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**Ethnic Entrepreneurship of Koreans in the USSR  
and  
post Soviet Central Asia**

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## Introduction

The collapse of the Soviet Union and the emergence of sovereign states opened a new page in the history of the “Koryo saram”.<sup>1</sup> Opposite to other ethnic minorities, that have chosen the strategy of leaving the former Soviet Central Asian Republics, the Koreans have stayed but they are again being forced to adapt and this time to the nationalizing states. Emigration of the Koryo saram to foreign countries is not considerable. The majority of migrants are drawn to other post-Soviet spaces.

There are also differences within the Koreans in Central Asia. The Korean Diaspora in Kazakhstan became urbanized much quicker than that of Uzbekistan, where up until the beginning of 1990s there remained many large, so-called "Korean collective farms." This agrarian population has socio-cultural characteristics that are essentially different from those of urbanized Koreans. Furthermore, since the Uzbeks have always dominated in Uzbekistan numerically, unlike the Kazakhs in Kazakhstan, Uzbekistani Koreans are more accustomed to their host country's culture and language. Different political, economic, and cultural processes in the contemporary Central Asia play key roles in divergences of the Korean Diasporas. (Ким Г.Н., 2000)

The Korean Immigrant communities living scattered over the world are demonstrating one specific feature - their special ability to adapt themselves in the host countries. Koryo saram are, in this sense, a remarkable case. The first generation of Koryo saram tried as fast as possible to settle down on the land of the tsarist empire and later of the Soviet Russia. That generation learned Russian and accepted Orthodoxy, and then a couple of dozen years later quickly abandoned the religion, following the Communist Party line. They ploughed in both direct and figurative senses the virgin lands and prepared them for sowing. The second generation did not have time to taste the first fruits of their labor in the new lands. They were forced to repeat the mission of the previous generation, that is, to adapt after the Deportation of 1937 to the conditions in a new land, namely Central Asia. That generation heroically withstood all the difficulties and created, so it seemed, a solid foundation for the third generation. After the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991 the third generation also turned out to be pioneering because they were forced to adapt to the new sovereign states of the post-Soviet area.

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<sup>1</sup> In the past, both in the academic literature and the vernacular, the term "Soviet Koreans" was used to refer to all Koreans living in the USSR, but the Koreans referred to themselves as either Koryo saram or Choson saram interchangeably. Nowadays the term Koryo saram is preferred. Recently in South Korea two variants of the name, Koryoin and Koryo saram, have become most commonly used in regard to post-Soviet Koreans.

## **Objectives of Research**

The end of the 20<sup>th</sup> and beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> cc. for the vast Eurasian space is characterized by a stable interest in the analysis of various aspects of entrepreneurship. The reason is evident – it is during that period that in the post-Soviet states including Russia and Central Asia (Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan) there appeared political, economic and legal grounds for market relations, the basis of which was the entrepreneurship. The latter became a topic of research for many scholars.

At the same time in the world scholarly research of the last decade great interest was taken in the paradigm of the ethnic entrepreneurship which is related, first of all, to the international migrations which have embraced millions of people and hundreds of countries in all the continents. On the eve of the 21<sup>st</sup> century the Asian continent has turned not only into the arena of the leading world economy players: China, Japan, South Korea and other Asian “dragons” but also of the transnational exchange of labor resources. For instance, from the South Korea which occupies the 11<sup>th</sup> place in the rating of the developed countries of the world, every year dozens of thousands people leave for other countries with the aim of achieving success in business, family and personal life. At present in Almaty, the former capital of Kazakhstan, the number of permanent South Korean residents is around 3 thousand. The South Korea itself in its turn has to receive hundreds of thousands immigrants who help to fight the deficit of labor and are engaged in unqualified work.

In the post-Soviet states of the Central Asia which are on the way to strengthening their national sovereignty on the basis of the so-called titular (autochthon) nations, ethnic minorities found themselves facing the dilemma of competition in the state sector of the economy, big business or occupying niches in the sphere of small and medium enterprises. Some representatives of non-titular ethnoses managed to get a place at the top of the economic Olympus but the majority of ethnic minorities adapted in the low and medium level of business. Thus the objective of the present research is the issues related to the emergence of the ethnic entrepreneurship among the Koreans in the former USSR and modern countries of the Central Asia.

Ethnic entrepreneurs need to develop socially meaningful relationships with the ethnic community in order to start a business. To start a business, ethnic entrepreneurs draw on co-ethnics to help them, but these ties are not given. They have to activate their networks for them to become social capital. People come to recognize each other as part of the same ethnic group by defining them as belonging. In other words, people recognize as familiar co ethnics those that share networks. Ethnic entrepreneurs mobilize social capital through ethnic social networks. They will be in an advantageous position to exploit ethnic networks. Those that are established in ethnic networks can do best.

In my research which is of the interdisciplinary character I am analyzing in turn several interrelated topics, each being important for getting the whole picture of the origin and development of ethnic entrepreneurship of the Soviet Koreans and Korean diasporas in

the Central Asia. The interdisciplinary approach is conditioned, first of all, by a multi-aspect character of the object of our analysis; however, the main and all-connecting discipline is not being economics or sociology but history as the genesis of ethnic entrepreneurship has been taking place for a long period of time in different political and economical systems i.e. in the changing historical context.

Beyond the scope of our attention remained entrepreneurship activity based on ethnic networks of new Korean immigrants from the Central Asia in the modern Russia and that of South Korean businessmen in the Central Asia. Such division is caused by considerable differences in conditions of origin, ways of realization, volume, forms and methods of ethnic entrepreneurship as compared with the mainstream of the Central Asian Korean Diaspora under consideration. Though we cannot exclude the possibility of interconnection of the selected groups of the Korean population and correspondingly, some elements of their interaction in the sphere of entrepreneurship.

Structurally the research consists of an introduction, main part, conclusion, addendum and a list of sources and literature.

The main part is composed of four chapters being relatively autonomous but logically and rationally interdependent.

Chapter One examines the notion of ethnic entrepreneurship, describes used methodology and reviews sources, data and literature of a complex nature.

Chapter Two contains an essential description of the historical background of the Koreans Diasporas in Central Asia starting from early stages of the voluntary immigration to the Russian Maritime Region, though to the forced deportation from the Soviet Far East to Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan until the sudden collapse of the Soviet superpower.

Chapter Three studies the “second economy” of USSR, *kobonji* as a kind of ethnic entrepreneurship in the Soviet economy and part of the Soviet “second economy”.

Collapse of the Soviet Union determined crucial changes in the Soviet society as a whole and it is a watershed in the life of Koreans in Central Asia. In the final Chapter Five I explore changes in social structure and ethnic organization of Koreans, determinants of the entrepreneurial success and establishment of small and medium size enterprises of Koryo saram in Kazakhstan, as the most advanced market economy country of the contemporary post Soviet Central Asia.

Addendum and references compiled by the author are integral parts of the research paper and will help to better understand some aspects of the topics under consideration.

