

**THE KOREAN CHINESE (*CHOSONJOK*) IN THE RUSSIAN FAR EAST:
A RESEARCH NOTE**

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Ethnic Koreans in Russia

Ethnic Korean presence in Russia officially started in the 1860s and most of it was concentrated in the Maritime Region (Primorskii Krai today), especially near the border regions with Korea. The attitudes of local Russians towards the ethnic Korean migrants varied from hostile treatment to welcoming acceptance for cheap labor. The most hostile treatment was Stalin's forcible transfer of Koreans to Central Asian republics in the 1930s. At that time, the Soviet government worried about the Japanese influence into the Russian Far East (RFE), which might be infiltrated by the ethnic Koreans whose country was colonized by Japan in 1910. According to an official document¹ which was declassified in the 1990s, 36,422 households constituting 171,781 persons were "loaded" into 124 cargo trains of the TSR (Trans-Siberian Railways). Among them, 16,272 households of 76,525 persons were sent to Uzbekistan and 20,170 households of 95,256 individuals were settled in Kazakhstan. Later they were re-migrated into nearby republics in Central Asia. The ethnic Korean population in 1989 totaled 438,650 in fifteen republics including the 43,000 residents of Sakhalin Island who were forced to move and work as mainly mine workers before the Second World War when the southern part of the island was Japanese territory.

The perestroika led by Gorbachev opened a way in the 1990s to restore the rights of ethnic Koreans who were forcibly deported from the RFE. The "1993 Decree on the Restoration of Ethnic Korean Rights in the Russian Federation" was adopted in the Supreme Assembly. Here, "individual and voluntary *return* to the former place of residence" was permitted (Article 2) and Russian citizenship could be obtained by migrants from outside the newly independent Russia (Article 4). The decree also stated that the local authorities should provide "residential houses and lands for farming and other activities for ethnic Korean returnees as far as they want to do so" (Article 5).

Resurgent nationalism in the new-born Central Asian republics accelerated massive transfer of ethnic Koreans to Russia and the RFE. According to an incomplete source of the Russian government, the population of ethnic Koreans in the former Soviet Union excluding foreign nationals exceeded 470,000 in 1999. Seven republics had more than 1,000 ethnic

Koreans (Table 1).²

Table 1. Ethnic Korean Population in 1999

Republics	Number	Republics	Number
Russia	125,000	Taziksatan	6,000
Uzbekistan	198,000	Ukraina	9,000
Kazakhstan	105,000	Turkmenistan	3,000
Kirgizstan	19,000	Other Republics	5,000

Source: Ki Kwangseo, “*ku soryon hanin sahoeui yoksajok pyonch'onkwa hyonsil*” [Historical Development and Realities of the Former Soviet Korean Society], Proceedings of 2002 Conference by the Association for the Study of Overseas Koreans(ASOK), Seoul: ASOK, December 15, 2002, p. 8.

Ethnic Mosaic: Koreans in the Russian Far East

The Russian Far East is an ethnically complex place for Koreans. South Korea normalized its diplomatic relations with Russia in 1991, meanwhile North Korea maintained its relations with the Soviet Union/Russia relatively firmly since the Second World War. Newcomers to the RFE, including South Koreans, North Koreans, Koreans from the Central Asia, and ethnic Koreans from Sakhalin in the 1990s made the ethnic map of Koreans in the region more complicated.

Koreans in the RFE are mainly concentrated in Primorskii Krai, where 18 kilometers of borders are shared between Russia and North Korea. Among the 125,000 ethnic Koreans living in Russia, at least 33,000 are living in the Maritime Region (Primorskii Krai). Other regions with ethnic Korean populations range from Khabarovsk to Kamchaka. Their place of origin, nationality, socio-economic backgrounds, and history make them different from each other (Table 2). There are at least nine different types of ethnic Koreans in the RFE. They are three Korean-Russian groups, two North Korean groups, two Korean-Chinese, and two South Korean groups. There are also ethnic Koreans from other countries not mentioned above, such as Japan. The nine groups are not only different in their nationalities but also separate in their use of language and culture. Thus, studies of inter-ethnic relations among them will be quite interesting and important in addition to research on their relations with other ethnic groups such as Russians.

