

A Study of Korean Chinese Culture Transitions from Modern, Contemporary to Future Perspectives

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ABSTRACT The purpose of this paper is to interpret the development of Korean Chinese cultures from a historical perspective. It is a collaborative work done by a native anthropologist and a non-native anthropologist. The research methods used in the present study include literature research and anthropological field survey. By combining personal observation and participation, the researchers intend to restore the true picture of the Korean Chinese ethnic group in terms of its culture change, community construction, population immigration, transnational living styles, etc. It is emphasized that Korean Chinese culture is based on the farming mode of paddy field cultivation throughout the process of population movement across regional and national boundaries. Evidence shows that in view of transnational conditions, the modern concepts of nation, ethnicity, and identity need to be deeply explored.

INTRODUCTION

“Chaoxian-zu” (ethnic Korean Chinese, the Korean nationality) have legally transcended their national boundaries. Some of them have become South Korean, Japanese, and even American citizens. As a transnational people, they have begun to accept within their midst members from other ethnic groups, such as Han Chinese, South Koreans, Japanese, and other people, while forming and developing their own social networks.

Historically, it is clear that Korean Chinese have practiced slash and burn cultivation, and also that mobility is a distinctive feature of their existence. These two seemingly disparate things, namely their traditional means of attaining a livelihood and their need to uproot and transplant themselves elsewhere, are linked. The population flow, no matter whether it is from village to village, from village to city, or even from village to overseas, has never ceased because people all moved to China from Korean Peninsula for the same reason, namely a better life. Korean Chinese have been migrating from their home villages to large cities in China and other countries from the 1980s. Despite these waves of migration their traditional culture and conventions still play a positive and important role in their lives in these new places of residence. Korean Chinese adapt themselves to host societies, and

still manage to maintain much of their traditional cultural background. At least one ramification that emerges from this fact is that the commonly held assimilationist theories that abound in academia cannot be simplistically applied to these people. For instance, in research on migration in the American context, it has been found that full cultural assimilation has been achieved by most immigrants, though with the caveat that neither full structural assimilation nor Anglo-conformity is yet in evidence in migrant communities of non-European origins (Gordon 1964). This phenomenon of full assimilation may be true for the United States, but in reality this is not applicable to the migrations of the Korean Chinese. Korean Chinese have not merely moved from place to place impelled by outside forces, only to be swallowed up entirely in their new places of residence. Rather, they have been proactive agents in the process, which has allowed them to preserve their culture. Since Korean Chinese culture is based upon their agricultural village lives, it is important to know and understand the process of historical formation of their cultures within the context of those villages.

In light of the inappropriateness of past ethnicity theories based on the modern nation-state, the circumstances of the Korean Chinese show rather that transculturalism is a more meaningful theory for understanding their lives, for it challenges those same common ethnicity theories.

Objectives

This paper interprets Korean Chinese culture through the process of its historical formation from pre-modern times to the present. The researchers conducted this study from modern and contemporary perspectives, with an eye to the future, in the hope that people can gain a deeper insight into the change and development of this ethnic group. The study is designed to answer the following three questions:

- ♦ Does Korean Chinese mobility play an important role on their culture development?
- ♦ What sort of cultural sense, or cultural self awareness is shared by Korean Chinese?
- ♦ What are the features present as in Chinese culture transforms in new social environment?

METHODOLOGY

This research examines how Korean Chinese culture evolved across time and space. It is a collaborative work done by a native ethnic Korean Chinese anthropologist and a non-native anthropologist for the purpose of restoring the historical formation process to the understanding of Korean Chinese communities, their cultures, and their ordinary lives with the ultimate aim of achieving objectivity and fairness. The research methods used in the present study include literature research and anthropological field survey. By combining personal observation and participation, the researchers intend to restore the true picture of the Korean Chinese ethnic group in terms of cultural change, community construction, population migration, transnational living styles, etc.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Rethinking the Anthropological “Other”

Historically speaking, anthropological researches had been focused on so-called “primitive” cultures and societies. Through the Age of Exploration, anthropologically “primitive” societies were conquered and dominated by European civilization for more than three centuries. As is well known, anthropological research has played a part in aiding this conquest and domination.