# 1. Theoretical Framework, Methods and Sources

## 1.1. Defining Ethnic Entrepreneurship

Ethnic entrepreneurship is a quite new and multidimensional concept, the definition depends largely on the focus of the research undertaken. The critical question arises in the entrepreneurship literature whether entrepreneurs are born or made. The term “entrepreneur” applies to “someone who establishes a new entity to offer a new or existing product or service into a new or existing market, whether for a profit or not-for-profit venture” ([wikipedia.org/wiki/Entrepreneur](http://wikipedia.org/wiki/Entrepreneur)). Entrepreneurs focus on conquering problems, starting new businesses, accepting responsibility and are expecting the recognition and respect from the society and business field according to their success. The entrepreneur may be driven not only by economic motives but also by psychological motives like the desire to innovate and create new products (Schumpeter, 1934). The level of education is another important variable. Entrepreneurs have many of the same character traits as leaders. David McClelland (1961) argues that “the entrepreneur is primarily motivated by an overwhelming need for achievement and he/she has a strong urge to build”. The concept of the entrepreneur is associated with three elements: risk bearing, organizing and innovating. It should be noted that the term ‘entrepreneurship’ is a rather ideal-typical concept. Most business firms are standard operations where the entrepreneur is more a manager than a risk-lover. Consequently, the term entrepreneurship is often too broadly interpreted as the management of a business firm. (Drucker, 1985; Acs and Audretsch, 2003)

In the literature, different concepts and definitions are used to refer to ethnic or migrant entrepreneurship. Changanti and Green (2002) assembled three main identifications given by Waldinger et al. (1990) and U.S. Department of Commerce (1997). Foreign entrepreneurs can be defined such as “immigrant entrepreneurs”, “ethnic entrepreneurs” and “minority entrepreneurs”. To immigrant entrepreneurs refer people who start their own business just after their arrivals using their individual connection with former immigrants and non-immigrants with a common origin. Ethnic entrepreneurs create “a set of connections and regular patterns of interaction among people sharing common national background or migration experiences” (Waldinger et al., 1990). U.S. Department of Commerce defines foreign business owners such as “minority entrepreneurs” who are not of the majority population (U.S. Department of Commerce, 1997).

In order to understand ethnic or migrant entrepreneurship, previous researches have focused on the past-present and future evaluation of ethnic enterprises. (Baycan-Leven et al. 2005-2010) The main questions arisen to evaluate the success and the sustainability of ethnic enterprises are as follow:

- motivation and orientation

- labor and capital conditions
- customer relationships
- gender and generation differences
- cultural differences
- break-out strategies

Ethnic entrepreneurship is a firm part of any migration, most obviously observed in the United States, where the foreign born have been overrepresented in small businesses. The history of ethnic entrepreneurship in the USA also explains why research in this subject has its roots there. An early and very prominent theory suggested that ethnic businesses are an obvious reaction to blocked opportunities in the labor market, which in many instances still holds true today. Europe, on the contrary, was at the turn of the century an emigration continent and remained very homogenous until after World War II, when large labor forces were needed by ever-growing industrial companies. Initially, the immigrants came as a temporary workforce, fulfilling jobs which required no skills and which could easily be replaced by a succession of sojourners (Waldinger et al., 1990a).

Ethnic economy is a conceptually developed topic of the western sociological discussion. There are several classifications of theoretical approaches to the analysis of this phenomenon; the variants of the most widespread approaches can be found in works by Ivan Light (Light, 1985) and Roger Waldinger (Waldinger, 1986). The modern concepts of ethnic economy originate mainly from the contention that immigrants, belonging to the minority in the host country, encounter a particular situation which is disadvantageous, on the one hand (as the position of any minority). On the other hand, immigrants have additional resources which are usually called “ethnic”. According to Light and Rosenstein, ethnic resources are those, which are based on the identification of a person with ethnic community (Light, Rosenstein, 1995).

“Ethnic” resources not only allow immigrants to find dwellings, to settle down etc., but also determine their economic strategies. This phenomenon is defined as “ethnic economy”: *“the economy is ethnic because its personnel are co-ethnics”* (Light, Karageorgis, 1994:649). It is supposed, that the people, as representatives of ethnic minority, have an opportunity to be united on the basis of the common ethnicity and to be engaged in joint business activity. This also implies that they trust each other, just because they belong to the same ethnic group. The trust based on the shared ethnic identity allows them to establish “ethnic” social (economic) networks, facilitates the information circulation within these networks, reduces probable transactional costs connected with mistrust (for example, the activity of middlemen in the role of guarantors in business, becomes excessive) (Light, 1986:22). Thus, the existing concept of “ethnic economy” rests to a considerable extent upon the concept of ethnicity, and proceeds from the ethnic belonging of individuals involved.

The business entry decision has had a strong impact on the development of theories in ethnic entrepreneurship. Much attention has been given to the question

whether cultural or structural factors influence the business entry decision and therefore are responsible for the rise of ethnic entrepreneurship. Supporters of the culturalist approach believe that immigrant groups have culturally determined features leading to a propensity to favor self-employment (Masurel et al., 2005). The structuralist approach, on the other hand, suggests that external factors in the host environment, such as discrimination or entry barriers on the labor market due to education and language deficits, push foreigners into self-employment. More recent approaches, which attempt to combine these two perspectives, show that a differentiated view is necessary to understand this complex phenomenon. Today, a gradual shift away from the stereotypical ethnic-run corner shop towards more diversified sectors can be observed (Freitas, 2003). Even though these types of self-help firms persist, new sectors such as computers, global trade, leisure and recreation management, real-estate agencies and cultural enterprises are developing as well.

Our research suggests the “understanding” definition of “*ethnic entrepreneurship*”, as an economy *involving individuals, who subjectively consciously pattern their economic behavior on their own ethnicity, subjectively comprehended, and on the ethnicity of those with whom they cooperate* (Бредникова, Паченков, 2002) On the basis of this approach, we try to argue the existence of “ethnic entrepreneurship” in the diasporic (not immigrants!) milieu which we investigated.

## **1.2. Data and Methodology**

The research was carried out in the places with relatively big numbers of ethnic Koreans. I have been able to cover around two thirds of selected cities and towns of the Central Asia.

- Almaty (city) and Karatalskii rayon (countryside) in Kazakhstan;
- Tashkent (city) and Tashkent province (countryside) in Uzbekistan.
- Bishkek (city) and Bishkek province (countryside) in Kyrgyzstan

The important methods of the project research were as follows:

- a) The comparative analysis of the general and particular in development of the Korean ethnic business in Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan;
- b) The interdisciplinary approach which includes the historical, sociological and political science approaches.

The main research methods are observation of the phenomenon under consideration, questioning of general respondents and problem-oriented interviews with the people engaged in ethnic entrepreneurship in the Soviet Union and the modern Central Asia. It is necessary to use other auxiliary methods such as: descriptive, comparative, statistical, diachronic, synchronic, combined, typological etc.