Table 2. Ethnic Korean Groups in the RFE

Name	Origin	Number	Time of move	Main Occupation
Koryoin 1	Natives	33,000	18 th century	various
Koryoin 2	Central Asia	n.a.	1990s	Farmers/ various
Koryoin 3	Sakhalin	n.a.	World War II	various
North Korean 1	Contracted	4000 –	1990s	Timbering

	workers	12,000		Construction
North Korean 2	Refugees	Less than 1,000	1990s	various
South Korean 1	South Korea	2,000	1990s	Business/students
South Korean 2	U.S.A Other nationals	More than 200	1990s	Mainly missionaries
Chosonjok 1	Heilongjiang	n.a	1990s	Shuttle traders
Chosonjok 2	Yanbian	n.a	1990s	Market traders

Korean Russians can be divided into three groups. The first is the group of Korean Russians who were not forcibly moved in the Stalin era and continued to live in the RFE. The second group is composed of ethnic Koreans from the Sakhalin Island. Those are descendants of the people who were forced to move to the island before the Second World War. They have come to the RFE in search of a better chance in *Keunddang* (literally “big territory” in Korean, which means Continental Russia). The third group is from the Central Asian republics of the former Soviet Union. Most of them are descendants of those who were scattered to various regions in Central Asia during the Stalin era. Today they are coming back to their former homeland. These three groups are called “Korean Russians” (*Koryoin* in Korean). Most of the Korean Russians do not speak the Korean language and are heavily russified in culture.

The number of Korean Russians including the new immigrants from Central Asia was not more than 33,000 in 2001 (Table 3).

North Koreans in the RFE are mainly contract workers under the agreement between Russia and North Korea. The exact number is not known. In 1997, there were 4,149 North Korean workers in Primorskii Krai. Some estimated the numbers around 3,000³ in 1999. According to the South Korean Intelligence Agency, the number hit the record of 20,000 in 1996 but dropped to 12,000 in 1999. It is widely believed that the decrease was due to the Russian government investigation on the drug and arms trafficking and human trade.⁴ Another North Korean group is refugees from North Korea. North Korean refugees (*Talbukja*) in Northeast China is widely known⁵ but the reality in the RFE is still difficult to grasp.

Table 3: Korean Russians in the RFE, as of April 15, 2001

Regions	Approximate numbers	Note (including)
Vladivostok	2,400	students
Ussurisk	17,200	Novonikhosk, Mikhailrovka
Nakhotka	2,600	Partizansk Raion
Partizansk	2,800	Radiovski Raion

Artem	3,300	Shikotovski Raion
Dalni Spask	3,000	Chernikovski Raion
Other regions	2,600	
Total	33,000	

Source: Ethnic Korean Association of Culture

Due to the probable political sensitivity of Primorskii Krai as a place of meeting with North Koreans, the South Korean government does not publish separate data of the South Koreans in the region at the official home page of the Korean Embassy in Russia. A consulate office of South Korea is located in Vladivostok and North Koreans have their consular office in Nakhodka. Also, South Korean missionaries are unique in the ethnic setting of the RFE. It is widely believed that more than 200 Christian missionaries are active in the RFE. Although they are ethnically Korean, many of them have foreign passports such as the United States.

Another ethnic Korean group in the RFE is Korean-Chinese (*Chosonjok*), which will be discussed later in this paper. They are Chinese nationals but ethnically Koreans and a part of officially designated 55 ethnic minorities in China. The number of Korean Chinese is also unknown. Therefore, it is difficult to say how many ethnic Koreans are living in the RFE, particularly in Primorskii Krai. The new “Law on the Legal Status of Foreign Nationals,” which was promulgated in Russia on November 1, 2002 can be a good source of data in the future. In the law, there are three categories of foreign nationals such as temporary visitors, temporary residents, and permanent residents.