However, from 1889, Franz Boas criticized ethnocentric attitudes toward non-European societies from an anthropological, culturally relativistic perspective. He proposed cultural relativism and anthropologically holistic approaches in order to attack the past and contemporary colonial attitudes of anthropologists toward less economically developed societies and peoples (Boas 1928). Despite Boas’ vast and critical contributions to anthropological research, actual colonial-style relations between advanced countries and under-developed countries remained and anthropological research on those societies and cultures has still been carried out and applied for the end of domination.

Edward Said’s *Orientalism* (Said 1978) was fundamental to opening up a discourse on this problem, and it contributed to criticisms of essentialism and non-equal relationships between the European societies one hand, and the Orient and other non-European societies on the other. According to Said, representations of a given culture should be done by the people of that culture themselves; the control ought to be in the hands of those non-European people.

How then can anthropological researchers write about other cultures? According to post-colonial essentialist criticism, only native anthropologists may have the right to write about their own cultures and make self-representations (Yoshioka 2005). In this way, they can become the leaders in the discussion of their native cultures, and thereby struggle against the effects of colonialism and colonial ideas on those cultures.

For non-native anthropologists, it is necessary to again proclaim cultural relativism and the “foreign culture-ness” of other cultures in order to reject power relations between natives and non-natives (Yoshioka 2008). However, while it is of course necessary for the non-native anthropologist to learn the perspective of the native one. It is also necessary for the native anthropologist to learn to other, non-native interpretations of their culture; in short, to see themselves through the eyes of the other. This co-operative work can create new possibilities for the interpretation of cultures, whether foreign or native. This paper relies upon this kind of co-operative method between Korean Chinese and Japanese anthropologists.

In the past, anthropological study of other cultures was typically focused on small, narrowly defined, and relatively stable communities, and

anthropologists were not particularly concerned with hybrid and fluid cultures. However, because of globalization today, the crossing of borders and intermingling of peoples and (thereby) cultures have become common phenomena around the world. Anthropology must face this globalization and come to grips with these phenomena. Korean Chinese have relocated their own life-worlds and spread their communication networking from China to Japan, South Korea, the United States, Australia, and into other countries. Anthropological studies on ethnic Koreans in China can thus be a window on transnationalism, and in addition, these studies can rethink ethnicity, identity, the nation-state, and other modern concepts and ideas. By interpreting Korean Chinese culture, it is possible to transcend fixed modern views on societies, and reach another anthropological method for understanding our current mode of existence. Although transnational conditions are shared by people all over the world, the nation-state (as merely one example of the previously mentioned common modern concepts) excludes transnational phenomena such as the movement of peoples outside or across fixed borders. The modern nation-state is seen as a firm structure in the everyday life of a given nation, and it brings with it a promise of national identity. As a member of a nation-state, one can maintain a sense of psychological security and can categorize and discriminate against those who do not belong. However, transnational conditions are rapidly developing all over the world, and such limited view has become inadequate.

Community History and Interpretations of Korean Chinese Culture

Korean Chinese started their migration from before the modern period. As it was so difficult to survive in northern Korea in particular during the late Choson period, and especially during the 19th century, Korean farmers of the region crossed the borders into northeast China and settled on the mountains and fields, converting them into farmland. Although these areas belonged to China, the population of Han Chinese was quite small and the residents were mostly Manchus, Mongolians, and those of other ethnic groups. Koreans cultivated these areas relatively freely with their traditional slash-and-burn methods.