Commonwealth of Independent States - Central Asian States



The materials for the research are of a complex nature. They include:

- Statistical data on labor activities of Koreans in the Soviet period and post-Soviet Central Asia
- Mass media and web materials
- Interviews with officials, leaders of Korean communities, ethnic Korean NGOs, Korean businessmen
- Secondary sources such as dissertations, books, monographs and articles on ethnic entrepreneurship

### 1.3. Review of Literature

Literature related to the object of the study and is divided into 3 main blocs and in the first of them are publications on the theoretical concepts of ethnic business. To the second belong the studies of ethnic aspects of the business among Korean Communities in the USA, Korean Residents in Japan and other countries. (See: Kim G., 1995). Next block is the biggest one because we have a voluminous literature on history and recent life of Central Asian Koreans. (See: Kim and King, 2001). In the third recently emerging block of literature are the works of Russian sociologists, ethnographers and economists who just started to analyze appearance, organization and functioning of ethnic business (entrepreneurship) in Moscow, St. Petersburg and other big cities.

Ethnic entrepreneurship as a specific way of organizing and conducting business by migration ethnic communities within a quantitatively dominating environment of another nation have been considered in the works by Light I., Bonacich E., Karageorgis S., Waldinger R., Aldrich H., Ward R., Jones T., McEvony D., Schwarz T, Velleman P. and others. Here one must bear in mind that formation and development of ethnic entrepreneurship in the Soviet Union was different from Western models. That is why Western concepts of ethnicity and business correlation should be extrapolated to the empirical field of the Soviet reality only after critical analysis of the imported ideas.

Ethnic aspects of the business among Korean Communities in the USA are considered in a number of publications by Kim Hyung-chan, Kim Illsoo, Kim Kwang Chung, Kwak Tae-Hwa, Min Pyong Gap, Yu Eui-Young and in the recent monographs by Park Kyeyoung and Yoon In Jin. About peculiarities of entrepreneurship of Korean residents in Japan are the works of Abe Kazuhiro, Kajimura Hideki, Lee Changsoo, George De Vos, Mitchell Richard H, Lee Kwang-Kyu, Sonia Ryang, H. Wagatsuma, E. Wagner Edward, Yoshika Masuo, Fukuoka Yasunori and others.

Now economists have been paying attention to the phenomenon of the shadow economy, a phenomenon which in the eyes of many adds almost a second dimension to economic studies. Sovietologists (political scientists, lawyers, sociologists, economists) have been studying the Soviet second economy as a development which has forced them to review a number of previously accepted notions about the political, legal, and socio-economic system of the Soviet Union. These studies have resulted in a number of publications concerning the general character of the Soviet second economy, some of its specific sectors, and its legal and sociological ramifications. (Grossman, 1977; Katsenelinboigen, 1977; Wellisz and Findlay, 1987; Sampson, 1987; Feige, 1990; Sik, 1992)

During the Soviet period ethnic entrepreneurship was not a subject of any scholarly research. Some fragmentary notes about specific business activities of the Soviet Koreans can be found in a number of works by native and foreign authors. A closer interest to this issue has been lately demonstrated by some journalists and scholars from Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan and South Korea. (*Back Tae Hyeon*. The Social Reality faced by Ethnic Koreans in Central Asia. - *German Nikolaevich Kim and Ross King (Eds.)* The Koryo Saram: Koreans in the Former USSR. Korean and Korean American Studies Bulletin. Vol. 2&3, 2001, pp. 45-89; Lee Geron. Notes of an Observer of the Earth Love of Koreans. Bishkek, 2000, 467 in Russian; 권희영, 한 발레리 공저, 2004 『중앙아시아 초원의 유랑농업.우즈베키스탄 고려사람의 고본지 연구』 한국 정신문화연구원.

Modern Russian sociologists, ethnographers and economists have just started to analyze emergence, organization and functioning of ethnic business (entrepreneurship) in Moscow, St.Petersburg and other big cities. (*Snissarenko A.* Die Aserbaidshische Gemeinde in St. Petersburg. Selbstbehauptung und Abwehrstrategien aserbaidshischer

Zuwanderer.- Post-sowjetische Ethnizitäten. Ethnische Gemeinden in St.Petersburg und Berlin/Potsdam. Berliner Debatte Wissenschaftsverlag / Hg.: I .Oswald, V.Voronkov. M., 1997.) In Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan and other Central Asian countries of the post-Soviet space researches devoted to the analysis of this topic have not yet been carried out which only accentuates the importance of the present project.

For the understanding the ethnic entrepreneurship of Koreans in the FSU( former Soviet Union) there is a necessity to know their background. There is a various literature on the history, culture, language of Koryo saram from the Russian empire period until now. A number of works by Russian authors appeared at the time of the first migration of Koreans to the Russian Far East. In certain of the these works, authors paid attention to factors underlying the mass immigration, and also the social , economic and legal conditions of the new arrivals to the Maritime region. Since interest in the Korean influx was dictated primarily by pragmatic rather than purely academic considerations, it is not surprising that counted among the ranks of the first authors are statesmen from the Tsar's administration in the Far East, as well as officials, military men, writers and publicists.

After a long silence of the Stalinist period a new turn in the studies of the Soviet Koreans began from the end of 1980s. "Perestroika and Glasnost" initiated by Gorbachov provoked a boom of interest of all peoples in their roots. During a decade there were printed many more publications about Koreans in the FSU than had appeared in the previous fifty years. There are concrete reasons for this increased interest in Koryo saram. First of all, Gorbachev's "Democratization and "Glasnost"" gave access to formerly secret archival documents and permitted the re-evaluation of the history of deported peoples including Koreans. Secondly, these events laid the bases for an ethnic renaissance when members of all nationalities in the former USSR became interested in their roots and history. Thirdly, opening of Korean cultural centers offered a formal organizational structure for the study of the Diaspora's history. Fourthly, the government of the Republic of Korea, South Korean academic institutions, foundations, societies, and associations helped to stimulate this research by sponsoring the collection, copying, and publishing of archival material and books as well as financed language study, international seminars and conferences, and research trips to Seoul for Koreans from the former USSR.

As a result the main stages in the historical development of Soviet Koreans, their ethnic culture, professional performing arts, language, education etc. have been sufficiently explored and studied. However, all numerous publications remained primarily descriptive and mostly general in approach.

The foreign historiography boasts definite achievements in terms of the research into the social and economic, national and cultural life of Koreans in Russia and the former USSR. Almost all the authors drew on historical, ethnographical and linguistic works of Soviet scholars. Some of the works of the foreign scholars, however, have inaccuracies and mistakes of an empirical character, suffer from narrowness of source bases, and are less

theoretical than they should be, while the works of other authors are frequently tautological. It is also impossible to deny the existence of the fundamental divergence between certain of the views, appraisals and conclusions of foreign scholars.

