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## Article

# Diaspora, Mobility, and Food Culture: Continuity and Change in Dietary Habits and Foodways among Korean Return Migrants from Latin America\*

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### Abstract

Food is an important symbol of diaspora in this era of international migration. The food practices of a diaspora often reflect their unique historical and cultural characteristics and contexts of home and host countries. This article explores the dietary habits of Koreans who have returned from Latin America to their ethnic homeland. Methodologically, this study draws on an empirical approach to food and migration studies and utilizes data collected from 18 in-depth interviews held with Korean return migrants from Latin America. The findings show that after returning to Korea, the respondents' consumption of Latin-American food significantly decreased because of the general unavailability and high cost of Latin food ingredients and restaurants in Korea, and because Latin dishes in Korea are Koreanized or Americanized. Contrastingly, their consumption of Korean dishes increased because of their affordability and available variety. They also enjoyed the easy access to other Asian flavors, including Thai, Vietnamese, and Indian cuisines. This study will enhance the understanding of the Korean diaspora's return migration, their hybrid and varied food culture, and their cultural identities.

**Keywords** : Latin-American food, mobility, return migration, diaspora, glocalization, food and identity

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## Introduction

Traditionally, food culture of a specific location was shaped by the natural, environmental, and sociocultural characteristics of the region or country. However, widespread globalization and human migration due to the rapid development of transportation and communication technologies have effected an unprecedented transformation in Korean food and its food service industry. John Urry (2007) listed five interdependent mobilities: corporeal, material, imaginative, virtual, and communicative. The mobility framework covers not only human mobility, but also transportation and communication; mobility of objects, images, information, systems and networks; and social mobility (Urry, 2007; King & Christo, 2011). With the intensification of mobility flows of people and objects, culinary cultures travel beyond their traditional territories, and foreign food materials and recipes are disseminated beyond these territories, increasingly influencing other nations' food cultures. Food and foodways travel the globe, contributing to the (re)production of ethnic, religious, class, and national identities (Mintz, 2008).

In the era of international migration, food is an important symbol of a diaspora, whose food practices reflect the unique historical and cultural conditions and contexts of home and host countries. Regarding the Korean diaspora and their food cultures, Song (2016) examines the phenomenon of globalization and popularity of Korean food in the former Soviet Union. Similarly, Kwon (2005) compares the degree of localization of the Korean food culture among Korean descendants in Mexico and Japan. However, the Korean diaspora's food culture has rarely been examined within the broader context of the phenomenon of "return migration," and the recent emergence of ethnic food cultures in the urban space of Seoul.

The International Organization for Migration (2004, p. 56) defines return migration as "[t]he movement of a person returning to his/her country of origin or habitual residence usually after spending at least one year in another country," adding, "This return may or may not be

voluntary.” Since the 1990s, an increasing number of overseas Koreans have been returning to the Republic of Korea (hereafter “Korea” or “South Korea”). Naturally, these Korean return migrants interact with their compatriots on a daily basis.

During the 1960s, following the Korean government’s encouragement, the majority of Korean agricultural families settled in Latin America. According to statistics issued by the Korean Ministry of Foreign Affairs, as of 2019, there were 103,617 Korean immigrants in Latin America. There were 48,281 Koreans in Brazil (46.60%); 23,063 in Argentina (22.26%); 11,897 in Mexico (11.48%); 5,501 in Guatemala (5.31%); and 5,039 in Paraguay (4.86%). However, Koreans in Latin America have demonstrated relatively high levels of mobility, and their migratory movements tend to be multidirectional, involving continuous migration within Latin America, or globally. Some Koreans who initially went in Latin America either returned to South Korea or relocated to the U.S. because of political or economic crises in Latin America, or for other reasons (Bae, 2014). The present study accords particular attention to some younger generation Koreans who were born or raised in Latin America, and came to Korea with family, or alone, for better educational opportunities.<sup>1)</sup> This article was devised as follow-up research to the author’s previous work (Bae, 2018a) exploring the higher education experiences in Seoul of Korean students returning from Latin America. It was hypothesized that there would be a difference between the dietary habits of younger-generation Koreans with a multicultural upbringing and background, and those of first-generation Koreans from Latin America, as the former tend to be more assimilated into the local Latin-American society and culture through schools or mainstream social institutions. It was also hypothesized that younger-generation returnees would encounter and experience a much greater difference in food culture than their first-generation counterparts in the process of return migration. This article notes that the physical transnational movement of people, including the return movement of the Korean diaspora from Latin America, also elicits flows of food cultures, culinary knowledge, food ingredients, and

social networks between Latin America and South Korea.