This slash-and-burn migration continued until Japan initiated its relocation plan for Koreans during the 1930s. One year before the establishment of the Manchukuo state in 1932 in the northeastern region of China, the Japanese government decided to send Koreans there and organize these people as peasants in 1931 in order to cultivate japonica rice. Although the Japanese government organized groups of Koreans and prepared them for farm work some Koreans left Korea for northeast China on their own initiative because they had heard rumours that there were large amounts of arable land available. There were, in essence, two groups of Koreans in the area: planned immigrants and free immigrants. Since the pre-Manchukuo government was not successful in controlling the inflow of Korean immigrants, the free immigrants were vast in number (Jin 2012). It is calculated that before the establishment of the new state in 1932, more than 670,000 Koreans relocated to China (Hyeon 1967).

During the Manchukuo period from 1932 to 1945, the basic life strategy for Koreans began to take shape. Those residing in the territory of Manchukuo were given the status of subjects of Imperial Japan, and the ethnic Koreans accepted the reality and used it for their survival. Their strategy was, first, the cultivation of paddy fields as the foundation of the community, and then the striving for further success in life through education, and climbing toward what was called "civilization". From the 1950's, after the defeat of Japan and the collapse of its empire, Korean Chinese continued to construct their economic base through paddy field cultivation, which had begun in the Manchukuo period. They indeed managed to survive, and aimed to thrive now as citizens in the northeast of what had again become China. This basic level of economic success meant that further, higher levels of achievement were possible only through better education, similar to the past under Japanese rule, but this time, Chinese Koreans left their villages for Beijing or other large cities which had highly ranked universities. A more detailed comparison between the Manchukuo and post war eras is in order.

Before 1945, Koreans had sent their children who were living in Manchukuo to Japanese schools. They knew that even Japanese women received an education and could read Chinese characters. Although Korean adults at that time

did not generally go to school, and instruction in the Korean *hangul* writing system and some Chinese characters was limited only to men in private schools, the ethnic Koreans knew that education promised the future success of their children, and thus it became a pull factor, drawing Koreans away from their rural villages. This posed a kind of conundrum; Korean Chinese strongly formed communal ties within their villages and emphasized the educational role of villages, but at the same time such an emphasis necessitated the leaving of the village by children in favor of metropolitan areas.

When Koreans in Manchukuo started to form their villages, some had indeed left for urban areas (Jin 2012). This tendency of leaving for cities was shared by Koreans in Hawaii from the 1910's (Patterson and Wayne 1988). Cities for Koreans must have been seen as offering the chance for greater success because cities, from their perspective, promoted "civilization". This tendency necessarily runs contrary to the sustaining of village life. Through the Manchukuo period, until the 1950s, the Koreans there did not really desire to settle permanently in those areas; generally, they hoped to earn money, and then return to their homes on the peninsula. Villages in Manchukuo were thought of as temporary dwellings, and therefore the Koreans had little difficulty leaving them behind in pursuit of education in the cities. In the villages, the focus was on keeping the human connections and the local culture they had brought with them from their home villages on the peninsula. There were not yet deep ties to the community and the land around them. The tendency to see those villages in China as home, and the resulting desire to protect and maintain them came about only in the 1960s.

After 1945, many new Korean villages were created in Northeastern China and the ethnic

Koreans became Korean Chinese. At that time, most Korean Chinese lived in those Korean Chinese villages, as Chinese law pertaining to rural farmers prohibited their relocation to urban areas. The stability and communal living that resulted formed the basis of a distinctly Korean Chinese (not peninsular Korean) culture and human relations. This life in the villages continued through the 1970s. However during the 1980s, things began to change participated in trade with China, North Korea, and Russia during the 1980's and 1990's. The number of students studying in Japan increased during these two decades and the number of Korean Chinese laborers in South Korea rapidly increased after the 1980's. Today, going abroad is very common for Korean Chinese, and one of its effects is that Korean Chinese villages are disappearing because of the declining number of Korean Chinese residents actually living there.