There still remains much virgin territory to explore in terms of studies of more specific topics with more theoretical pondering. There needs to be done more concrete and focused research on various aspects of the history of Koryo saram, and the present day life of the Diaspora. Furthermore, academic analyses are needed which can help to form actual goals for the future political, socio-economic, and ethnic development of Koryo saram and attempt to make prognoses concerning the topical problems and optimistic or pessimistic prospects of the Diaspora in the ethno nationalizing states of the post Soviet Central Asia in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

## 2. Historical Background of the Ethnic Koreans in Central Asia

### 2.1 Immigration and Economic Adaptation of Koreans in the Russian Far East

The beginning of the new history of the Korean immigration to the Far East is considered to be the first half of the 1860s. The deficit of the labor in the first decade after joining Priamurye and Primorye to the Russian possessions coincided with the first wave of immigrants from the Northern provinces of Korea, who had run away from the severe exploitation of the feudal-monarchical regime, abuse and unlawful actions of the landowners, bureaucrats and moneylenders, to the bordering regions of Russia and Manchuria. (Kim Syn Hwa, 1965; Kho Song Moo, 1987, Pak B.D., 1994; Petrov A.I. , 2000; Kim German, 1999 )

In connection with the mass Russian colonization more and more often arose the «Korean question" or the issue of expediency of the Korean immigration. In accordance with the directive of Priamurskyi general-governor A.N. Korf all Korean immigrants in Russia were divided into three categories. The first category numbered those who moved and settled in Russia before the Russian-Korean agreement of 1884. They were allowed to stay in the Ussuriyskyi krai and they were to get the Russian citizenship. To the second category belonged the Koreans who migrated and settled in Russia after 1884 but those willing to adopt Russian citizenship and undertaking to follow the rules established for the first category. To the third category belonged the Koreans who temporarily lived in the Priamurskyi krai, i.e. those who came to earn some money. They had no right to settle on the state lands. They could stay in Russia only after getting Russian residence permits.

By the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> c. liberalization of the policy of general-governors S.M. Dukhovskoi and N.I. Grodekov towards Korean settlers contributed to the fast increase of

**Table 1. The Number of Korean Immigrants in Russia, 1884-1896**

Year	Russian citizen	Foreign nationality	Total
1884	-	-	7 599
1886	-	-	9 221
1888	-	-	10 098
1892	12 940	3 624	16 564
1895	13 647	8 913	23 893
1899	14 980	10 675	25 655
1901	16 163	13 445	29 608
1902	16 356	13 122	29 478
1905	16 500	12 000	28 500

the number of Koreans migrating to Russia. Actual number of Koreans who crossed the Russian-Korean and Russian-Chinese borders many times surpassed the number of those who passed through the passport-visa control or got a Russian residence permit. The majority of Korean immigrants came to the Russian Primorye illegally through the river Tumangan. The Koreans got settled in the suburbs of Vladivostok, along the seashore of the Amurskiy and Ussuriyskiy bays and in some other places in the Russian Far East.

The Russian-Japanese war of 1904-1905 and establishing of the Japanese protectorate over Korea led to a more active Korean migration to Manchuria and the Far East. The main determining factors of the migration remained economic ones, such as: mass loss of land by the Korean farmers, Japanese economic dominance, and deterioration of living conditions in Korea. With the loss of independence emigration started to bear a pronounced political character. Among the emigrants there were many participants of the anti-Japanese, national-liberation movement. The severe military-police terror of the Japanese colonial regime in Korea forced many Korean patriots to leave the country and to transfer their activity onto the territory of Russia.

The number of Korean emigrants only in Primorskaya oblast according to the data of Priamur general-governor P.F. Unterberger increased from 34,399 in 1906 to 50,965 in 1910. But those data reflect only the number of registered Koreans and the total number of Koreans in Primorskaya oblast in 1908 can be about 60 thousand. Considerable size of the Korean immigration to Russia after its defeat in the Russian-Japanese war caused the chauvinist reaction on the side of the tsarist autocracy. P. F. Unterberger appointed in 1905 the Priamur general-governor was a very active supporter of populating Priamurye exclusively with Russians and an opponent of "the yellow colonization". He considered the Koreans who had been living in Southern Ussuriysk for 40 years, aliens that could not be trusted because they constituted an ideal basis for spies. And thus he concluded – "I prefer a desert but a Russian desert to the land cultivated but Korean"

Those words were followed by tough measures aimed at limitation of the Korean immigration and at moving them out of bordering regions to the western regions of Siberia and to the North. In 1905 about 500 Koreans working in the mines near Khabarovsk were sent to Perm. Later on the directive of Unterberger 200 Koreans of the Amur oblast and 5,000 in the Udskiy uезд of the Primorskaya oblast were forced to move out from the mining territories. Under Unterberger a very strict control and supervision of the political reliability was established over the Koreans as they all were suspected of being Japanese spies. Such suspicion turned into an integral part of the policy of the tsarist autocracy regarding Koreans. But despite such a suspicious attitude of the local governors, the determining factor of the tsarist policy remained the same – using Korean immigrants as cheap labor for the economic reinforcement of Russia along the Far Eastern borders.

## The Map of the Russian Far East



In 1917 on the eve of the October revolution there were about 100 thousand Koreans in Russia. In Primorye there lived 81, 825 Koreans - nearly one third of the total population. Besides, during the Civil war and foreign military intervention against the Bolsheviks' power in the European part of Russia there were up to 7 thousand and in the western Siberia about 5 thousand Koreans.

Korean workers living in the Far East, in Siberia and other regions of Russia thought that the Soviet power defended and fought for the rights, freedom and independence of all oppressed peoples and because of that when the Civil war and foreign intervention started the most patriotic and revolutionary part of the Korean population rose arms-in- hands at its defence. Participation of the Korean workers in the struggle for the power of the Soviets was motivated first of all by their desire to liberate their motherland from the colonial rule. The Koreans thought that the victory over the Japanese occupants in the Far East would contribute to the restoration of the independence of Korea. After a very tough suppression of the First of March movement of 1919 in Korea, the military anti-Japanese actions of the Korean patriots who formed guerrilla detachments in Manchuria and Siberia became especially active.

The Soviet power failed to improve the situation with the Korean immigration in the Russian Far East. On the contrary, a turbulent whirlpool of the Civil war and the foreign intervention, change of the government, lack of control over immigration led to the situation when no measures were taken at regulating vital issues of immigrants' accommodation. Two thirds of the Korean population did not have Russian citizenship. Being foreigners they were not given land and had to rent it from Russians and Koreans – Russian citizens. Immigrants had to buy residence permits for each adult member of the family at 7 roubles 50 kop.in gold. Those without the permit were fined and those without passports were sent back to Korea.

All regions of the Primorskaya gubernia (province) where Koreans got settled at the beginning of the 1920s suffered from famine. The worst situation was in the Posyetskiy rayon where for two years (1922-1923) there had been poor harvest. In 1922 around 30 thousand Koreans living in that region lived only on vegetables and herbs. All these circumstances made many of the Korean farmers move to the Chinese territory as they saw no prospects for improving their living conditions. In spring of 1923 around 500 Korean families left Primorye. Totally 5 thousand Koreans moved to Manchuria.