Research Update on the Korean Chinese in the RFE

In the international seminar on “Human Flows across National Borders in Northeast Asia” in 2001, three papers, presented by Elizabeth Wishnick, Viacheslav Karlusov, and Ekaterina Motrich, dealt with Chinese migration in Russia, particularly in the Russian Far East (RFE).⁶ Among them, Dr. Wishnick raised questions of Korean-Chinese shuttle traders and North Koreans, who included contract workers and refugees. The Korean-Chinese presence in the RFE is a unique feature in the ethnic mosaic of the region and it needs to be scrutinized. They are ethnically Korean but Chinese citizens and can be potentially integrated into ethnic Korean communities in the RFE. Also, the question of North Korean refugees became internationalized after the much publicized events of May 2002. Mainly however, questions of North Korean refugees have been focused on those in China. Therefore, the study of the ethnic Korean presence in the RFE is still in very early stages.

There are virtually no previous works on the Korean-Chinese presence in the RFE. As an initial study, this author decided to conduct interviews with members of NPOs and businessmen who are currently involved in matters related to the ethnic Koreans in the RFE. I also participated in a seminar on the Korean Chinese held in September 2002 in *Yanji*, the capital city of the Yanbian Korean Autonomous Prefecture in Jilin Province. The author met several academics and governmental officials of the prefecture and had a chance to talk about the presence of the Korean Chinese in the RFE. I also visited Hunchun, a border city and one of the passages to Russia for Korean-Chinese. This research update is the result of these interviews and is a first step for future research on the Korean Chinese in the RFE.

Interviewees

NGOs

Recently, two NGOs were established in aid for ethnic Koreans in the former Soviet Union: Northeast Asia Peace Solidarity and AID the Koryo People Movement. Northeast Asia Peace Solidarity (NAPS, *dongbuka pyonghwa yondae*: <http://wekorean.or.kr>) was established in October 2001. Led by a former professor and anthropologist of Seoul National University, Kwangkyu Lee, it assists ethnic Koreans in China and the former Soviet Union. Main tasks of the NAPS are twofold; to assist ethnic Korean migrants from the Central Asian republics to the RFE and to help Korean-Chinese migrant workers in South Korea. The NPO had not noticed the separate presence of Korean Chinese in the RFE until I had interviews with the activists.

The activities of the NAPS in the RFE are mainly divided into two parts, culture and agriculture. One of the goals of the NAPS is to revive Korean culture in the Korean-Russian (*Koryoin*) community. For this, the NAPS opened a Cultural Center in Ussurisk for *Koryoin* in Primorskii Krai (<http://krec.ca.to/>). The cultural activities of the center, which was opened in April 2001, will be discussed in the sections on ethnic Korean activities and education below. The head of the center, was interviewed briefly in October 15, 2001 with a *Koryoin* head of the Ethnic Korean Revival Programme.

The other program of the NAPS is to assist agriculture of the *Koryoin* community. An Agricultural Center of Primorskii Krai (*Yonhaeju nongop senta*, http://wekorean.or.kr/2002/org/yh_nong_center.htm) was established in Mikhailovka. With other NPOs of South Korea, the aim of the center is to provide agricultural opportunities for the *Koryoin* resettlers from Central Asia who are very poor. The author had several chances to have interviews with the president of the NAPS and the organizers of the agricultural

center.

Although the NAPS has a long-term plan to establish a community of ethnic Koreans in the RFE such as *Koryoin*, Koreans from North and South, and Korean Chinese in harmony with local Russians, it does not have a separate recognition and program on the Korean Chinese.