It is calculated that the number of Korean Chinese abroad exceeds 650,000, and they are dispersed amongst South Korea, Japan, the United States, Australia, Canada, Russia, and other countries.¹ Also the population of Korean Chinese in the Shandong Peninsula, which is within China but close to South Korea, is increasing; those residing in Qingdao and nearby cities total approximately 300,000. The network of Korean Chinese is now transnational, and the number of foreign passport holders is increasing (Tables 1 and 2).

The discussion above provided a short history of the Korean Chinese community up to the present. Next is an examination of the various models used to interpret the Korean Chinese with regards to their history.

Among Korean Chinese, there have been five basic frameworks for interpreting their own ethnic condition. The first model, which has been

Table 1: Chinese Korean population in large cities in China (outside of the Northeastern area)

Unit: Ten thousand

Area	Population	Area	Population	Area	Population
Shandong	18	The capital area	17	East China area	8.5
Qingdao	12			Shanghai	6
Weihai	3	Beijing	12	Yiwu Zhejiang	1
Yantai	2	Tianjin	4	Suzhou Jiangsu	0.8
Guangdong	6	Shanxi	0.3	Gansu	0.05
Sichuan	0.1	Yunnan	0.08	Hainan	0.04

(An Chenghao - Changes of an Ethnic Group: An Anthropological Investigation on the Communities Korean Chinese, 113)

Table 2: Korean Chinese population

Year	1990		2000		2010	
Area	Population	Percentage	Population	Percentage	Population	Percentage
Jilin	1183567	61.54	1145688	59.55	1040167	56.81
Heilongjiang	454091	23.61	388458	20.19	327806	17.90
Liaoning	230719	12.00	241052	12.53	239537	13.08
Beijing	7710	0.40	20369	1.06	37380	2.04
Tianjin	1820	0.09	11041	0.57	18247	1.00
Shanghai	742	0.04	5120	0.27	22257	1.22
Jiangsu	963	0.05	5048	0.26	9525	0.52
Neimenggu	22173	1.15	21859	1.14	18464	1.01
Guangdong	611	0.03	10463	0.54	17615	0.96
Shandong	3362	0.17	27795	1.44	61556	3.36
other	17603	0.91	46949	2.44	38375	2.10
Nationwide	1923361	100	1923842	100	1830929	100

(The number of this table does not represent the actual number of Korean Chinese and shows the officially registered number.) (Piao, Guangxing. “‘Compression type city’ of national community ‘discrete crisis’ and ‘reconstruction of motion’”, 90)

quite influential, is conceived of figuratively as Korean culture marrying into Chinese culture (Zheng 1997). The ethnic Korean, understood here in the subordinate, passive, feminine role, abandons her old “family” and cleaves wholeheartedly to the Chinese “husband” and adopting his norms. Clearly this is a cultural assimilationist model in which Koreans join the Han mainstream. Han Chinese society.

The second framework is the “Korean Chinese culture as independent and unique” view (Huang 2002). Jin Jingyi notes that “the culture of Korean Chinese does not belong to the Korean Peninsula. Our culture is independent and has equal status with those in the Korean Peninsula” (Jin 2001).

The third framework regards Korean Chinese culture as a culture of the margins. The core of Ethnic Korean community and culture is located away from the urban metropolitan centers, on the frontiers bordering on North Korea, and thus seen has literally marginal. This positioning of the Korean Chinese can function to create another form of culture, not bound to the strict nation-state, and can contribute to the world in the twenty-first century. It then becomes imperative for Korean Chinese to know the role of their cultures in the world and create appropriate cultural strategies (Jin 2001).

The fourth framework likens Korean Chinese culture to an “apple-pear” plant. According to Xu Mingzhe, “Korean culture co-mingles with Chinese culture, which creates a hybrid Korean Chinese culture, and this hybrid is distinct from

the separate Korean and Chinese cultures from which it arises” (Xu 2006). In this regard, it is much like the so-called apple-pear plant. In fact, “apple-pear” is a misnomer; the plant is actually a combination of two different types of pear, one native to North Korea and the other native to northeastern China, but the fruit looks very much like an apple. Ethnic Koreans are fond of eating this fruit.