One of the key concepts utilized in this study includes “ethnic food.” In a broader sense, ethnic food can be defined as an ethnic group’s or a country’s cuisine that is culturally and socially accepted by consumers outside of their respective ethnic groups (Kwon, 2015). For example, Greek, Indian, Italian, Thai, and Korean foods are all considered ethnic foods outside of their own countries (Kwon, 2015). Previous literature has examined the emergence and development of ethnic food cultures in Korea, focusing on Korean nationals’ preferences, attitudes, consumption patterns, and ethnic food entrepreneurship. For instance, Bak (2010) explores the nature of Korean patronage of emerging ethnic restaurants and maintains that Koreans construct and express their global identities by consuming ethnic cuisine, while restaurant entrepreneurs strategize their business to suit the Korean cultural environment. In particular, the author points out that, in adapting to local conditions, ethnic cuisines undergo cultural processes of standardization, localization, and hybridization.

Some scholars have examined the increasing influx of foreigners into, and the emergence and proliferation of ethnic cuisines within, the Korean society. Previous studies on migration and subsequent changes in migrants’ food culture include research on food culture adaptation processes within marriage migrants’ homes, or the reterritorialization of Muslim migrants’ food culture in Seoul (Song, 2007; Kim, 2010; Choi, 2017). However, there has been little research on the impacts of the recent flourishing of ethnic restaurants on returned Koreans’ everyday dietary habits and food culture. Against this backdrop, this study explores the continuity and change in dietary habits and foodways among Koreans returning from Latin America to their ethnic homeland. Each country’s or region’s cuisine takes a different position depending on the geographic location. This study delves into how Korean returnees address the fact that in Latin America, Korean cuisine can be considered ethnic or exotic by non-Koreans; however, in Korea, Latin-American cuisine is classified as ethnic food.

This study draws on an empirical approach to food and migration

studies and utilizes data collected from 18 in-depth interviews conducted with Korean migrants from Latin America. The main points of inquiry of this research are as follows: whether and how Korean returnees continue or change their dietary lifestyles after returning to Korea; how the recent burgeoning of Latin-American restaurants in Seoul has impacted Korean returnees' dietary habits; how the consumption of Latin-American foods is related to returnees' (trans)formations and expressions of hybrid cultural and ethnic identities; and how returnees react to localized, or fused, Latin-American foods in Seoul restaurants.

In summary, this study explores the continuity and change in dietary habits and foodways among the Korean diaspora that has returned from Latin America to their ethnic homeland. It particularly discusses the meanings of Korean returnees' cooking and consumption of Latin-American food as part of their negotiation of cultural identities.

### **Growth of the Ethnic Restaurant Businesses in Korea**

During the late-1990s, ethnic foods began to appear in the Korean society. In particular, Vietnamese and Thai restaurants emerged one after another, targeting the younger generation. Spicy Thai food and light Vietnamese food quickly gained popularity without particularly rejecting the tastes of the younger generation. The ethnic food craze then shifted to Indian and Middle-Eastern food (Park, 2009). A major reason for this interest in, and popularity of, ethnic food is the increase in international travel since the late-1980s, which exposed people to foreign cuisines. Cosmopolites consume international media, foreign literature, movies, and exotic dishes in their home countries and establish their individuality through the consumption of original and authentic objects (Jang & Ha, 2015). A large number of Koreans, who have traveled abroad and tasted a variety of cuisines, want to experience global cultural diversity in Korea. Ethnic restaurants provide this opportunity (Turgeon & Pastinelli, 2002). Moreover, social network services and television programs on international cuisines have also contributed to the popularization of ethnic foods

in Korea.