AID the Koryo People Movement (KPM, *Koryoin Dopki Undonghwi*, <http://www.koreiski.com>.) is a religious organization to provide aid to *Koryoin* resettlers. Active since February 2000, the KPM is mainly concerned with providing shelter for the resettlers from Central Asia. With other NPOs such as the NAPS, five resettlement camps were built in Rastolnoye, Kremova, Popovka, Platanova, and Novonezne. Volunteers, mainly South Korean married couples of the religious sect, assist *Koryoin* in teaching the Korean language and customs, to give medical help, and to help with agricultural techniques. The KPM does not have any interest in the Korean Chinese there.

Korean Chinese in Yanbian

In September 2002, there was a week of celebration for the 50th anniversary of the establishment of Yanbian Korean Autonomous Prefecture in Jilin Province. The author participated in a seminar sponsored by the Association of Korean and Chinese Lawyers, and the prefecture government. Some delegations were from Heilongjiang, Shanghai, and Beijing among other cities. The author found that there were no systematic works on the Korean-Chinese migration to other countries by Korean Chinese themselves. Moreover, the prefecture government does not have any statistical data on the Korean-Chinese migration from Heilongjiang Province. No systematic research is being carried out across the provincial boundaries of Northeast China in which most of two million Korean Chinese reside.

The author collected limited secondary source information on Chinese shuttle traders' routes to Russia and periodical changes of their migration patterns. There are four outpost cities for most of the Korean Chinese who wish to go to Russia including Hunchun in Jilin Province, and Heihe in Heilongjiang Province. Korean Chinese from Jilin Province normally use the Hunchun route when they go to Russia but often use other routes in Heilongjiang when they come back from Russia. Therefore, it is extremely difficult to figure out the numbers of Korean Chinese who go to Russia from Chinese sources of information. For more reliable numbers, we should see the Russian data from the four posts, but they do not include ethnic identification.

The situation changed in 1997. Tourist companies in Yanbian sponsored by the prefecture government emerged. At least four companies are involved in the Russian tour

business. After advertisements for a group tour to the RFE are announced in newspapers or in other ways, they make a group and hire a bus to Russia. They use the Hunchun route and most visitors come back at the same time in the same bus after a week-long visit in Russia. It is an organized method for Korean-Chinese shuttle traders from Yanbian. But it is obvious that shuttle traders from Heilongjiang use different ways to go to Russia. At present, the author does not have a chance to meet people of tourist companies in Yanji. The author was informed that there were problems in calculating the number of shuttle traders, even if some statistics are available. Although some traders go to Russia, three or more times a year, we do not know the proportion of them in the statistics unless the tour companies give the full names of the visitors/ traders.

South Korean Businessmen

The author interviewed some South Korean businessmen who have joint ventures in the RFE. Most of them, however, do not have even elementary knowledge of the Korean-Chinese presence in the RFE. Their concerns are mainly with Russian Koreans or Russians there.

One businessman, who wishes to remain anonymous, has a joint venture with some Korean Russians and a Korean Chinese. He provided me some figures and his own experience on the joint venture with Korean Chinese in the RFE.

Although the author interviewed many people concerned in the presence of Korean Chinese, it is an indirect research method. Therefore, this paper is a research note for further research that will be based on field work in the RFE. The findings from the interviews are discussed in the next section of the paper.

Findings

Population and Occupations

From the interviews the author conducted, the number of Korean Chinese in the RFE could be ascertained. The best way to obtain such data would be to use official statistics from Russian and Chinese governments. On departure and entry cards of China, each traveler is supposed to indicate his/her ethnic identification. Therefore, we should be able to know how many Korean Chinese go to the RFE. As far as the author knows, such information has officially not been published. The author is not sure if the Russian side has separate statistics on Korean Chinese. Another way to collect needed statistics is to use statistics from such groups as the Ethnic Korean Revival Program and the Ethnic Korean Association of Culture.