The fifth framework is multiculturalism. According to Liu Jingzai, “The original culture of Korea, plus the cultural influences present during Japan’s occupation of the region, and also traditional Chinese culture all formed the present Korean Chinese culture. Therefore in order to understand the Korean Chinese and grasp the complete image of their culture, it is necessary to know and understand all of the respective cultural influences” (Liu 2006).

During the 1990’s and the 2000’s, Korean Chinese people moved to large cities in China and to foreign countries, and as a result villages became smaller and even sometimes disappeared altogether. Han Chinese people entered these villages and became the majority of the resident population due to the decreasing number of Korean Chinese. The discussion of the culture of Korean Chinese became very popular during this period. Up until this point, Korean Chinese had developed their culture, educational institutions, and economies on the foundation of their villages. As their villages were relatively stable by that period, Koreans were able to maintain their lives, cultural practices and institutions.

Korean schools essentially belonged to villages and played a large role in maintaining the Korean language. After school, children could learn the other facets of Korean cultural life in their homes and in the village community. Outside these communities and villages, Korean Chinese had to, of course, speak Chinese in order to relate to the Han and other peoples around them. It should be noted here that through the Korean language, children could learn Confucian human relations and behaviors. Contrary to what might initially be imagined, in China forms of human relations and etiquette are not broadly Confucian and thus common to all the peoples of China. Rather, they are more narrowly ethno-specific, which is to say, Ethnic Koreans have kept their own etiquette, social hierarchies, and so on distinct from Han ones. A similar thing can be seen in other facets of cultural life as well. For example, the traditional Korean cuisine is common to all ethnic Korean community residents. The lighter, less-oily Korean food is cooked and eaten in the traditional Korean way, in contradistinction to the heavier, oilier foods enjoyed by their Han neighbors. Traditional ethnic dance furnishes another example. It is popular, can be seen at both formal and informal gatherings, and is associated with ethnic pride. The cultural attachment to dance is not in evidence among Han Chinese in the same way.

Since it was their villages that provided the cultural characteristics for the Korean Chinese, the collapse of those villages alerted them to their importance, and made them conscious about the state of their culture. However because of the restoration of political and economic relations between China and South Korea, urban Korean culture rapidly flooded into the life-world of the Korean Chinese, and those ethnic Koreans who were living in cities were much influenced by the urban Chinese culture they found around them. These new circumstances began to pose a threat to the maintenance of the traditional Korean Chinese way as had been the case up to that point. Korean Chinese scholars based in the People's Republic of China started to pay closer attention to this challenge and sought to awaken Korean Chinese consciousness to it. However, despite this, both South Korean and Chinese cultural influences remain strong and as a result, the culture of Korean Chinese is weakening.

Anthropological research has recently started to investigate Korean Chinese cultural prac-

tices through fieldwork. It is difficult to state concretely what exactly is Korean Chinese culture at this time, but historically speaking, it has been constructed through the amalgam of traditional, ethnically specific Korean culture, the colonial experiences in Japan's Manchukuo, paddy cultivation, and also predominant Chinese influences. This is evident in *undonghoe* (athletic competitions), for example, which are very popular. In the Manchukuo period, Japanese colonial policy forced Koreans to participate in these athletic events, with the aim of furthering the domination of the Japanese over them. However, after 1945, these meetings became important annual events for Korean Chinese themselves in each village. In effect, Japan's imperial purpose was changed to a self-affirming Korean Chinese one. Furthermore, these athletic meets held by Korean Chinese, are also attended and participated in by people of other ethnic groups. Korean Chinese have gone beyond the narrow confines of nationality and have created a post-modern culture which permits the participation of non-Korean Chinese people. Such events are not just for pleasure, but also for cultural awakening. In this way, have taken original Korean, Japanese colonial, and Han Chinese elements and have used them with new aims namely cultural survival and creative cultural production.

