons of social security and insurance.

He watches televised Korean news almost every day, particularly KBS 9 news. Korean politics and economic trends are the main concerns for him. He meets many Korean-Chinese and Koreans for business in China and Korea. He often goes on business trips to cities such as Beijing, Tokyo, and Seoul, which have led him to feel very close to these cities and countries.

“What is hometown? To me, anywhere can be hometown...I don’t feel different when it comes to the news happening in Beijing and Seoul. I feel so close with those cities that they are just cities near Shanghai where I

live. Those cities are just Beijing and Seoul for me, not Beijing, China, or Seoul, Korea. I think it's due to my regular viewing of Korean television and quite frequent business trips to those cities" (Mr. B).

The meaning of "hometown," for him, seems to be not the place where he goes back to or refers to at a time when he feels nostalgic, but rather his notion of a "hometown" lies in the feeling of being connected through the consumption of media and information.

In addition, he mentioned viewing news that has different perspectives as the benefit of watching news in Chinese and Korean. Aside from news programs, he often watches documentaries and golf programs. Additionally, he has come to watch entertainment programs since he started watching Korean television. He said it might be due to it containing the sense of humor a Korean descendant would understand. Particularly when it comes to food programs, he feels very strongly that Korean and Korean-Chinese are same descendants. Of course, he feels familiar with Chinese programs, but he feels more empathy for the Korean ones. He started to watch Korean programs on Chinese channels, and then on the satellite channels that his Korean-Chinese friends recommended to him. Mr. B remembered that he used to listen to old Korean songs when he was young. His Korean-Chinese friends prefer to sing old Korean songs when they go to Karaoke. His wife Mrs. E has similar memories of Korean songs.

His wife Mrs. E, also a second generation Korean-Chinese, watches Korean television almost every day and makes it a rule to watch Korean dramas. She said Chinese people also watch Korean dramas because Chinese dramas are low quality and the stories are not that interesting. She majored in pharmaceuticals and has a dietician certificate. She therefore enjoys watching programs relating to health:

"Those programs are so helpful to get information about health and detailed information I want to know. I used to watch Japanese dramas soon after coming back to China from Japan, but I don't watch Japanese dramas any longer because Korean dramas are a lot more appealing to me. I have relatives residing in Korea and visits them a couple of times a year. I really enjoy shopping in Korea, which suits my taste perfectly" (Mrs. E).

Their only child, currently studying in the UK, understands Korean but is not able to speak it because she was educated at Chinese schools. She previously attended a Korean learning program in Shanghai. Her friends are mostly Chinese and she consumes mostly Chinese media. However, she became interested in Korean television due to the recent Korean culture boom. Her friends watch Korean television programs on the Internet and sometimes ask her to watch Korean satellite television together at her home when she comes back to China. She also has come to

know of some famous Korean celebrities and uses some Korean expressions that she has learned from Korean television. Their story shows that the motivation and the way they consume Korean media are quite different, depending on the generation.

Mrs. D watched Korean television the least among the interviewees. She is from Yanbian and came to Shanghai seven years ago. Her mother and husband watch Korean television more than she does.

“My mother in her 70s used to enjoy watching Korean television in Yanbian and still watches Korean television. It is everyday routine for her. My husband also watches Korean television more than me and Yanbian TV as well. He regularly checks Yanbian Newspaper on the Internet as well, because he values his ethnic group” (Mrs. D).

It seems that because she focuses on her career, she has almost no time to watch Korean television. However, she has an impression that Korean television programs are of high quality compared to Chinese ones. She said she was quite impressed by the good service and environment when she lived in Seoul for business for a year and a half. She felt comfortable when she was in Korea, but she never thinks about living in Korea. Her children can speak Korean, but do not enjoy watching Korean television. They are quite weak at reading and writing Korean. She does not care much about their children’s Korean proficiency. This is similar to the informants mentioned above.