After expulsion of the interventionists from the Far East Korean guerrilla detachments were disbanded. This fact took its toll painfully on the political mood of the Korean population. Many of them were refused residence permits, no money was allocated for material assistance, no loans granted to former partisans who wanted to shift to rice plantation cultivation. In August, 1922 was held a meeting of representatives of local authorities and Bolsheviks' party devoted to the work among national minorities of the Soviet Far East. One of the main issues was the Korean question, on which a resolution was adopted which became a basis for sovietization of the Far Eastern Koreans. (Kim Syn Hwa, 1965; Kho Song Moo, 1987, Pak B.D., 1994; 박 환, 1995; Petrov A.I. , 2000; Petrov A.I., 2001; Kim German, 1999 )

**Table 2. Distribution of Korean Rural Population in Primorskaya Guberniya, 1923**

Uezd (district)	Number of Koreans		
	Russian nationality	Foreign nationality	Total
Posyetskiy	14 371	13 610	27 981
Nikolsk-Ussuriyskiy	7 621	28 354	35 975
Suchanskiy	2 302	19 342	21 644
Spasskiy	2 896	4 294	7 190
Olginskiy	14	2 199	2 213
Imanskiy	1 848	1 402	3 250
Khbarovskiy	2 091	3 138	5 229
<b>Total</b>	<b>31 143</b>	<b>72 339</b>	<b>103 482</b>

## 2.2. Stalin's Collectivization and Sovietization of Koreans

The sovietization of the Korean population started first of all in the sphere of the administrative-legal status. In the middle of 1924 re-elections to the village Soviets started. Formerly practiced limitations of the right to elect were eliminated and the Korean population elected their organs – village Soviets on par with the Russians. As a result of the re- elections of village Soviets in 1924 out of the total number of increased village Soviets 105 constituted the Korean village Soviets instead of the former 87, and in 1925 their number was 122.

One of the major political actions of the Soviet Power in the solution of the Korean question was establishing in 1923 of an Institute of authorized persons for Korean affairs under Dalrevcom<sup>2</sup> and local Revcoms.<sup>3</sup> In March, 1923 were introduced positions of authorized persons for Korean affairs under Primorskiy Gubernskiy Ispolcom<sup>4</sup> and Uezd Ispolcoms of the Soviets. One of the main tasks of the Institute of the authorized persons for Korean affairs was to study and work on the most important issues related to the Korean population of the gubernia: records of the Korean population, getting single agricultural tax, land arrangement. As it turned out, the most burning issue for the Korean population was related to getting the Soviet citizenship. The legal basis for solving the problem of citizenship for Koreans was the Resolution of Dalrevcom of the DVK of December,8, 1922 on coming into force of the decrees of All Union Central Executive Committee<sup>5</sup> and Sovnarcom<sup>6</sup> on granting the Russian citizenship to foreigners on the territory of the DVK. (Kim Syn Hwa, p.142). However, the bureaucratic obstacles, extreme suspicions of political unreliability of the Koreans hindered the process of getting the citizenship. The land issue was also of vital importance, and on it depended the territorial distribution of the Korean population. Though one of the first slogans of the Soviet Power was: "Land to the People", the land problem had not been solved and as a result there was antagonism and hostility between the Russian and Korean population in the Far eastern krai. Koreans turned out to always be the guilty, suffering and accused as a rule. In the regions where Koreans lived there appeared banditry which was aimed not only at robbery but also at forcing the Korean population out from the Russian territory by terror. (Kuzin A., 1993, p.59)

The problems of the territorial distribution of the Koreans worsened with the endless immigration from Korea and Manchuria to the Russian Far East. In January, 1925 the

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<sup>2</sup> November 1922 was created Dalrevcom - temporary body with all completeness of authority

<sup>3</sup> Revcoms – temporally local bodies in the first years of Bolsheviks regime

<sup>4</sup> Ispolcoms – local executive authority in the initial period of Bolsheviks regime

<sup>5</sup> All Union Central Executive Committee (ЦИК) - The supreme, legislative, administrative and supervising body of the Russian Federation, 1917-1937.

<sup>6</sup> Sovnarcom (Совнарком, СНК) – The supreme, legislative, administrative body of Soviet Union, 1923-1946

People's Commissariat of the Foreign Affairs decided "to undertake all possible measures to stop the flow of the Chinese and Koreans to the Soviet territory" and considered it necessary " to realize in the first turn, colonization from the inner gubernias of Russia" as chaotic settlement of the Far East by the Chinese and Koreans was " a serious threat". The Soviet Power, thus, demonstrated full admission of the policy of the tsarist government regarding settlement of the Far East: prohibition for Korean immigration and stimulating migration of the Russian population from the Central, Southern and Western regions of Russia.

At the end of the 1920s the Far Eastern authorities again raised the issue of forcing Koreans out from the Vladivostok okrug. Out of the total number of Koreans of 150,795 according to their opinion 51,761 would stay in the okrug and 99,000 would be relocated during 5 years to other regions, far from the borders. By the autumn of 1929 1,408 Koreans settled in Khabarovsk okrug and in 1930 only 1,342 Koreans including 431 who were forced to, and with it , as it seemed, the well-planned campaign failed. The reasons for the failure were familiar: lack of money, poor preparations of the lands in places of destination and also unwillingness of the authorities of the Khabarovsk and Amursk okrugs to accept Korean settlers. Koreans themselves did not demonstrate any interest in moving and often refused to leave to their places of destination and left for Korea and Manchuria instead. Some of them who were forced to move returned back to Primoriye in secret.

It should be noted that at the end of 1920s amidst the preparations for the campaign of deportation a small group of Koreans found themselves in Kazakhstan. As is known, Koreans in Primorye demonstrated great skills in rice cultivation. It was decided to invite Koreans to Kazakhstan to assist in organization of rice cultivation and share their experience. However, as B. Pak notes, " because of the considerable cut of the plan of the intra-republican settlement and cut of money allocated for settlement measures for 1930 the Uzbek authorities refused to admit Korean rice specialists any more".(Pak B.D., 1995, p.212)

By the middle of 1930s Koreans in the Soviet Far East whose number was approaching 200 thousand have established their own identity, culture and traditions. Dozens of Korean agricultural and fishing kolkhozes were founded. Koreans were actively involved in government and social organizations. Traditional culture flourished; the Korean intelligentsia prospered; and Korean radio, theater, educational and cultural institutions were established. Hundreds of young Koreans were educated in the universities of Moscow, Leningrad, and other Far Eastern and Siberian cities. In short, they were sovietized and integrated into the new political and socioeconomic system. (Kim San Hwa, 1965; Pak B.D., 1995; Nam S.G., 1998; Kuzin A.T. , 1993, 이광규·전경수, 1993 )

### **2.3. Deportation and Korean Kolkhozes in Central Asia**

The Far Eastern Koreans were the first among all the peoples of the Soviet Union

who experienced the hardships of deportation, later dozens of others followed – Germans, Crimea Tatars, Polish, Chechens, Kurds, Balkars etc. The deportation was not a forced measure aimed exclusively at the Koreans, so it is worth asking the question – what were general reasons for deportation of many peoples in 1930-40s? We can approach this question from two sides: firstly, taking the deportation of Koreans as a separate phenomenon with its specific features and motives and secondly, taking the policy of deportation of Stalin as a general phenomenon. The Korean deportation had a prehistory, when at the end of 1920s – beginning of 1930s the Soviet leadership was making plans to force Koreans to move out from the border areas of Primorye to the remote territories of the Khabarovsk region. Thus, the Resolution of the Communist Party and the Soviet government found its logical development in a joint Resolution No. 1428-326cc (cc – abbreviation in Russian for “top secret”) of the Soviet of Peoples' Commissars of the USSR and the Central Committee of the Communist Party on the 21st of August, 1937 «On Deportation of the Korean Population from the Bordering regions of the Far Eastern Krai» signed by Molotov V. and Stalin I. According to a brief preamble to this resolution the deportation of Koreans was planned with the aim « to prevent the infiltration of the Japanese spies to the Far East».

