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TRANSNATIONAL TIES WITH THE ETHNIC HOMELAND: THE CASE OF KOREAN WOMEN OF THE CIS IN MARITAL MIGRATION¹

Every year, tens of thousands of women from developing countries cross borders to marry men from developed countries. Men in Western Europe and the United States are looking for future partners from Russia and Eastern Europe, while men in East Asia and Australia find wives in the countries of Southeast Asia. Transnational marriage puts these women in a vulnerable position because women lack the resources, language skills, social support and legal protection in receiving countries. For more than twenty years of socio-economic, scientific, educational, cultural cooperation with the countries of the former Soviet Union, South Korea has become a recognizable and attractive brand for everyone. One of the results is an increase in transnational marriages, most often ethnic women of the CIS. The author considers the features of the international marriage of ethnic Koreans married in South Korea.

A “Eurocentric” perspective on the choice of a South Korean citizen as a marriage partner for CIS girls can greatly assist Korean government and non-governmental organizations in adjusting policies to attract migrant women, as well as in implementing policies for the integration and adaptation of Russian-speaking ethnic Korean women in Korea.

Key words: Interethnic marriage, CIS, historical homeland, marital migration, Koreans of the CIS.

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Этникалық Отан мен трансұлттық байланыстар: ТМД-дағы корей әйелдерінің некелік миграция жағдайы

Жыл сайын дамушы елдердегі ондаған мың әйелдер дамыған елдердегі ер-азаматтармен некеге тұру үшін шекарадан өтеді. Батыс Еуропа мен Америка Құрама Штаттарының ер-азаматтары Ресей мен Шығыс Еуропадан, ал Шығыс Азия мен Австралияның ер-азаматтары Оңтүстік-Шығыс Азиядан өз болашақ жарларын іздейді. Трансұлттық некелер әйелдерді қиын жағдайға қояды, себебі қабылдаушы елдерде бұл әйелдерге ресурстар, тілдік дағдылар, әлеуметтік қолдау мен құқықтық қорғау жетіспейді. Жиырма жылдан астам уақыт бойы бұрынғы Кеңес Одағы елдерімен әлеуметтік-экономикалық, ғылыми, білім және мәдени саладағы ынтымақтастықтың арқасында Оңтүстік Корея көпшілікке танымал және тартымды брендке айналды. Одан шыққан нәтижелердің бірі ретінде трансұлттық некелердің көбеюін, әсіресе, ТМД елдерінен келген этникалық әйелдермен құрған неке санының артуын атап көрсетуге болады. Автор Оңтүстік Кореядан некеде тұрған этникалық корей әйелдерінің халықаралық неке ерекшеліктерін қарастырады.

Оңтүстік Корея азаматының ТМД елдеріндегі қыздарға үйлену проблемасына қатысты «евроцентрлік» көзқарас корей үкіметі мен қоғамдық ұйымдарға мигрант әйелдерді тарту саясатын түзетуде, сондай-ақ Кореядағы орыс тілді әйелдердің бірігу және бейімделу саясатын жүргізуде айтарлықтай көмектеседі.

Түйін сөздер: ұлтаралық неке, ТМД, Тарихи Отан, неке көші-қоны, ТМД корейлері.

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Транснациональные связи с этнической родиной: случай корейских женщин СНГ в брачной миграции

Ежегодно десятки тысяч женщин из развивающихся стран пересекают границы, чтобы вступить в брак с мужчинами из развитых стран. Мужчины в Западной Европе и Соединенных Штатах ищут будущих партнеров из России и Восточной Европы, в то время как мужчины в Восточной Азии и Австралии находят жен в странах Юго-Восточной Азии. Транснациональные браки ставят этих женщин в уязвимое положение, поскольку женщинам не хватает ресурсов, языковых навыков, социальной поддержки и правовой защиты в принимающих странах. За более чем двадцать лет социально-экономического, научного, образовательного и культурного сотрудничества со странами бывшего Советского Союза Южная Корея стала узнаваемым и привлекательным брендом для всех. Одним из результатов этого является увеличение транснациональных браков, чаще всего этнических женщин СНГ. Автор рассматривает особенности международного брака этнических кореянок в браке в Южной Корее.