Now, it is necessary to understand certain aspects of village culture in order to ascertain what at present are the characteristics of Korean Chinese culture. Village culture can provide a lens through which to view the life-world of Korean Chinese who have spread around the world. These people are former residents of these places and were culturally influenced by the way of life therein.

Basic Cultural Practices in Korean Chinese Villages

Generally speaking, Korean Chinese people are (or descend from) rice field farmers; demographic studies show that a full 92 percent of them belong to this category (Archives of Yanbian Korean Autonomous Prefecture 1985). However, a consideration of earlier, nineteenth century history is required to fully grasp the importance of this.

Koreans were successful in rice cultivation in northeastern areas of China after 1875 (Jin

2007), though it was not wetland (or paddy) rice, but rather dry-land (or upland) rice, and this caused the increase of the Korean population there and the formation of Korean villages. Clearly Rice had become an important product for cultivation even from before Japan's invasion in 1932. After the establishment of Manchukuo, Japan organized their own villages for Koreans who were already there and used these people as rice cultivation laborers in the beginning. This was led by Japan's army in the 1930's, and Koreans were forced to live in these places (Sun 2009). After 1937, Japan started to send Koreans from the peninsula who had rice field cultivation skills to Manchukuo. *Mansen Takushoku*, or the company that developed Japan's investments in Manchukuo and Korea, invested 2,626,000 yen over seven years (At that time, one dollar was about 3 yen, or 103, 00 yen today) and developed paddy fields in Manchukuo (Sun 1999).

Japan's policy for Koreans in Manchukuo was to create artificial villages for them. In response, Koreans tried to maintain their culture language, and communities formed with compatriots from the same subnational home regions. These home cultures were based on local counties in Korea, namely, North and South Hamgyong and North and South Pyongan provinces in northern Korea, and North and South Kyongsang and North and South Cholla provinces in southern Korea. Most Korean villages of that time were of this character. Maintaining their home cultures by settling with others from the same locale was a method of resisting the disruptions of colonialism that could not be seen by the Japanese, who could not perceive the regional differences. However, the Japanese enforced wet land (or paddy field) cultivation, and not the dry land method that the Koreans had previously known. Since this modern method ensured increased output, the Korean Chinese followed the Japanese colonial policy, and therefore, they had to attempt to maintain their original culture on the new foundation of paddy fields. Because of this, there were limitations on the degree to which people of the same areas could settle together.

The attempt by these Koreans to reproduce, or simply transplant local cultures from disparate parts of the Korean peninsula into Manchuria was not entirely successful. They became classified officially by the Chinese government as "Chaoxian-zu", or ethnic *Korean Chinese*,

and because of the language education from northern Korea, the differences in dialect between these newly declared Korean Chinese who had various regional origins began to diminish. They, at this point, slowly began take on this new Korean Chinese identity and regard themselves as the same people, although some of their linguistic and cultural differences remained. Furthermore, although they had tended to form networks among the people from same village, this was indeed merely a tendency, and their network increasingly opened up to all Korean Chinese.

After 1945, with the collapse of the Japanese empire and the end of Manchukuo and its forced cultivation regime, ethnic Koreans in the northeastern areas of China faced great instability. Some began to leave for their home country, causing a reduction in the population. Others were at a loss and had no future plans because they thought they could not survive in Korea proper. Although the ethnic Korean community in China after 1945 became disordered to some extent, Korean Chinese further reorganized their villages along the lines of share dialect and region of origin in order to survive in the northeastern areas of China (An 2014).

During this period, in Heilongjiang Province the paddy field area in 1945 was 124,470 hectares, but it fell to 80,000 hectares by 1947. By 1953 the paddy fields were restored to 120,083 hectares, by 1954 to 157,222 hectares, by 1955 to 176,307 hectares, and by 1956 to 296,752 hectares (Chinese Academy of Sciences Nationality Research Institute 1959). The outflow of ethnic Koreans trained by the Japanese with the skills to carry out the wet rice cultivation, meant that there were fewer people knowledgeable in maintaining the presently existing agricultural system. The local Han Chinese residents destroyed some of the irrigation systems that the paddy fields required, and without them, paddy cultivation became impossible. From their perspective, the paddy field had become useless (as they did not have the skills to operate them), so they tried to eradicate the wet cultivation and return to the dry field farming with which they were already familiar. In order to reorganize Korean villages, Chinese Koreans had to restore these systems. To this end, the ethnic Koreans formed and developed base groups, and these groupings became the basis for new Korean Chinese villages later.