Mr. C runs a Korean restaurant in Shanghai. We interviewed Mr. C and his wife Mrs. F at the restaurant where Korean television is on all the time. They came to Shanghai twelve years ago. Both of them are second generation Korean-Chinese. Mrs. F lived in Korea for three years. She does not watch Chinese television at all. She cannot empathize with Chinese television. She still understands Chinese but she feels like she has lost a lot. She likes Korea and Korean people very much. She mentioned that they are well mannered and she received good service at stores and facilities such as department stores and banks. She also mentioned that things usually go differently in China.

“I usually watch Korean television at the restaurant and on the Internet when we are busy. When there were some problems with Korean television, I even went to my friend’s house just to watch Korean television. Chinese people also like to watch Korean television and want to learn some Korean words here. Young generation knows Korean food and order by themselves. I feel so good Chinese people like Korean culture. I had good impression about Korea through watching television in China and I even more liked Korea when I visited” (Mr. C).

She trusts Korean people, perhaps too much, as she got cheated once. She is hoping to go to Korea after retirement. She sometimes checks the housing in the area in Seoul where many Korean-Chinese live. She feels as though she is living in Korea. She knows exactly what is happening in Korea but does not know Chinese current news even though she lives in China. She goes to karaoke with her Korean-Chinese friends, which she really enjoys. They sing old Korean songs and the young generation sings current and popular Korean songs. She said her husband feels the same way as she does. He also wants to go to Korea and mentioned that when he visited Korea for the first time, he said it would have been better if he had visited Korea earlier. Her husband, Mr. C enjoys watching Korean television just like his wife. However, he also expressed feelings that differ from hers. He was very critical about the Korean attitude toward the Korean-Chinese, mentioning that his hometown was destroyed due to the so-called “Korean dream.” Young people had gone to Korea for work and only the elderly people have been left.

Ms. G is third generation Korean-Chinese. She is an undergraduate student from Jilin and came to Shanghai for a university education. She studied at a Korean ethnic middle school. Both the Chinese and Korean languages are comfortable for her, but she can feel empathy when she watches Korean dramas. She watches Korean television on the Internet, which is different from other informants who watch Korean television on Satellite. She also watched Korean satellite television in her hometown.

“I watched Korean television for the first time at grandmother’s house. I was looking forward to Sunday to watch Korean television. When I meet Korean-Chinese friends, I enjoy chatting with them and going to karaoke where they sing Korean songs. I have a lot of fun with Korean friends. My national identity is China, but I don’t watch Chinese TV. I enjoy and feel empathy more with Korean television” (Ms. G).

She never visits Korea and wants to visit Korea some time. She has never heard about the Korean’s negative attitude toward the Korean-Chinese and she has a good feeling about the Korean people she met in her hometown. As a Korean descendant, she is proud of Korea, particularly when Chinese friends ask her about Korean dramas and singers. She said she feels so good that she can understand Korean television when her Chinese friends cannot understand. She also gets information about Korean fashion and makeup styles on Korean sites and in programs. For her, it is a habit and pure entertainment to watch Korean television, while being cool and trendy at the same time.

## Diasporic Identity and Media Use of the Korean-Chinese in Tokyo

The largest number of Korean-Chinese outside of China and Korea is residing in Japan, mainly due to their language proficiency and geographical proximity. We interviewed two Korean-Chinese undergraduate students (Ms. I and J) and one Korean-Chinese graduate student (Ms. H).

Ms. H, a graduate student in Tokyo, came to Japan in 2011. She was born in Longjing city, Jilin as a fourth generation Korean-Chinese. Her relatives are residing in both South and North Korea. She went to a Korean ethnic school and spoke only Korean in her childhood. There was a Chinese course at school and she understood Chinese when watching TV, but she communicated with her family and her Korean-Chinese friends in Korean. She made Han-Chinese friends at university and most undergraduate courses were conducted in Chinese. However, she still has difficulty in academic writing and presentation in Chinese. She used to watch Korean dramas on Yanbian TV and has watched Korean television programs on the Internet since high school:

“Watching programs on Yanbian TV was just boring and the programs were low quality, compared to those of Korean television. That’s why I stopped watching Yanbian TV and started to watch Korean television programs on the Internet. Our interests were Korean television programs and celebrities at high school. My Han-Chinese friends of university even watched Korean television programs” (Ms. H).