«Европоцентристский» взгляд на проблему выбора южнокорейского гражданина в качестве брачного партнера девушками СНГ может оказать значительную помощь правительственным и общественным организациям Кореи в корректировке направлений политики привлечения жен-мигрантов, а также в проведении политики интеграции и адаптации русскоязычных женщин в Корею.

Ключевые слова: межнациональный брак, СНГ, историческая родина, брачная миграция, корейцы СНГ.

Introduction

Every year, tens of thousands of women from developing countries cross borders to marry men from developed countries. Men in Western Europe and the United States are looking for future partners from Russia and Eastern Europe, while men in East Asia and Australia find wives in the countries of Southeast Asia. Transnational marriage puts these women in a vulnerable position because women lack the resources, language skills, social support and legal protection in receiving countries.

For more than twenty years of socio-economic, scientific, educational, cultural cooperation with the countries of the former Soviet Union, South Korea has become a recognizable and attractive brand for everyone. One of the results is an increase in transnational marriages, most often ethnic women of the CIS. The reverse side of such marriages was often the initiative of South Korean citizens to find a marriage partner outside of Korea, because as a result of the country's socio-demographic problems, the marriage issue was not resolved on ethnic territory.

Justification of the choice of article and goals and objectives. According to the Ministry of Public Administration and Security, in November 2016, 318,948 people had the status of marriage immigrants and persons acquiring citizenship by nationality. South Korea has become an attractive market

for international marriages. Ethnic Koreans, Han Chinese, Vietnamese, Filipinos and ethnic Koreans of the post-Soviet countries have recently become the most popular ones in the marriage market. At the same time, a stream of labor migrants rushed into South Korea, including people from the CIS countries. Gradually, the number of foreign population in the country increased. According to the Ministry of Justice (Statistical Yearbook 2016 on the foreign population), the total number of foreigners living in Korea last year was 2.04 million out of 51.69 million people. This is twice the 910 thousand registered 10 years ago. In 2015, the figure was 1.9 million. Today, South Korea steadily continues to promote the idea of transforming a mono-ethnic nation into a multicultural community in accordance with all international standards of rights and freedoms.

Since the mid-2000s, the trend of growth of cross-border marriages in South Korea has become more noticeable, which is reflected in foreign scientific and academic literature. At the same time, statistics on "multicultural" marriages of citizens of the Republic of Korea recorded the appearance of the counties of Russia and Central Asia, which include citizens of Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan. According to the data of the Ministry of Gender Equality and the Family of the Republic of Korea in 2011, the status of immigration marriage held by women from Uzbekistan was 1,788 people, Kyrgyzstan - 455, Kazakhstan - 213 (Yem N.,

2013a). Thus, the data on citizens of Kazakhstan also demonstrated their participation in intermarriages with Koreans: 2009 total - 147, including men - 5, women - 142; 2010 total - 195, including 8 men, 187 women; 2011 only 213, including 8 men, 205 women (Statistics to Marriage Immigrants).

Academic literature, mass media shows the growth of international marriages in South Korea. There are wedding agencies, which offer marriage partners to Koreans from different countries of Asia. There had been changes, which brought the growth of international marriages, factors of migration of foreign spouses (Lee Yean-Ju, 2006). There was the thorough investigation into the question about position of foreign women in marriages defined that the "demand on foreign spouses more among divorced city bachelors and rural men. The level of adaptation of migrants in accepting society substantially depends on nationality (Lee, Yean-Ju, 2006) consideration to gender characteristics of marital migrants was shown to difficulties of adaptation in the accepting society. The scholars in their academic research have been concerned about limitation of the women in receiving social insurance, difficulties in communication, economical problems; social isolation. Investigators emphasized the problems of commercialization of international marriages, domestic violence, racial prejudices and cultural detachment in Korean society (Kim, Hyun-Sil, 2008). Aspects of social isolation of women in marriage with rural bachelors were considered in detail in political context of government directed on integration of migrants in Korean society (Kim Soon-yang, 2007). There was a «Great plan» which was ratified as the whole policy of social integration of foreign women and members of their families. The results of national investigation witnessed that plan brought to «assimilation of foreigners «but not to integration to the society keeping cultural originality» (Lee Hye-Kyung, 2008). The fail in the government of Damunhwawas explained by egocentrism of legal actions of the government and local authorities (Yang, Hyunah, 2011). The citizenship of migrants in Korean society considered as «Condition of multiculturalism». The difficulties in adaptation were in patriarchal system of the society and nationalistic relation to migrants. The society has viewed foreign migrant wives as mothers of future generations of Korean citizens (Ahn Yang-Heui, 2012) and subjects of reproduction of population (Lee Hyunok, 2012). However, the questions of international marriages have been studied in context of solution of the problems of social integration and assimilation of women migrants from China, Philippines, and Vietnam