Both outbound and inbound mobilities of people have rapidly transformed urban foodscapes and expanded the ethnic restaurant market in Seoul. Today, multicultural districts of cities can be developed and marketed as leisure and tourism destinations (Shaw, Bagwell & Karmowska, 2004). The Seoul metropolitan area houses 270,000 foreign residents and foreign food restaurants are often scattered throughout or clustered in specific areas of Seoul. The process of human migration is intertwined with the migration of food cultures. Over the past few decades, various ethnic towns have developed in Seoul because of the growing influx of foreign workers, marriage migrants, international students, and the returning Koreans. These ethnic towns and restaurants serve as spaces where migrants share information and preserve and express their cultural identities and food cultures (Song, 2007; Cha & Cha, 2013). For instance, Song (2014) analyzes the spatial process and cultural territory of Islamic restaurants in the Itawon area of Seoul, and demonstrates that for Muslim migrants, these shops offer not only the taste of their homeland but also the possibility of maintaining their religious identity. For Korean consumers and non-Muslim clients, Islamic restaurants and grocery stores represent a form of exotic dining experience. Cha and Cha (2013) delve into a foreign residents' street in Gimhae City and illuminate that ethnic restaurants play a role as social spaces where migrants can connect with their own ethnic culture and relieve the stresses they experience in occupational and residential spaces. This is because they can consume food that is the same as in their home country and meet and have conversations with friends in their own language.

The number of Korean returnees from Latin America is small, so they do not form separate concentrated residential and commercial areas in Seoul. However, ethnic enclaves and restaurants of diverse backgrounds spread across the urban space of Seoul have contributed to the development and popularization of assorted types of ethnic foods, and have granted returnees greater access to ethnic food options.

## Methods

Methodologically, this research utilizes newspaper articles and other secondary sources in Korean and English related to the migration history and experiences of Koreans in Latin America, their return migration, and the ethnic food culture in Korea. However, the most significant research data were gathered empirically through in-depth semi-structured interviews conducted between October and December 2018 with 18 Korean migrants from Latin-American countries. Interviewees were recruited on the following basis: a participant needed to be over 20 years old and an ethnic Korean who had lived in a Latin-American country for more than two years, but resided in Korea at the time of the interview.

In order to locate and recruit participants, this research project was advertised on various websites and social media networks. Additionally, snowball sampling through initial contact was used to recruit other participants. Face-to-face interviews were held in Korean, English, or a mixture of both, depending on the respondents' preferences. The main research questions can be divided into three categories: 1) the biographical information of the research participants, including birth place, nationality, occupation, the duration and country of their residence in Latin America, and the year they relocated to Korea; 2) details of their dietary lifestyle and habits in Latin America; and 3) details of their dietary and culinary practices in Korea. The third category of questions, related to the eating habits of the respondents after their return migration to Korea, was the most significant and central to this study. Each interview lasted between one and three hours. Interviews were recorded with the consent of the interviewees and transcribed afterwards. The interview data were analyzed using thematic analysis and all interview materials were treated anonymously and confidentially. In order to protect the respondents' privacy, only pseudonyms are used in this study.

Table 1 provides an overview of the participants. Interviews were conducted with five males and 13 females. Most of the respondents were in their early twenties, with a median age of 22.6 years. Their birth places

are as follows: 10 were born in Korea, two in Guatemala, two in Bolivia, and one each in Brazil, Paraguay, and Ecuador. The Korean-born respondents initially migrated to Latin America with their parents mainly because of economic reasons, and most had lived in Latin-American countries for over 17 years. The average duration of their residence in Latin America was 16.7 years.

Table 1.  
*Overview of Research Participants*

	Name (Sex)	Birth Year	Birth Country	Former Country of Residence in Latin America	Period of Residence in Latin America	Year of Arrival in Korea
1	Sunghee (F)	1996	Guatemala	Guatemala	17	2014
2	Jisoo (F)	1999	Panama	Panama	18	2016
3	Nahyun (F)	1994	Korea	Dominican Republic	14	2012
4	Jiyeon (F)	1997	Bolivia	Argentina	19	2016
5	Sojin (F)	1997	Bolivia	Bolivia	19	2016
6	Minjun (M)	1998	Guatemala	Guatemala	18	2016
7	Taeho (M)	1991	Korea	Mexico	17	2011
8	Dongsoo (M)	1992	Korea	Mexico	4	2011
9	Chansol (M)	1994	Paraguay	Paraguay	18	2012
10	Eunmi (F)	1996	Korea	Chile	17	2014
11	Miae (F)	1998	Korea	Mexico, El Salvador	17	2016
12	Hyejin (F)	1995	Korea	Ecuador, Mexico	19	2015
13	Jinhee (F)	1997	Korea	Dominican Republic	13	2015
14	Aera (F)	1996	Brazil	Brazil	22	2018
15	Jiyoung (F)	1990	Korea	Mexico	15	2009
16	Inho (M)	1993	Ecuador	Colombia	19	2012
17	Yujin (F)	1999	Korea	Argentina, Brazil	17	2017
18	Myunghee (F)	1995	Korea	Peru	18	2014