Her parents went to South Korea for work in 1992 and then went back and forth several times. Her mother is currently working and residing in Korea with a permanent visa. Ms. H herself went to Korea in 2009 for the first time and although the familiarity of the Korean food and culture attracted her, her impression of Korea was not good at all, particularly because the way she speaks is different from the Korean people, which made her feel uncomfortable. She also has experience from working at a company in Beijing, but ended up leaving there in less than half a year. She explained that she did not like the peoples’ manner and style. One of the reasons she chose to come to Japan is that her cousins who were residing in Japan recommended that she study in Japan. She also wanted to learn another language and was concerned about the Koreans attitude toward the Chinese-Koreans. She feels more comfortable in Japan than in China or Korea and hopes to get a job and reside in Japan in the future.

It was also interesting that her image of the Korean people has changed since she came to Japan. This is because her Korean coworkers at her part-time job at a Korean restaurant are nice to her. Now, she thinks she would feel comfortable when visiting Korea. She does not have television at home in Japan and watches Korean

television programs on the Internet. She gets information about what is popular in Korea and the political situation as well. She often uses Daum and Naver, portal sites in Korea. She does not use Chinese media or Korean ethnic media. Her media environment is almost the same as those belonging to the young Korean generation living in Korea.

Her cousin who married a Korean-Chinese does not teach Korean to their children because of their accents. She thinks differently, saying she is willing to teach Korean to her kids. She sees that many Korean-Chinese are able to use standard Korean as a result of watching Korean television programs or residing in Korea, but she said that she would be left out of the group if she used standard Korean.

Ms. I is from Yanji and came to Japan in 2011. She also went to a Korean ethnic school. Their parents went to Korea when she was in elementary school and currently reside in Korea. They plan to go back to Yanbian after retirement. She went to a university in Dairen and dropped out to come to Japan. Her mother and uncle recommended that she study in Japan. She has the same reason as Ms. H for coming to Japan - instead of choosing to go to Korea where their parents are residing, she is able to learn another language here. She used to watch Korean drama on Yanbian TV and CCTV. She went to Seoul last year for the first time. She felt quite embarrassed by the way the Koreans and Korean-Chinese speak, as it is different. Ms. J felt the same.

She likes living in Japan, but now she is planning to go back to Yanji after graduation. Although she has no intention of going to Seoul to stay, she watches Korean television on the Internet:

“I watch Korean television programs on Korean-Chinese websites. I don’t read Korean-Chinese news on those sites. Why do I watch those programs? It is just because I’m just used to watching Korean programs since elementary school. My friends are all like me. We talk about Korean celebrities, not Chinese celebrities. But my identity is China. I don’t want to live in Korea. Maybe I will return to China after graduation and I want to live in cities other than Yanbian such as Dairen and Qingtao where I am familiar” (Ms. I).

She knows some Korean people in Tokyo and she has friendly feelings toward them. However, she does not have a positive outlook of Korea because of the conflict between the Koreans and the Korean-Chinese as well as the biased coverage of the Korean media on the Korean-Chinese. She also mentioned the relationship between Japan and China, which defends the Chinese policy and position.

Ms. J is from Yanji as well and stayed in Seoul with her family for a year and a half. Her first language is Korean and she learned Chinese as a foreign language.

She can communicate in Chinese but she thinks she is weak at academic Chinese. There was a satellite system at home so she was able to access a lot of channels including Chinese television. However, she mostly watched Korean television programs. She often talked about Korean celebrities and songs with her friends. She made some Chinese friends in the neighborhood who loved Korean culture. Although she was familiar with Korean culture due to watching Korean television, she was not willing to go to Seoul. She had difficulty interacting with classmates in Seoul for the first couple of months. She gradually adapted to school, which made her stay in Seoul a lot easier. She still keeps in touch with her friends from the middle school in Seoul. She was often praised because she is good at both Korean and Chinese. This made her think her language proficiency and experiences would be useful. Unlike other interviewees, she speaks in a perfect Korean accent thanks to her long stay in Korea.