in Korean society. The problems of assimilation of women of the CIS weren't studied (Yem N., 2013b).

Such women are deprived of possibility to receive benefits of social security: their weak communicative capabilities and limited approach to the information is the cause of difficulties in adaptation. The mistrust of the husband and his family make life more complicated. Besides women-migrants undergo racial prejudices mainly because they are women from "developing countries". The most common stereotypes are statements: "she is getting married because of money because her country is poor", "she is interested in sending money home", "she can abandon the family and could run away in any minute" (Kim Yi Seon, 2006). Thus, there is negative perception of immigrants as women who use the marriage for migration and potential victim of human trafficking and domestic violence. Simultaneously the Mass Media cultivate the image of men as representatives of low social status who could not marry and "refer to doubtful organizations in search of the wife from The Third World." Unequal relations, economic inequality of rights, difficulties of communication and employment assistance, stereotype relations from the side of Korean society, discrimination as "women from poor countries" create "invisible" for Korean society difficulties of adaptation of foreign women in marriage with the South Korean men (Yem N., 2013c).

Multicultural families refer to the group of low-level of social and economic status. Such families, share of which is 36.6%, have a monthly income of about 1-2 million of Korean won, less than 1 million won - 21.5% of average income in Korean homes is about 3.432.021 won (about 3000 dollars of USA). Demonstrating multiculturalism of the country the government is not able to satisfy the necessities of multicultural families with the low income (Lee Hyunok, 2012). There are no materials about labor of migrant wives which explains that they are mostly employed at home. The majority of women would like to work but there is no position for them in Korean society. Some of them work as not qualified workforce. The work of women migrants is not connected with the level of their education and career in their country. Korean government present all resources to those women as different programs to be acquainted with the Korean culture, but possibility of getting professional education is absent or not developed yet (Yem N., 2013c).

Korean society accepts migrant wives as not independent citizen but as wives of Korean men, daughters-in-law, mothers of Korean children. Declaring patriarchal ideology of Korean family, the

society assimilates them in Korean society without their consent. Presenting services of studying Korean language and traditions, opening courses of cooking Korean food all of these is done to “dissolve” identities of foreign women in Korean society. Women-migrants practically do not receive equal to them attitude, there is no interest to them as equal subjects; society does not see necessity of understanding culture of the country where they come from. Beside “Koreans having strong feeling of nationalism and cultural homogeneity and it is difficult to recognize cultural diversification (Kim Hyun-Sil, 2010)” (Yem N., 2013c).

Academies suggestions appear to modernize medical system and provision of social service to multicultural families. The society is concerned about the level of psychological condition of women during constant aggression and abuse of men defining main function of foreign wife in the process of the reproduction of family and care after ageing parents (Kim, Jung A., 2011). It is considered that foreign mothers are not able to create conditions for socialization of children in multicultural families because of limited language abilities. As a result, such an attitude is passed to the children of multicultural families. This is expressed in a neologism which was made towards children who were born from mixed marriages - “Kosians”. The term was presented in 1997 in Korea by citizen groups who studied questions which were connected with the presence of workers-migrants. The term was widely used in 2004 when some newspapers used its newspapers on intermarriages in rural area. The term Kosian refers to children of Korean with other Asians as a rule between Korean men and women of South-East Asia. Discussions that are made by mass media about multicultural children make impression that children are «problematic» and need social help. The lessons for migrant wives are given only during five months so they can reach only elementary knowledge, which is not enough for communication with children. The Representative of Department on receiving social security, which emphasizes “the absence of governmental support after children of migrant wives as one of the reasons why multicultural families and their children suffer”. Besides, the solution of the problem of Korean education towards the children has no social support. According to the data of survey of parents in Ansan, in spite of the fact that 80% of respondents had positive opinion to support children from multicultural families, only 10 % were ready to pay higher taxes for realization of the support (Lee Mary, 2009). In the beginning, these children should become future “Connection”,

“Link leaders” who will develop mutual understanding between countries (Yem N., 2013c).