## Results and Discussion

### Decrease in the Intake of Latin-American Foods

The practice of eating food has various symbolic meanings, being an integral part of daily life and directly and closely related to the body. It is also an important means of cultural identification and involves the enactment of the past. Unlike ethnic restaurants involved with people's temporary consumption, Korean return migrants' dietary life constitutes an arena in which different food cultures are selected, hybridized, and compromised in the context of everyday multicultural practice. Most Latin-American countries were colonized by Europe, especially Spain, for a long time, and during which period they adopted European ingredients and recipes to create a unique food culture, fusing indigenous and European cultures (Koo & Kim, 2005). The mainstream food culture in Latin America was formed by mixing European elements introduced by Spain, and the Arab elements inherent in the Spanish culture (Jung, 2009).

Even after relocating to Korea, many of the respondents continued to eat Latin-American food, describing the practice as a way to reconnect with their former countries of residence, thus feeling secure, satisfied, and nostalgic.

I eat Latin-American food in Korea—despite the inauthentic taste—because that reminds me of home. It is like an intrinsic connection. Just like Koreans crave kimchi and rice when they go abroad, I crave guacamole, steak, and Latin spices. Latin food makes me feel comfortable and happy. (Minjun from Guatemala)

When migrants prepare meals in the new country of settlement, they draw on their memories of food from the past (Sutton, 2001). Familiar food habits help them retain a significant aspect of their sense of ethnic

identity: ethnic food represents symbolic and cultural connections to countries of origin (Tuomainen, 2009). Korean returnees have multiethnic identities and are simultaneously connected to multiple places. Therefore, cooking and eating Latin-American cuisines—they had cultivated a natural preference for them while growing up—engender in them a sentiment of “homecoming.”

Food is a medium of emotional bonding, social relations, community building, and religious practices. Bae (2018b) demonstrates that Korean student returnees from Latin America visit Latin-American bars and restaurants in Seoul to maintain or forge social networks with other Korean or non-Korean migrants from Latin America through the consumption of Latin-American cuisines and music. Similarly, Miae, one of the respondents noted the following:

I tend to go with other Latin *gyopos*. It not only helps us review the food by comparing it to the food back home, but also provides an opportunity to keep the Latino vibe alive while living in Korea. (Miae from El Salvador)

However, in Seoul, the respondents’ overall intake of Latin-American food reduced remarkably for a number of reasons. First, in Seoul there are few grocery stores selling authentic Latin-American ingredients and spices. Cwiertka (2002) found that changes in the foodways of Japanese residents in the Netherlands occurred mainly because of difficulties in procuring certain ingredients, coupled with their high price and poor quality. Similarly, lack of good-quality, inexpensive seafood coupled with availability of good quality, inexpensive meat resulted in the increased consumption of meat dishes in Japan. Likewise, economic and environmental factors associated with ethnic food ingredients have critical ramifications for Korean migrants’ dietary practices. Basic and essential ingredients of Latin-American food, such as cilantro, cumin, ancho chili pepper, avocados, limes, and beef, are less affordable or less available in Korea. Furthermore, Latin-American restaurants are rare—and ex-

pensive—in Korea.

Procuring fresh, good-quality vegetables at reasonable prices is difficult in Seoul. The same applies to fruits. Avocados are not only expensive but also tiny in Korea. (Eunmi from Chile)

### Koreanized or American-Style Latin-American Cuisines in Seoul

When ethnic or national food is introduced to other parts of the world, the cuisine undergoes standardization and modifications to adapt to the receiving cultures (Bak, 2010). Glocalization refers to the process through which ethnic foods are localized to better suit the culture, taste, and habits of people in other countries (Kwon, 2017). A few Latin-American restaurants in Seoul operated by Latino immigrants serve foods with authentic ingredients and flavors and incorporate the unique atmosphere of Latin America through music, performance, or interior decor.

However, apart from a few exceptions, most of the respondents felt



Figures 1 & 2. A dish (Enchiladas Suizas) and interior decoration in a Mexican restaurant (Hongdae, Seoul) run by a Mexican immigrant serving home-style Mexican food. Source: author.

that the Latin-American food available in Seoul were excessively Koreanized.