She wanted to study in Australia to learn English, but her family wanted her to go to a country closer to China and Japan. Three interviewees were only children even though the minority can have more than one child since many families are eager to educate their kids and women tend to have full-time jobs in China.

Her aunt and cousin are Korean citizens and her cousin married a Korean man. She also considered studying in Korea, but she mainly wanted to experience something new. She came to Japan in 2011. She likes to visit Korea and stay there. She feels very comfortable, particularly because she is able to communicate in her first language and is familiar with the Korean food and culture. She also likes the good service at restaurants and shops, which is very different from China.

She watches Korean television programs although there is no television at home, which is the same situation as Ms. J. She enjoys watching Korean television and sometimes she even feels strange when she watches Chinese programs. She mentioned that some Chinese programs copy Korean ones, which makes her feel superior. She is very used to the Korean language and accent due to Korean television and sometimes forgets Korean-Chinese expressions and tries to recall them. However, she thinks that her national identity is Chinese saying:

“I am Chinese and I root up China when watching international games. I will go back to China to live with my family after graduation. My father is working at a company owned by Chinese and I am very proud of my father because he is doing well thanks to his fluent Chinese and Korean skill. I feel I need to learn Chinese more” (Ms. J).

It appears that her multiple diasporic experiences of living in China, Korea, and Japan have contributed to strongly globalizing her diasporic identity and reforming her national identity as a Chinese citizen.

## Discussions

This study investigated the motivations of media consumption among Korean-Chinese and its cultural meaning and relationship to their diasporic identity, focusing primarily on their double diasporic experience and identity negotiation process. Firstly, the Korean-Chinese diaspora in this study were eager to consume Korean media much more than the Chinese, Japanese, or Korean-Chinese ethnic media. They used a wide variety of Korean media contents including news, dramas, documentaries, music shows, and comedies, while they view only a minimum amount of major news from the country they reside in. One of our interviewees in Tokyo does not own even a television set because she does not find it necessary to watch Japanese broadcasting.

Additionally, the double diaspora informants we interviewed differed from the Korean-Chinese residing in the Korean autonomous prefecture of Northeast China and return immigrants to Korea in terms of media consumption. Overall, our interviewees tended not to use ethnic media, which shows their media use has little to do with their identity as a Korean-Chinese. As for the Korean-Chinese who returned to Korea, their experience of being treated as “others” in Korean society and in biased Korean media representation on the Korean-Chinese might lead to a stronger identity as a Korean-Chinese. This in turn might have them access ethnic media such as Internet sites for the Korean-Chinese.

The study also revealed that transnational media consumption such as satellite television and Internet have extended the traditional role of media in the construction of boundary-based cultural identity and globalized the Korean-Chinese informant’s diasporic identities. They lead their life in a symbolic world in the era of transnational media, which provides a sense of “contemporaneity” and “synchronicity” as noted by Tsagarousianou (2004). They share the same sense of time and space as the Korean citizens by watching KBS 9 news when it is 8:00 pm in Shanghai and enjoying Korean dramas depicting Korean life and value in Shanghai and Tokyo. Additionally, while they feel proud of the recent economic and cultural development of Korea, they exhibit a contradictive attitude when Korea is referred to as a “small country” compared to China. They show strong concerns regarding the way that the Korean media depicts the Korean-Chinese negatively, and its effects on the Korean peoples’ attitude toward the Korean-Chinese. Changing and expressing their identity depends on the circumstances and issues that are to their advantage. This can be referred to as “identity negotiation” and be interpreted as a “self-enhancement” process.