In reality modern Korean society which is at the beginning of the way to solution of social and demographic, economical problems in conditions of fast developing economics by means of attracting migrant women will be justified multiculturalism as one of the aspects of tolerance of coexisting cultures in the purpose of mutual development and flourishing (Yem N., 2013c).

However, in general, in the scientific literature, all issues of inter-ethnic marriages were studied in the context of marriages of women migrants from China, the Philippines, and Vietnam. Marriages with women from Central Asian countries were not considered. The peculiarities of the “eastern mentality” of the countries of Central Asia of the post-Soviet space, in our opinion, are specific. In addition, the statistics of international marriages are not traced separately for foreign countries in Central Asia (Yem N., 2013b).

In the literature there are no studies of marriages of citizens of Central Asia with citizens of South Korea. The peculiarities of the mentality of the modern post-Soviet society should be shown to the world community, since the real situation of marriage migrants of Russian-speaking women of the CIS compared to Filipino or Vietnamese women is significantly different. Russian-speaking women from the CIS in a number of parameters are unsuitable for marriage with South Korean outsiders. Moreover, the governments of the CIS countries and society should not ignore the growing social problem of marital migration of Russian-speaking women.

Scientific research methodology. The author analyzed the statistics of the websites of Ministries and departments in South Korea, which keep records of marriage, and divorce in the country from 2000 to 2017. The author traced the dynamics of marriages, gender structure, and ethnic characteristics of partners of international marriage. In addition, the author identified indicators such as age difference and place of residence (urban and rural). The territorial boundaries of the sample of respondents covered the city of Seoul, the city of Busan, the city of Ansan, and the nearby small satellite towns of Seoul (Yem N., 2013b). Women who came from countries of the former Soviet Union and married to South Korean men became participants in a sociological survey. Gradually, the boundaries of the sample expanded, since it was difficult to find any statistics that would separate the ethnic Koreans of the former CIS countries by ethnicity. Statistics from the Foundation for Overseas Koreans, as well as the Institute for Mi-

gration, retain information on the marital status of ethnic Koreans (by type of marriage visa). It also indicated information which country they migrated from. Between February and August 2013, the author conducted a survey of 54 women. Among them - 30 ethnic Korean women from the CIS countries who are married to citizens of South Korea, a structured interview was conducted with nine of them. Women represented such countries as Uzbekistan (16 people), Kazakhstan (8), Kyrgyzstan (3), Russia (2), Tajikistan (1). All the stages of the sociological research carried out corresponded to the legislation of the Republic of Kazakhstan, as well as the International Code of ICC / ESOMAR² on the practice of conducting marketing and social research under the articles "Conscientiousness", "Professional Responsibility", "Informational Openness", "Property Rights", "Recording and Monitoring", "Data protection and confidentiality", "Publication of the research results", "Responsibility" and others.

Results and discussion. This paper examines the social and mental characteristics of ethnic Koreans from the post-Soviet space who have married Koreans, attempts to identify the relationship of demographic and socio-cultural characteristics with the level of marriage satisfaction of migrant women by the example of women migrants from the CIS. As a result of the analysis of questionnaires and interviews, it was revealed that women of the CIS countries in marriage migration in South Korea "have their own specifics" in marriage with South Korean men due to differences in mentality, perception of reality, expectations related to the experience of becoming a personality in the society of the post-Soviet space. A "Eurocentric" perspective on the choice of a South Korean citizen as a marriage partner for CIS girls can greatly assist Korean government and non-governmental organizations in adjusting policies to attract migrant women, as well as in implementing policies for the integration and adaptation of Russian-speaking ethnic Korean women in Korea. In order to prevent the risks of international marriages for immigrants from the countries of the former USSR, we have identified the relationship of demographic and socio-cultural characteristics with the level of marriage satisfaction of women migrants on the example of women migrants from the CIS. In conclusion, we obtained the following results.