In Korea, everything is sweet. They use fewer spices or fewer ingredients with strong flavors, such as cilantro. They are usually fusion dishes and not authentic Latin-American dishes. (Yujin, Brazil)

D (restaurant's initial) is a burrito place, but I do not consider it a Latin-American restaurant despite it serving Mexican food, because they altered the flavors to fit Korean tastes. (Taeho, Mexico).

In general, Bak (2010) contends that ethnic food restaurants in Korea satisfy both the expectations of exoticism of Korean nationals, and the desire to remain within their culinary comfort zone, resulting in a safe yet exotic custom-made experience. These characteristics are expressed in interior decorations, menu selection, and modification of original recipes to cater to local palates.

Latin-American cuisines offered at Seoul restaurants range from authentic Latin-American cuisine and Korean/Latin hybrids to American-style Latin food. Some restaurants serve a specific country's food, whereas others offer a pan-Latin-American choice or Latin-American plus American or Italian food. Mexican dishes, such as chili con carne, served in Korea are mostly Cali-Mex- or Tex-Mex-inspired, and modified according to North American tastes. Tex-Mex was born when Mexican workers began working on the Texas and Mexican railways in the late-19 century, and blossomed as Mexican migrants settled in the U.S. (Park, 2018). American-style Latin-American food is frequently introduced to the Korean society by incoming Korean Americans or U.S.-based Latin-American restaurant franchises. For example, the V Korean-Mexican fusion restaurant chains were founded by three Korean American entrepreneurs who grew up in California and Texas in the U.S., and serves



*Figure 3.* Kimchi carnitas fries in a Korean-Mexican fusion restaurant (Jamsil, Seoul). *Source:* author.

kimchi chili and kimchi carnitas fries, which are French fries with fried kimchi, beef, and chili sauce. The T Churrascaria (a Brazilian steakhouse) restaurant chain, headquartered in Dallas, Texas, combines cuisines from southern Brazil with Texas-style meat dishes.

The respondents reported that they rarely dined out at Latin-American restaurants because of “inauthentic” tastes and flavors. They also reported drastically reducing the cooking of Latin-American dishes at home owing to the unavailability and high price of ingredients. The proportion of respondents consuming Latin-American food as part of their overall diet decreased significantly after their return to Korea.

### **Predominance of Mexican Food**

There exists a status hierarchy among ethnic cuisines that can be stratified by nationality or region. Latin-American restaurants in Seoul are predominantly Mexican because Mexican food is more globalized than other Latin-American cuisines, and is reasonably popular in Korea. Korean returnees from the Dominican Republic, Bolivia, Panama, and

Paraguay report that they eat Mexican food when they miss the tastes and flavors of their former countries of residence.

Yes, I eat Mexican food. I would love to eat Panamanian dishes, but they are not available here. Latin-American food evokes memories of home and friends. (Nahyun from Panama)

With life disruptions caused by migration, Mexican food can serve as a medium of continuity in their lives. This is not only because Mexican food is similar to other Latin-American cuisines, but also because some of the respondents had eaten Mexican dishes in Latin America when they were growing up. Now, in Korea, they ate Mexican food whenever they felt nostalgic about their previous country.

### **Increased Intake of Korean Foods**

In Latin America, the younger participants consumed different kinds of food in residential, educational, and religious spaces. Although they usually consumed local dishes at schools, owing to their first-generation parents' preference for traditional Korean food, they ate mostly Korean and, to a lesser degree, Latin-American dishes at home and at Korean churches.

Koreans in Latin America can find Korean ingredients at specialist grocery stores in Korean or Chinese markets; the overall awareness and popularity of Korean food has recently increased in Latin America because of the Korean Wave. However, Korean restaurants are not ubiquitous in Latin-American countries, and they are expensive too. Therefore, most of the respondents ate Korean food at home. As they had grown up eating Korean and local Latin-American food together, much like their multicultural, multilingual background, their culinary background is also heterogeneous. These multiple hybrid identities that Korean return migrants embody are mediated by their experiences with food through their process of transnational migratory movement and

readjustment.

After arriving in Korea, they began eating Korean food much more often at restaurants upon realizing that Korean food options were more reasonably priced and varied than in Latin America. Consequently, consumption of Korean food—that is, the local, mainstream food—increased for most of them after they relocated to Korea.

### More Options for Different Types of Asian Foods

As a global city, Seoul offers many geographic spaces and facilities that exhibit international and multicultural characteristics. In particular, the recent development of dine-out culture and the availability of an increased variety of ethnic restaurants have affected respondents' dietary habits. In the Korean society—especially in Seoul—the presence of different nationalities has resulted in the availability of various types of ethnic foods: Thai, Vietnamese, Indian etc., thereby driving the city's restaurant sector (Kim, 2018).