On the 28th of September, 1937 the SovNarCom of the USSR adopted the additional resolution No. 1647-377cc signed by V. Molotov and N. Petrunichev «On Deportation of Koreans from the Territory of the Far Eastern Krai» on the total deportation of Koreans from all - without any exception territories of the DVK including non-bordering, remote regions and neighboring oblasts. On the basis of that government decision they revealed, detained, arrested and deported those Koreans who lived or studied in many cities of the central part of Russia where Koreans could as well be suspected of spying for the Nazi Germany, fascist Italy etc. In this connection «preventing» and «stopping the foreign espionage» as a main or single reason for deportation is not convincing and sufficient.

The main reason for the deportation of Koreans and all other special settlers one should search in the nature of the totalitarian regime itself which had been formed in the USSR by the end of 1920s and which developed to the full extend in 1930-40s. On Stalin's orders and under the leadership of the obedient Party and state apparatus, punitive bodies and means of propaganda, they were building socialism on the basis of the principle: purpose justifies everything; economic and military superpower was being constructed and a new type of the human community – Soviet people and a new type of a human being – *Homo Sovieticus* was being formed.

A well-known Stalin's thesis about the direct proportion of the sharpening of the class struggle inside and outside of the country to the success in the socialist construction opened the era of a tragic mass terror in the huge country. All the time and everywhere the people were brainwashed with the image of a dangerous and cunning enemy, moreover the enemy was not individuals or social groups or classes but whole nations. So it was only logical that terror and ruthless fight against nations hostile to socialism, Motherland and the

leader himself was necessary.

Among true reasons for the deportation of the Soviet Koreans from the Far East the internal political factor played an important role. Stalin and the Soviet leadership being aware of the coming world war and their unreadiness for it, were trying to maneuver among imperialist opponents and to approach Germany in the West and the imperial Japan in the East. In order to get closer to Japan some compromises were necessary, one of which being selling at a very low price of the rights to the KVZHD. Another compromise, in the opinion of Park M.N. could be total deportation of anti-Japanese oriented Koreans from the DVK. The idea of Koreans being «political hostages of a preventive action» for the first time was expressed in the detailed commentaries of Vladimir Lee on the resolution of Korean Deportation but was not developed any further.

Among other reasons for the deportation of the Koreans existing inside the country but playing a second fiddle, one can mention the following:

1. By 1937 the Korean population had been to a considerable degree integrated into the social-political, economic and cultural life of the Far Eastern krai. However, the character of their territorial distribution – rather compact regions with considerable or prevailing number of the Korean population caused concern and did not correspond to the principle – «divide et impera».
2. In the opinion of many foreign researchers, establishment of a Jewish autonomous oblast could cause demands on the side of the Koreans of the Far East for their national – state autonomy. As is known, the existence of the national state autonomy of the Soviet Germans was not an obstacle for the decree of 28th of August 1941 which liquidated the Volga autonomous German republic and on the basis of which hundreds of thousands of Germans were deported to Kazakhstan, Siberia, Altai and other regions of the country.
3. The forced deportation of Koreans inside the territory had also certain political and economic aims.

One can assume the following: firstly, deportation to the Central Asia and Kazakhstan, the area of which was hundreds times bigger than the territory of the DVK automatically meant dispersion and living in fragmented groups for the Korean population.

Secondly, in Kazakhstan and Central Asia millions of people died and hundreds of thousands left their republics and countries as a result of criminal methods of mass forced collectivization. During 1931 -1933 from famine, epidemics and other hardships only in Kazakhstan 1, 7 million people died and over one million people left the republic. Thus, there was a sharp deficit of labor which partially could be covered with settlers – Koreans. One can assume that bringing Korean settlers mainly to the Southern regions of Kazakhstan and Central Asia meant that they could be engaged in their traditional agricultural activity: rice and vegetable cultivation. Thirdly, deported Koreans had left behind infra-structure, houses and other buildings which were given to the military units of the Red Army deployed

to the Far East. However, those reasons, as it has been mentioned above, are not the main ones. The main reason lies in carrying out the Great Power policy both in the home and foreign policy of the totalitarian regime.

The deportation of the Koreans was a planned, organized and thoroughly controlled big scale operation of the totalitarian regime which tested the mechanism of mass forced migration. It is known that before the fatal Resolution on Deportation of Koreans several waves of the Party cleanings and repressions took place which embraced all echelons of power including the Party apparatus, Army, punitive and force bodies, intelligentsia and dozens of thousands of simple workers. To avoid any obstacles in the process of the deportation of Koreans the totalitarian regime deprived them of their leaders. The NKVD falsified a regional Korean riot centre which allegedly was preparing a military resurrection with the aim to separate the DVK from the USSR. In order to justify the unlawful deportation, in the DVK the propaganda machine started to work at full speed which was creating the atmosphere of "spy-mania". It started with two articles published in the main organ of the country - newspaper Pravda in April, 16 and April, 23 about the Japanese espionage in the Soviet Far East and which stated that the Japanese spies were active in Korea, China, Manchuria and the Soviet Union and that they used the Chinese and Koreans who pretended to be locals.

The plan of the deportation of Koreans from the DVK envisaged three stages, moreover, the first stage was mentioned in the Stalin-Molotov Resolution of August 21, 1937: "The deportation will start with Pos'etskiyi region and the area next to Grodekovo". The second and third stages were defined by the krai leadership after a number of resolutions of the SNK of the USSR were adopted at the beginning of September on "deportation of Koreans" without mentioning the bordering regions and led by the criterion of remoteness of the regions of deportation from the external borders and the chronology of realization. According to the established stages of the deportation krai and oblast troika<sup>7</sup> at their meetings worked out plan-schedules for trains and their departures, defined places of gathering and waiting for those deported, railway stations and points of departure.

The analysis of the archive documents, statistic data and evidence of the eye-witnesses make it possible to assume that shortly before the deportation and during it there was no considerable migration from the DVK and when the resolution on the deportation was adopted the borders were strengthened with additional border guards and NKVD detachments and no Koreans could escape. The number of died during the transportation including victims of the tragic accident of echelon N 505 which occurred on September, 13th 1937 at the station of Verino near Khabarovsk was in all probability several hundreds. The exact figure of those dead is difficult to calculate; undoubtedly the two opposite age groups suffered most of all - the old and the children.