There are two Korean-Chinese groups in terms of departure points: Heilongjiang and Yanbian. The problem is that we do not know the numbers respectively. Moreover, it is not clear how long the visitors stay in Russia and how many times a year they go to Russia. Multiple entries and duration of stay are important to analyze the Korean-Chinese presence in the RFE. Therefore, the author uses indirect data of the Russian Koreans and others in discussing the problems of Korean Russians in the RFE.

Among the ethnic Koreans, which include 33,000 Korean Russians, the population of Korean Chinese is not known. Moreover, it is not known how many Korean Chinese are included among the Chinese residents/citizens. Heilongjiang Daily estimated that around 30,000 Korean Chinese are living (temporarily or permanently) in the RFE. But the source of information and the settlement pattern of the Korean Chinese in Russia are not revealed.

A (South) Korean businessman told me that there are around 100 Korean-Chinese sellers in the market place of Ussurisk. They are selling mainly vegetables, side dishes and light goods for everyday use. Yevegeni Kang, the head of the Korea Revival Program also confirmed that there are at least 150 Korean-Chinese households around the market place. He also told me that Ussurisk is the only area where a concentration of Korean Chinese can be found. Korean Chinese are found in some cities such as Vladivostok and Nakhotka. They are mainly doing joint venture business with other ethnic Koreans such as South Koreans or Korean Russians. Many of them are believed to be representatives of firms, including South Korean firms. Also, others are teachers of the Korean language, and housemaids for South Korean businessmen. They do not have their own associations. Rather, they would join smaller gatherings, such as irregular meetings based on locality, occupation, and educational backgrounds. The anonymous Korean businessman mentioned above told me that there is speculation that most Korean Chinese in the RFE, especially in the market place of Ussurisk, are from Yanbian Korean Autonomous Prefecture or other places in Jilin Province. On the other hand, Korean Chinese from Heilongjiang are mainly shuttle traders and their places of work range all the way from Vladivostok to cities in European Russia, such as Moscow and Volgograd. These are interesting speculations that require verification.

Identity Questions of the Korean Chinese

The identity question of the Korean Chinese is a very important one in the new ethnic setting in the RFE. Wishnick argues that “these Chinese citizens speak Korean and potentially could be integrated more easily into Korean communities” in the RFE.⁷ But this author is reluctant to confirm her point for three reasons, based on his interviews with the people from the NAPS.

Firstly, three groups of Korean Russians are now being incorporated after being allowed to form their associations by the Russian government. Including the Ethnic Korean Revival Programme, there are at least eleven Korean-Russian associations registered in Primorskii Krai. Another eighteen associations are reported to exist in other regions in the Far Eastern territories, being served by the South Korean consulate in Vladivostok – in such areas as China, Sakhalin, and Irkutsk. The associations are mainly locally organized and there is no umbrella organization of the Korean Russians in the RFE (http://www.mofat.go.kr/mission/emb/ww_intro_view.mof). There are also some feuds even among the Korean Russian communities because of locality and power struggle. There are no Korean-Chinese associations in the RFE. In short, in terms of institutionalization, there is no link between the Korean Chinese and the Korean Russians in the RFE.

Secondly, ethnic and national identities of the Korean Chinese are interchangeable. The author heard that most Korean Chinese do not share any indication of ethnic Korean identity except the Korean language in the market place of Ussurisk. Most of Korean Chinese regard themselves as Chinese nationals as well as ethnic Korean minority in China, where Korean Chinese are differentiated from Koreans in the Korean Peninsula. This is mainly due to the successful policy of the Chinese Communist Party towards the Korean minority in China. For the Korean Chinese, national identity is most important. Language is an instrumental tool for communication with other ethnic Koreans in the RFE, most of whom do not speak Korean fluently. There are some variations on the matter of ethnic identity. Some Korean Chinese who are living with Korean Russians as their partners are very conscious of their Korean ethnic identity. But most of the Korean Chinese regard themselves as Chinese.