Historically, immigrants from China and Japan have also influenced the cuisine of some Latin-American countries, especially Brazil and Peru, where Asian restaurants have been introduced and popularized by Chinese and Japanese migrants.

As we are influenced by the global community, it is easy to find Japanese and Chinese food in the country. These restaurants were usually established by native Japanese and Chinese people who had migrated to Guatemala. (Minjun from Guatemala)

Some of the respondents reported eating Latin-American-style Chinese or Japanese food in addition to Korean food while they were growing up. However, in Seoul, some of them had begun enjoying Thai and Vietnamese food, which was either unavailable or uncommon in Latin-American countries.

There are cuisines, such as those from Vietnam (Pho), that I had not had in Peru, but now that I am here, it is everywhere. It tastes a little different from what I am used to, but it is an amalgam of the two cultures that I lived in: a mixture of vegetables, noodles, and soup (Korean), and the addition of lime (Peru). (Myunghee from Peru)

### Conclusion

Food culture has been influenced, changed, and developed by the environment, geography, culture, and, particularly, the history of human migration. Through transnational migration processes, people carry, preserve, and modify their food culture and eating habits. This article demonstrates how the younger Korean diaspora from Latin America maintain, adapt, and change their dietary habits and foodways after their return migration to Korea.

Most of the studies on ethnic restaurants have emphasized that Korean domestic customers enjoy exotic cuisines and cultures through restaurant visits. The growing movement of people in and out of the Korean Peninsula has impacted ethnic food cultures in Seoul. Especially, the increased influx of expatriates and the Korean diaspora into the Korean society, coupled with their ethnic food entrepreneurship, has eased the access of Koreans to foreign cultures without the need for travel abroad. However, for members of the Korean diaspora, the consumption of certain food items considered “ethnic” or “exotic” in Korea can be related to the expression of their multicultural identities and to the continuation of their “familiar” eating habits. By eating Latin-American dishes, Korean returnees reconnect with the cultures and memories of their former countries of residence, which makes them feel secure and nostalgic. They also socialize and bond with other Korean returnees from Latin America through the consumption of these dishes.

The findings of this study also show the current status and character-



istics of Latin-American food in the Korean ethnic food sector. The sizeable Korean Chinese diaspora has formed large ethnic residential and commercial areas in many parts of Seoul. Contrastingly, the Korean Latin-Americans have neither established ethnic districts nor had a significant or large-scale influence on the food culture of the Korean society. Attempts to maintain the Latin-American food culture have largely been made at the individual level. However, the respondents reported that their consumption of Latin-American dishes had significantly decreased since their return migration to Korea, especially to Seoul, because Latin-American food ingredients and restaurants rare and expensive, and even the cuisine is highly Koreanized or Americanized, mainly targeting domestic Korean clientele. Additionally, dietary readaptation processes are different among subgroups of Korean Latin-Americans. As Mexican food is more globalized and dominant in Korea, those from other Latin-American countries, especially from countries whose national food culture is less popular in Korea, view Mexican food as a substitute for the cuisines of their former countries of residence.

The massive Korean immigration wave to Latin America began in earnest only during the 1960s. Therefore, the history of Korean migration to Latin America is relatively short. This is why the food traditions of Korean immigrants there remained largely intact, and, consequently, the returnees could adapt to local food quite easily. Rather, the respondents had increased their consumption of Korean dishes because of their affordability and greater menu options. Additionally, in Seoul, they enjoyed easy access to other Asian flavors, including Thai, Vietnamese, and Indian food.

This article has meaningful implications in that it addresses ethnic food culture in Seoul in relation to the return migration of Koreans from Latin America, which has not been previously examined. The present study will enhance the understanding of the Korean diaspora's return migration, their hybrid and varied food culture, and their cultural identities.

### **Note**

- 1) Return migration of various diaspora groups has taken the form of strategic movements in search of better economic or social opportunities in the groups' ethnic homelands, or has occurred because of homecoming instincts, ethnic ties and affinities, and immigration policies favoring ethnic connections in the ancestral homelands (Gmelch, 1980; Ley & Kobayashi, 2005; Oxfeld & Long, 2004; Tsuda, 2009; Bae, 2018a).

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### Biographical Note

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