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<sup>7</sup> troika - a commission of three for express judgment in the Soviet Union during the time of Joseph Stalin

According to the statistics of the NKVD section of work camps and places of exile, around 100 thousands Koreans were brought to Kazakhstan and over 70 thousand to Uzbekistan. In Central Asia Koreans found themselves in the unfamiliar environment and climate. It was difficult to adapt after the mild and humid climate on the shores of the Pacific Ocean to the sharp continental climate of the steppe with its hot summers and dry cold winters. As a result of the repressions and deportation, the Koreans also lost a lot in the realms of education, culture, and language. (이광규·전경수, 1993; Kim G.N., Ross King, 2001; 전경수 편, 2002). However, the Koreans found the will and courage to make a life for themselves in their new homeland. In particular, they found that they had the opportunity there to concentrate on agricultural work in which they found great successes. Especially remarkable were the efforts of Korean collective farmers who, despite difficult conditions, were able to increase their output and the size of their fields substantially during the Second World War years.

#### **2.4. Labor Activities of Koreans during Khrushchev and Brezhnev Periods**

In the post-War years, the Koreans continued to make great contributions to the development of agriculture. Before Stalin's death several dozens of Korean kolkhoz workers in Central Asia were honored with the highest title of "Hero of Labor" and decorated with the medal "Golden Star". Koreans contributed significantly to the production of rice, grain, beets, and vegetables. Koreans also became more involved in cotton production in the south of Kazakhstan and in several regions of Uzbekistan. Korean agriculturalists also met great successes in their production of vegetables. The accomplishments of such progressive vegetable cultivating kolkhozes as "Leninskiy put" in the Karatal'skii raion of the Taldy-Kurgan oblast' were well known throughout the Kazakh Republic. The results of their production activities were even exhibited at the National Economic Exhibition of the USSR in Moscow in 1953-1959. For their efforts in harvesting of sugar beets and melons, 5 Koreans were given the title of "Hero of Labor," 8 were given the "Order of Lenin," 13 were awarded the order of "The Red Banner of Labor," and 39 received other medals. Koreans also made great progress in the cultivation of onions in Kazakhstan in the post-war years. In the beginning of 1960s, Korean kolkhozes in the Karatal'skii raion of the Taldy-Kurgan oblast' alone provided 70% of the onions consumed in Kazakhstan.

One of the most important events in the lives of Koryo saram and in the lives of other "repressed nationalities," was the decision to no longer limit their migrations inside the USSR. Until 1953, Koreans and many other nationalities had special stamps in their passports that limited their mobility and served as a general mark of humiliation. After the decision to remove these stamps was taken in 1953, the Koreans of Kazakhstan took the opportunity to develop the strength of their Diaspora.

The experience of the Soviet kolkhoz development during the post-war years

demonstrated that small kolkhozes were developing slowly and failed to solve the problems facing them. In early 1950s a number of Party and government resolutions were adopted aimed at amalgamation of kolkhozes, including all agricultural artels<sup>8</sup> with Korean population. In the course of solving organizational and production tasks of the amalgamated kolkhozes new social and ecological problems were revealed. Quite often economically strong kolkhozes were unwilling to join small and weak ones. When a decision on amalgamation was taken, often the principle of voluntariness was violated and the economic expediency of amalgamation of these or those kolkhozes was not properly calculated. At the initial stage weak kolkhozes which became a part of advanced kolkhozes, were holding back the development of the latter.

Despite some negative moments in the process of kolkhoz amalgamation there were certain positive results as well: better financial situation of the kolkhozes, bigger areas under crops, stronger material-technical base, more cattle etc. Amalgamation of kolkhozes to a great extent facilitated solution of the problem of mechanization of labor processes in the fields, created more favorable conditions for improvement of the technical services for the kolkhozes for MTS.<sup>9</sup> Enlarged kolkhozes in Kazakhstan with once dominating Korean population became multi-national, however till mid 1960s some of them were called “Korean” because of the considerable share of Korean people and due to the old tradition in everyday life.

In 1950-60s some Korean kolkhozes underwent changes not only due to the amalgamation but also because of other circumstances. On the basis of the governmental decision about stimulating cotton-growing in the South-Kazakhstan and Dzhambul oblasts of the Kazakh SSR” it was planned to relocate Korean kolkhozes to develop the Dzhetyysai tracts of land. At the end of 1950 several hundreds of Korean families from the Karatal region of Taldy Kurgan oblast moved to the South Kazakhstan oblast. Eventually in the new places appeared advanced cotton-growing kolkhozes with Korean population such as, "Put' k kommunizmu", "Zarya kommunizma", "III International", "Progress", sovkhov "Pakhta-Aral" in Il'ichevskii region. In early 60s rice plantations were formed in the delta of the Ili river near Bakanas settlement of Alma-Atinskaya oblast and a big rice-growing sovkhov “ Bakbaktinskii” was organized. For this purpose about 200 Korean families were resettled from the Taldy-Kurganskaya, Alma-Atinskaya and Kzyl-Ordinskaya oblasts.

High crops were gained by the Korean kolkhozes in Uzbekistan. In the Soviet agricultural history are written down the names of the well-known Korean collective farms located around Tashkent in three (Low, Middle and Upper) Chirchik rayons: “Politotdel”, “Poluarnaya Zvesda”, “Severnyi Mayak”, “Sverdlov”, “Leninskiy Put“ and others. Korean kolkhoz farmers managed to get very high crops of cotton and kenaf, though they were new

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<sup>8</sup> artel is a general term for various cooperative Associations in Russia historical and modern.

<sup>9</sup> MTS – Machines and Tractors Stations provided services to several kolkhozes in the area.

agricultural cultures for them. For example, kolkhoz "North Star" in the Middle-Chirchik rayon of Uzbekistan began growing cotton in 1941. At that time, the average crop capacity of cotton in the district was 21.8 centners per hectare. The average yield of cotton of the "Severniy mayak" in 1941-43 numbered around 23.6 centners of cotton, and in 1944-1946, even more - 39.4 centners.. Furthermore, in Kazakhstan the plan for wheat production was 9-11 centners per a hectare while Koreans produced 30-38 centners. If an average kolkhoz's plan for sugar beet production envisaged 250-260 centners per hectare, the Koreans produced 500-800 centners, and for potatoes harvest of 40-45 centners per hectare, they harvested 150-500 centners.

Organizational skills and high educational standards also made it possible for many Koreans to make careers as specialists and supervisors in the industrial and governmental sectors. In addition, Koreans played important roles in the development of science, academic research, art, literature, education, health care, and sports during the post-war years. By 1970s there were several hundred Korean professors and scholars in the Central Asian Universities and Research Institutes.