Adult women in marriage have a lower degree of satisfaction with their family life. The large

difference in the age of a married couple guarantees a low degree of satisfaction with marriage.

Russian-speaking marriage migrants are from urban areas of the CIS countries. This affects the characteristics of adaptation and the level of satisfaction in marriage in South Korea. Mostly married women live in medium-sized cities, only a few live in Seoul. If women in marriage live in a large city, the degree of satisfaction with family life is higher. With increasing duration of marriage, the level of satisfaction with family life decreases. The first years of family life leave favorable impressions of the marriage. In addition, the author determined that marriage couples have a higher probability of divorce if the spouses found each other through a marriage agency. Although the sample data on the facts of marriage agencies are not very extensive, we were able to observe situations of success or failure of marriage depending on this indicator. The proportion of those who get divorced is higher among those who entered a marriage through marriage services.

Mostly women of the CIS countries with a high level of education get married to South Koreans. Usually, they came from an intelligent family, grew up in an urban environment. In times of economic crisis, such women painfully perceive difficult situations. However, they put even more effort into changing it. Many of them who are educated women do not idealize marriage life in Korea. It will not be a blind Korean dream.

As a result, they have a clearer picture of the culture of the country of their marriage. Often they learn the language professionally, or are already able to work with Korean partners (this can be either a large Korean company or private businessmen, for example, by distributing Korean cosmetics or other goods). We correlated data on the educational level of women with the degree of satisfaction with marriage. Highly educated women were more often satisfied with their marriage to a South Korean man.

The level of proficiency in Korean differs depending on the ethnicity of women, as well as the length of stay in South Korea. A high level of proficiency in Korean is not associated with high satisfaction in marriage. Subsequent generations of the post-Soviet space still feel traces of Soviet culture. Most women described themselves as "representatives of contemporary post-Soviet culture," women were independent both in terms of character and lifestyle in their home countries.

In this regard, the author argues that a CIS woman married to a South Korean man takes an active position, is able to resolve issues independently,

²http://www.esomar.org/uploads/public/knowledge-and-standards/codes-and-guidelines/ICCESOMAR_Code_Russian_.pdf

takes responsibility for herself and does not always rely on a man, because of her models of family life and relationship experience in her country.

Most women are confident that people from the CIS countries can compete in the labor market in South Korea. Initiative and independent, they try to make every effort to achieve their goals in Korea. Social prejudices and misunderstanding in the family and society are only to a small extent characteristic of Russian-speaking marriage migrants. A woman from the CIS married in South Korea is motivated to stay forever in Korea, seeing all the possibilities of this country.

Marriages of convenience have a tendency to less stability and less satisfaction with the marriage life. Marriages “for love” are more likely to have a high degree of satisfaction in marriage with a South Korean partner. In addition, there is a direct dependence of the satisfaction with marriage on the change in the material situation as compared with the premarital period.

The probability of divorce is directly dependent on the degree of satisfaction with the marriage. The women of the CIS married to a South Korean man, even in the event of a divorce, are ready to stay in Korea, as they see here the possibilities for a further life better off financially, with the possibilities of achieving personal success.

Religious women have a high level of satisfaction with family life. The experience of adopting religion in the lives of migrant women of the CIS countries requires further study.

Conclusion

As a result, ethnic Korean women of the CIS countries in marriage migration in South Korea “have specific features” in marriage with South Korean men due to a different mentality, perception of reality, expectations associated with the experience of personality formation in the society of the post-Soviet space.

The factors of attraction and pushing have played their part in the power of historical events in the post-Soviet space, aggravated by economic cataclysms and political instability. For CIS countries, marriage migration is a loss of social capital. Mostly educated women left for marriage to South Korea, a high proportion were those with postgraduate education.

The fates of these women in the early years of migration are at great risk of divorce. The motivation of marriage for women is often “to improve life and increase material well-being”. And the desire to stay in Korea, even in the event of a divorce, forms a cohort of CIS migrants who find themselves in conditions of “survival” in the narrow space of economically prosperous Korea.

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