After Koreans became Korean Chinese, again they followed China's fundamental agricultural policy. In the postwar 1940's and the 1950's, the basic agricultural policy in China was the formation of collective work groups in villages to better increase production. Korean Chinese formed their groups and restored the irrigation systems, tilled wilderness areas, and developed paddy fields. Because of this collectivization, the rice output was increased, and it provided better economic conditions. This cooperative organization became their cultural base.

During the period from the end of Manchukuo to the present, the Korean Chinese did not themselves have autonomous control over the uses of their village lands; rather, they carried the lingering influences of the old colonial policy, were pressed by the demands of basic economic survival, and were led by the policies of the national government. Restoring and developing paddy field cultivation was needed for survival, and whether or not they were the actual owners of village land, it caused them to maintain and develop their culture based on that paddy field cultivation.

Population Migration and Korean Chinese Culture

As previously discussed, the cultural practices and institutions of the Korean Chinese are based on paddy agriculture. Of course, such paddy agriculture depends upon stable paddy field and residents, but Korean Chinese historically have not always enjoyed that stability. Rather, migration has been common for them. From the beginning, Koreans relocated from Korea to Manchukuo in order to survive whether they were impelled to go by Japan's agricultural planning or not. Some Koreans entered Manchukuo freely, and many had known only of a relative or acquaintance living there ahead of them before they themselves had set out from Korea. Their adventure of migration meant the beginning of their paddy cultivation in Manchukuo. In that period of Japanese control, Koreans who could afford the cost typically did not elect to move to Manchukuo, but rather Japan. Those who did go to Manchukuo were the desperate who went to grasp at their last chance for survival (Harajiri 2011).

In the early twentieth century, both Japan and Chinese local governments tried to develop

paddy fields in the northeastern areas in China. For Koreans, who for a long time had not practiced individual private ownership of land, personal relations and shared cultural norms were important. When they organized their groupings, they relied on the model of the *kye*, which they had derived from Korean traditional culture. The *Kye* were mutual support systems originally based upon Korean traditional animist religion. Since the original Korean groupings derived from dialect-based regions of Korea, these regional groupings were associated with the *kye*, and in this way they (the *Kye*) became the basic unit for group building in Korean traditional villages.

The Koreans, for whom the experiences related to migration and resettlement were common, often came into contact with other peoples and other cultures. As they were in China, this definitely included Han Chinese people and their cultural norms. During the Manchukuo period, Japan was in control and so the Koreans formally became Japanese citizens. They encountered Russians in Manchukuo and including Mongolians. After 1945, this interethnic meeting continued and they became involved in creating a new culture. Cuisine again furnishes a good example. Among the Korean Chinese, mutton, beef, and other meat on skewers are very popular. Korean Chinese acquired the taste for this kind of food through contact with the Uighurs, and then went on to adapt and develop it in their own way by employing a variety of spices from Han food traditions. It is known that for instance South Koreans favor spicy foods, but they rely on chili peppers for their spice and tend not to use others. This is not so for the ethnic Koreans of China, who generally enjoy various spices. Generally speaking, food traditions are culturally conservative, so the Korean Chinese case is unusual. Korean Chinese learn from other peoples and apply this learning to create their own new ways of seasoning food. Their adaptability has developed through their historical experiences. Korean Chinese culture is open to other cultures and to future development. They do not simply assimilate into the dominant Han Chinese culture in China.