Thirdly, it becomes evident in the celebration of the Ethnic Korean Day, which was held on October 5-6, 2002 at the City Stadium of Ussurisk. That was the second Ethnic Korean Day sponsored by the NAPS and the Ethnic Culture Association led by Nikolai Petrovich Kim. Representatives of North and South Korean consular offices came to celebrate the day. Around 20 Korean Chinese from Yanbian participated at the invitation of the NAPS. But Korean-Chinese residents in the RFE were not present at the celebration. It can be interpreted in two ways. There were no formal institutional organizations of the Korean Chinese in the RFE, and it was not possible for them to participate in such a celebration. Or, ethnic affinity between the Korean Chinese and the Korean Russians is not very close. It is possible to say that there was a degree of self-censorship on the part of the Korean Chinese who regarded participation in an ethnic Korean event as a possible violation of Chinese domestic laws and regulations.

In short, there seems to be some distance between the Korean Chinese and the

Korean Russians in the RFE. Although Korean Chinese have their distinct “Korean” identity, it is rather a part of Chinese national identity than ethnic Korean identity. If ethnic Korean identity is accepted, the identity can be a sub-identity as a “minority nationality” within the realm of Chinese nation. Therefore, ethnic Korean identity is a bit different among the Korean Chinese. Also, a political barrier, as an “inseparable” part of the Chinese nation, can be seen as associated with other ethnic Koreans in the RFE.

Relations with Other Ethnic Groups

Relations with other ethnic groups can be divided into two parts: relations with local Russians and relations with other Chinese such as the Han Chinese. Relations within the Korean Chinese will be also discussed shortly.

One of the emerging characteristics of the Korean Chinese in the RFE is a partnership with the Han Chinese. According to a Korean businessman and people in Yanbian Korean Autonomous Prefecture, Korean Chinese firstly formed a group among themselves, usually according to their place of origin. However, some changes have taken place since 1999. The author offers the following changes, which need to be verified. Business conducted by Korean Chinese changed 1) from shuttle trade to wholesale, 2) from local RFE to the whole of Siberia, and 3) from ethnically segregated trade to mixed trade.

There seems to be a hierarchical ethnic division of labor in shuttle trade in the RFE. Most people told the author that shuttle traders along the Trans-Siberian Railway (TSR) are from Zhejiang Province. Particularly along the western stretches of the TSR, west of Irkutsk, shuttle trade is dominated by people from Zhejiang. In the Russian Far East, there are some Heilongjiang traders who were among the first shuttle traders in the RFE. These Korean-Chinese traders are hired by the big hands of the Han Chinese traders. Also, Korean-Chinese residents in the RFE are mostly representatives of the Han Chinese wholesalers or traders of their goods. Therefore, except in the market place of Ussurisk, there is a possibility that many Korean-Chinese shuttle traders are living or doing business with Han Chinese.

During the first period from 1993 to 1997, not many negative stories about Korean-Chinese shuttle traders were reported in ethnic Korean newspapers in northeast China. But the situation changed after 1997. Korean-Chinese newspapers started to report on extramarital affairs among the shuttle traders who were temporary visitors to the RFE. Temporary co-habitation between Korean-Chinese shuttle traders became commonplace. But ethnic Koreans began to co-habitate with Han Chinese after the hierarchical relationship between Korean Chinese and Han Chinese emerged. How widely this practice spreads is unclear, as are the social implications of this practice.

There are some tensions between Russians and Korean Russians, particularly Korea Russians from the Central Asian republics. According to Yevgeny Kang, ethnic friction started from the early period of the formation of CIS. He also suggests that all historical documents on Russian policy towards the Korean Russians should be declassified to settle the disputes he says exist between Russians and ethnic Koreans in Russia. As a gesture of goodwill to improve the inter-ethnic relationships, Korean Russians invited local Russians in Ussurisk to participate in the Korean Day celebration.