With regard to the motivation of Korean media usage, it can be said that our Korean-Chinese interviewees watch Korean television mainly for “entertainment.” Needless to say, this entertaining experience is based mostly on their ability to understand the Korean language and the basic cultural code that seems to be

especially necessary to fully enjoy dramas, variety shows and comedy. Almost all interviewees pointed to the fact that Korean programs are fun, amusing, and entertaining as the top reasons for consumption.

Another motivation for watching Korean television programs lies in satisfying the so-called “epistemic desire,” which is the desire to know about current events and people of a “home country.” Although our interviewees’ desire to know about contemporary Korea might be slightly different from the desire to know about the recent times of home country, it is clearly different from the interest to be directed toward a foreign country in general. Furthermore, the desire seems to be a strategic role in certain aspects such as being acquainted with the Korean style of social interaction. It is also connected to understanding and speaking more standard colloquial Korean etc. By watching Korean television, they can see how contemporary Koreans behave and talk in various situations and try to adapt to this behavior if they want or when needed. Such knowledge of a homeland can be a resource to ethnic minorities in their new country. However, it appears that keeping updated with current Korean events and people does not work as a primary resource to the Korean-Chinese in a diasporic situation. Shi (2005) indicated that some of her Chinese interviewees living in Iowa regarded being familiar with the current situation in mainland China as a strength of cultural minority in competing effectively in the United States. Our Korean-Chinese informants living in Shanghai and Tokyo, however, do not find much practical value in having detailed knowledge of contemporary Korea. They certainly have strong interests in Korean society and people and hence check the Korean news frequently and regularly, but they seem to do it not for using that knowledge as an ethnic resource but for fulfilling their desire to know and remember their past “home.” However, in previous literature, continuous adaptation for anticipated return in the future was specified as one of the major motivations for diasporic media consumption. This might not be the case with the Korean-Chinese diaspora of this study. Whereas Korean-Chinese diaspora admit Korea is the motherland of their grandparents and feel an ethnic affiliation to the Korean people, they identify their nationality as Chinese, almost without hesitation. They do not think of Korea as a place to go back to in the future for the purpose of business, career achievement, or residency. This positioning of Korean society or “Koreaness” in their diasporic identity landscape might determine their motivation for Korean media consumption behavior.

Additionally, their motivations for Korean television viewing and the way they consume Korean media are different depending on the generation and gender. The main reasons for watching Korean television, regardless of generation, can be explained in terms of the “cultural proximity” and “program quality” compared to Chinese and/or ethnic television. It was also interesting that viewing Korean television is so natural for undergraduate and graduate students who have been educated in Korean-Chinese ethnic schools. They mentioned that they have been

watching Korean television since their childhood and it is just a habit. As the double-diaspora choose to live in cities other than their hometown in Northeast China, they do not go through ethnic media, even by using ethnic sites to watch Korean television programs. It is worth noting that their media usage patterns of television watching and Internet use are not different from the young generation in Korea. In contrast, the young generations who have been educated in the Chinese educational system tend to regard Korean culture and media consumption as “cool” due to the recent Korean culture boom. The Korean media consumption may contribute to their identity reconstruction as Korean descendants.

Cultural proximity and empathy are more emphasized among middle-aged Korean-Chinese, which shows a significant generational divide. They emphasize that the Korean-Chinese and Koreans have just as much in common as the Korean-descendants. In comparison, the younger Korean-Chinese generations that did not watch Korean television got to watch Korean television programs because of the recent Korean culture boom and therefore feel proud that they understand the programs. Another motivation for watching Korean television programs can be explained in terms of information and entertainment. This differs according to gender: male informants prefer to watch news whereas females like watching dramas. These results have been well documented in media reception research.

There are a few studies on the diasporic aspects of media consumption and identity among Korean-Chinese that consider their expanding mobility or displacement. This study has shed some light on their double diasporic media consumption and identity. Future studies should further investigate the interaction between media consumption, the ongoing multiple identification process, dynamic reformation, and the social reconstruction of the Korean-Chinese diasporic identity in the transnational and globalized diasporic context.

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