The number of Korean Chinese who live outside of northeastern China has increased, and not only in other parts of China proper but also in other countries. The total population of Korean Chinese is 1,830,929 people in 2010. In South

Korea, they number about 600,000 people, in Japan about 100,000, in the United States about 80,000, and about 500,000 in China's large cities and other areas outside of the northeast. The scale of migration by Korean Chinese is incomparably greater than that of the 1940's.

According to the second author's unpublished field data, Korean Chinese form informal groups based upon their home cities or counties. Both cities and counties are associated with villages and form shared regional culture of Korean Chinese. From the ethnic Korean perspective, these groups are meaningfully associated with their villages. Moreover, Korean Chinese in the United States, Japan, and Korea hold athletic meets each year, which are held in their villages, too. The specific social relations that derive from village life remain present within the confines of the village, but outside of it Korean Chinese accept Han-Chinese, South Koreans, Japanese and others in order to go beyond modern national and ethnic boundaries. This post-modern, inter-ethnic condition is gladly accepted by Korean Chinese.

Transnational studies give some examples of post-modern living conditions of migrant communities in other nation-states but unlike Korean Chinese, these examples do not explore the meaning of cultural originalities and development based upon their home country culture and negotiations with other cultures (Köngeter and Smith 2015). Although this paper makes use of the methods of transnationalism, transnational studies until now has not been able to cover the cultural development and the creation of migrants as they change from pre-modern and modern to post-modern cultures.

CONCLUSION

Human relations of Korean Chinese are not confined only to members of the ethnic group in their different places around the world. Because of their cultural openness to Han Chinese, South Koreans, Japanese, and others, the communication network of Korean Chinese in large cities in China, South Korea, Japan, and the United States is not only populated by Korean Chinese, but also by people of other ethnicities who are associated with the activities of Korean Chinese.

In the historical context of Korean Chinese culture, their pre-modern tradition of slash-and-burn cultivation has continued since they left villages in Korea for Manchukuo. To improve the livelihoods, they kept moving, as their chil-

dren had to attend universities or join the army. Then, following the reforms of the 1980s by the Chinese government, they began to seek opportunities for a better life abroad the populations flow has never stopped.

Korean Chinese legally transcend national boundaries. Some become citizens of South Korea, Japan, the United States, or other countries. In this sense, they are a transnational people, going beyond modern nation states. Furthermore, while they are forming and developing their networks, they also transcend ethnic boundaries as well. Although modern ideas or modernity created the modern states all over the world, this modernity has little meaning for Korean Chinese in reality. It has been traditionally thought that ethnic groups generally stay within their own nation states, and that their ethnic boundaries are quite tight. However Korean Chinese go beyond these boundaries. From this, it is clear that the modern concepts of nation, ethnicity, and identity need to be reconsidered. A careful investigation of Korean Chinese culture can be a tool in the reinterpretation of post-modern human relations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

As is evident in the case of the migrations of Korean Chinese, the concept of transnationalism is not a modern concept but rather is a post-modern one. Transnationalism means that people create postmodern cultures using pre-modern and modern tools, communication technology, modern rational ideas, and others. The networks of Korean Chinese accept people of other ethnicities, such as Han Chinese, South Koreans, Japanese, and others. In addition to this, the modern concept of "identity" is problematic for them. For Korean Chinese, it is common to integrate different cultural elements from other peoples in order to create new cultural forms. In this way, they build the future based on the past. The past self seems not so meaningful for them. Their villages are communities based upon traditional Korean cultures, but Korean cultural traits are frequently transformed in based on their utility. Without any doubt, the past must contribute to future creativity.

NOTES

1. According to Ministry of Government Administration and Home affairs (2014), in South Korea there are 608,089; according to Liu Jingzai "The Global Korean Network of Chinese Korean", there are

53,000 in Japan; according to the Dong-A Ilbo newspaper (Jan. 27, 2006) there are over 20,000 in the United States; and according to the Overseas Korean newspaper (Jan. 23, 2006) there are from 30,000 to 50,000 in Russia.

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