Apart from the relationship between Korean Chinese and ethnic Russians in the Russian Far East, it is important to see the development of ethnic relations between Chinese and Russians. Korean Chinese here are located in the middle. By nationality, Korean Chinese are Chinese, but ethnically, they share identities with other ethnic Koreans, especially with Korean Russians. The situation reminds us of the Korean-Russian situation in the Stalin era. Although most Korean Russians were assimilated into Russian culture and became Soviet citizens, they were regarded with suspicion, for cooperating with the Japanese who colonized Korea from 1910. That was an important reason of the deportation of Korean Russians to Central Asia in the Stalin years. At present, local Russians are worrying about the “peaceful invasion” of Chinese of the RFE. Many works are written on these matters. However, it is not known that the local Russian government does have a separate policy towards the Korean Chinese apart from the Chinese and also from the Korean Russians. But, it is true that most Korean Chinese do not socialize with local Russians, except Korean-Chinese traders in the market place in Ussurisk.

Ethnic Education and Korean Chinese

Ethnic Korean identity can be revived from education of the Korean language. Among the ethnic Korean communities overseas, Korean Russians have the lowest level of proficiency in Korean. According to a 2000 study, 95 percent of Korean Russians between the ages of 10 and 29, who are the third or fourth generation, speak Russian in everyday life and do not speak Korean apart from some basic expressions. Among those in their 40s, 10 percent have basic proficiency in Korean.⁸ Some Korean NGOs and semi-governmental bodies provide language instruction to Korean Russians in the RFE. There are also departments and programs of Korean language in universities for Russian students.⁹

A semi-governmental Education Center of Korea in Vladivostok provides various levels of Korean language from beginners to advanced learners. In 1997, 132 students were enrolled. But 294 students were registered in 2001. Also, Korean culture, including Taekwon Do is being introduced. Also, more than ten universities in the RFE have a Korean-related

program. The Far Eastern State University in Vladivostok has a college of Korean studies which has more than 200 students. The Department of Korean Language in Ussurisk Teachers University has 80 students. Altogether, more than 2,000 students, including an unknown number of ethnic Koreans are studying Korean.

For the Korean Russians particularly, there are several part-time schools sponsored by Korean NGOs. At least 89 schools including almost 5,000 students are reported to be operating in many parts of the RFE. For example, there are four schools in Ussurisk which open two days a week for mainly beginner-level Korean instruction. Teachers are Korean Chinese who are hired by the NGOs or working as volunteers. It means that some Korean Chinese are in close contact with other ethnic Koreans on an individual basis.

For migrants from Central Asia, there are several programs for re-location and settlement based on agricultural education as noted above. Here, Korean-Chinese farmers who are invited by NGOs are playing a crucial role in agricultural education for the Korean Russians. Korean Chinese are also serving as intermediaries between Korean Russians and South Koreans. Therefore, in some areas, relations among the ethnic Koreans are bound to grow.

Summary and Future Research Needs

North Korea and Russia recently agreed to connect their rail links. South Korea and Russia also agreed to link TKR (Trans-Korean Railways) via North Korea to TSR. Along with Korean Russians, Korean Chinese also expect to be able to serve as intermediary in this new period of cooperation in Northeast Asia.

Based on the interviews with people related to the Korean Chinese in the RFE, the author has offered some preliminary findings. They all require verification through field work in the future. The market place of Ussurisk is the best place to see the Korean Chinese situation in the RFE. A separate study of shuttle traders in Heilongjiang Province is needed.

Here is a summary of the tentative findings. There are no systematic and academic works on the Korean Chinese to date. Therefore, the size of the population remains unknown. There are at least two groups of Korean Chinese because of the exit-routes and administrative differences: the Jilin route and the Heilongjiang route. Tourist companies in Yanji of the Yanbian Korean Autonomous Prefecture would be the best source of information on the number of Korean Chinese in the RFE.

Korean Russians in the RFE are divided into three sub-groups and there is no umbrella association including all three groups. This makes the estimation of the size of the ethnic

Korean Russians in the RFE difficult. The 2002 national census of Russia and the new “Law on the Legal Status of Foreign Nationals,” which was promulgated on November 1, 2002, can provide more reliable numbers of ethnic Koreans in the region.

But, Ussurisk has a large concentration of Korean Chinese. At least, 100 Korean-Chinese traders are found in the market place in Ussurisk. Most of them are believed to be from Yanbian rather than Heilongjiang. Korean Chinese from Heilongjiang are usually shuttle traders hired by Han Chinese wholesalers. Most Korean Chinese do not have close ties with other ethnic Koreans. Most Korean Chinese regard themselves as Chinese, and different from other ethnic Koreans. Some Korean Chinese, including shuttle traders from Heilongjian are living with Han Chinese. Most Korean Chinese do not have social relations with local Russians, or other ethnic Koreans in the RFE.

There are growing efforts to revive cultural identity among the ethnic Korean in the RFE, including language education for the Korean Russians. Korean Chinese who speak Korean almost fluently do not join these efforts, but some are hired in these efforts and others volunteer. They serve as intermediaries between South Koreans and Korean Russians. Daily interaction between Korean Chinese and Korean Russians is not close, but their contact is likely to grow.

Notes

¹ Kwangseo Ki, “*ku soryon hanin sahoeui yoksajok pyonch'onkwa hyonsil*” [Historical Development and Realities of the Former Soviet Korean Society], Proceedings of 2002 Conference by the

Association for the Study of Overseas Koreans(ASOK), Seoul: ASOK, December 15, 2002, pp. 4-5

² . A nationwide population census was taken in Russia in 2002. At the time of this writing, I do not have the new census statistics.

^{3 3} Chaemoon Lee, “*Nambuk hyopryok sidae rosia keukdong jiyok bukhan nodongryokui sanghwangkwa chongch'aek kwaje*” [North Korean Workforce in the Russian Far East during the New Cooperative Era between North and South Korea], (incomplete draft), Proceedings of the Conference on the June 15th North-South Joint Declaration and Korean Strategy, Kwangju: Chonnam University, June 7, 2001.

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Jeanyoung Lee, “*Talbukja Mangmyon Satae e Taehan Chunggukwi Taedo*,” Current Issues and Policy, Seongnam: Sejong Institute, vol. 72 (2002).

⁶ Elizabeth Wishnick, “Migration Issues and Russia’s Economic Integration in Asia,” in Tsuneo Akaha, ed., Proceedings of Human Flows across National Borders in Northeast Asia, Monterey, California: The Center for East Asian Studies, Monterey Institute of International Studies, January 2002; Viacheslav Karlusov, “Chinese Presence in the Russian Far East: An Economic Perspective,” in Tsuneo Akaha, ed., Proceedings of Human Flows across National Borders in Northeast Asia, Monterey, California: The Center for East Asian Studies, Monterey Institute of International Studies, January 2002; and Ekaterina Motrich, “Reaction of the Population of the Russian Far East to the Presence of Chinese People,” in Tsuneo Akaha, ed., Proceedings of Human Flows across National Borders in Northeast Asia, Monterey, California: The Center for East Asian Studies, Monterey Institute of International Studies, January 2002.

⁷ Elizabeth Wishnick, “Migration Issues and Russia’s Economic Integration in Asia,” in Tsuneo Akaha, ed., Proceedings of Human Flows across National Borders in Northeast Asia, Monterey, California: The Center for East Asian Studies, Monterey Institute of International Studies, January 2002.

⁸ Chaemoon Lee.

⁹ Yongpyo Choi, “*Yonhaegu Koryoin minjok kyoyuk siltaewa chiwonbanghyang*” [Ethnic education of the Koryoin in the RFE and Ways of Assistance], Proceedings of the Conference on the Overseas Korean Society in the 21st Century and East Asian Cooperation, Kwangju: Chonnam University, October 5, 2002.