## **2.5. Perestroika, Collapse of the USSR and Topical Problems of Korean Diaspora in Central Asia.**

In 1985 Gorbachev initiated a new policy which was known as "Perestroika." After years of strict prohibits and restrictions, Koreans in the Central Asian states began establishing ethnic community organizations. As a result, dozens of Korean associations and societies were founded, which began diasporic consolidation in the new political and socio-economic environment. (AKK, 2000; Khan G.B., 1997; Kim, Khan. 2001 )

The political and socioeconomic changes, and the deteriorating standards of living of in the first half of 1990s in Russia and the newly independent states of Central Asia, had led to much trepidation among all peoples of the former Soviet empire about their future. The Koryo saram shared the same difficulties as all other peoples in the FSU, along with additional problems unique to them. Here lie two primary binary problems. The first pair: the problem of the all-embracing internal ethnic consolidation and the problem of further inter-ethnic integration under new geopolitical and socio-economic conditions of the post - Soviet period. The second pair: the problem of national revival and problem of national survival as a small ethnic group, which does not have any form of autonomy. (Kim and Khan, 2000)

### **Internal Ethnic Consolidation and Inter-Ethnic Integration**

Speaking about internal - ethnic consolidation one should note that Koreans in the CA are heterogeneous in their composition; they can be divided into three groups. To the absolutely dominating in terms of quantity group belong descendants of the settlers from the

northern part of Korea to the Russian Far East. This group is represented by 2-5 generations. To the second group belong Sakhalin Koreans. As is well known, nearly 60 thousand Koreans were by force and deceit resettled from the southern part of the Korean peninsula in 1939-1945 for forced labor in the mines of Karafuto (Japanese name of the Southern Sakhalin). After the end of the Second World War more than 47 thousand Koreans stayed in the Southern Sakhalin. At present time the number of Sakhalin Koreans is more than 35 thousand and they represent 1-3 generations. (Bok, 1989; Kuzin, 2006) The third group is the least numerous but it is noteworthy because its representatives know the Korean language very well. This group is composed of the former citizens of the North Korea who stayed in the Soviet Union after contract work, graduation of higher educational institutions, post-graduate courses or those who crossed the border and got residence permits. This group, in its turn, is also characterized by heterogeneity, there are persons who have Soviet citizenship, - and citizens of the DPRK permanently living in our country and persons without citizenship belong.

Up to recently the term "Soviet Koreans" has been broadly used, which embraced all Koreans living in the former Soviet Union. It seems that there were all grounds to consider this community as a new ethnic unity being a result of many-sided and complicated process of creation and formation. Disintegration of the Union state, break of many vital horizontal ties among independent republics can lead to nuclearization of the formed in the Soviet period new ethnic community. Will such nuclearization lead to the formation of a new ethnic community of "Kazakhstani Koreans", "Uzbekistani", "Kyrgyzstani", "Russian", and «Sakhalin" Koreans? As nearly 70% of the Koreans of the ex USSR are living in Central Asia and Kazakhstan formation of a regional community is possible but in order to achieve it at least two factors are needed: a strong feeling of ethnic consolidation among broad masses of Korean Diaspora and secondly, a concrete, well-thought program of ethno-consolidating events of Korean republican organizations.

Koreans in America are considered to be a model Diaspora which in a very short period of time made great progress both in business, especially small and medium, and in establishment, science and even politics. Lately Koreans have often been called Asian Jews to emphasize their surprising social mobility, ability to adapt and mimicry. Researchers distinguish between their intensive acculturation of social function, which Koreans perform in a multiethnic society. They, like Jews, play the role of some kind of ethnos-mediator for others mutually distant ethnoses and profit from it. Small businesses of American Koreans in the form of vegetable stalls, laundries and snack bars bring considerable profit not only because of their hard work which is always noted as the most important national trait but also because of the simple fact that Koreans developed their businesses in such places where whites and colored did not even think of competing with them, that is in Harlem's. (Kim, Hyung-chan, 1976; Bonacich, 1980; Min, Pyong Gap, 1991; Edward Taehan Chang, 2001).

Central Asian Koreans quickly transformed into new entrepreneurs and there

appeared family and clan economic subjects, enterprises in the sphere of production, services and trade where relatives work together. In this connection, speaking about the issue of inter-ethnic integration, it is necessary to mention the necessity of balanced employment of Koreans in all spheres as it used to be during the Soviet period. Here we should remember that losses in intellectual potential would be greater for Korean Diaspora than for bigger ethnoses.

### **Revival and Survival**

The issue of the national revival of the Korean Diaspora or other national groups of Kazakhstan has not been studied by scholars or analyzed by the governmental bodies, or Korean public organizations. In the programs and founding documents of Korean cultural associations and centers only declarations on the necessity of revival of the native language are expressed. Above all, it should be made clear what language is to be considered native. Koryo Mar is the language of Koreans of the oldest age group, which exists mostly in its oral form and functions only in the sphere of family. Linguists state that Koryo Mar is a unique form of the dialect, which has its roots in the 15th century and was preserved as a result of long isolation from developing literary Korean. (Kho, 1987; King, 1987:233-277) As Koreans live in various types of different ethnic environments, laws of language contacts led to enrichment of the limited lexical fund of Koryo Mar with borrowings from the Russian and other languages. Koryo Mar practically has no written form, it is not used on the radio, in the theatre, and actually it is dying. Ten or fifteen years more and there will be no speakers of this linguistic unique. There is no way to reanimate Koryo mar. However, it's possible to transplant the South Korean standard language.

As for reviving Korean customs and traditions, here we also have more questions than answers. It is clear that it is not sensible to mechanically copy some actions, if they fall out of the context of life and do not correspond to the transformed mentality. Thus, to revive their ethnic culture Koryo Saram should radically change their way of living, psychology, mentality, that is to sacrifice their specific habits, customs and traditions - but do they want to do it?

And last but not least. Koreans like other ethnic minorities which don't have national-territorial formation neither in the ex-USSR nor in the post USSR are facing the problem of surviving as a unique ethnoses. At present Koreans are one of the most urbanized ethnoses of the republic. More than 90% Koreans of Kazakhstan are living in cities which due to their standardization and unification of the way of living are called - melting pots. Among urban Koreans the number of inter-national marriages is quite high, for example in Almaty it is 40% and as a consequence there appeared a generation of marginalized Koryo saram with going out ethnic identify. Change for the worse in living standards, general tendency to have fewer children is fraught with danger of natural depopulation. Mentioned above nuclearization of Korean communities in the republics of Central Asia, Russia and

Kazakhstan is aggravating the problem of preserving Koryo Saram as an independent ethnos.

Independence and sovereignty of the new Central Asian countries gave the “titular nations”, (aborigine people) of these countries a number of natural and artificial advantages as compared with Diasporas and national minorities. (Masanov, Karin, Chebotarev, Oka, 2002). It should be noted that there is certain nonconformity with the declared fundamental democratic rights and duties of the citizens of Kazakhstan, equal among themselves irrespective of nationality according to the Constitution and the existing legislation of the country and the practice of everyday life. However, neither Western experts nor external-internal opposition bring any accusations to Astana or Tashkent regarding official state discrimination of the non-indigenous (Russian speaking) peoples, Diasporas and ethnic minorities.

### 3. Second Economy of the Soviet Epoch and “Kobonji”

#### 3.1. Second Economy of the USSR

As a contextual basis for the research was chosen the paradigm of the second economy of the Soviet Union. A well-known American economist Greg Grossman was a pioneer in studying the Soviet “second economy”. Defining the notion of a second economy two considerations are spelled out in advance. First, the second economy is complementary to the official, the observed economy. The second consideration follows from the first: the official and the informal economy together make up the sum total of economic activities within a given country – Soviet Union. The western economists name this phenomenon “counter-economy”, “informal economy”, “unofficial economy”, “the parallel market”, “colored market”, “shadow economy”. (Grossman, 1977; O’Hearn, 1980; Rumer, 1981; Feldbrugge, 1984; Sik Endre, 1992)

Shadow economy of the Soviet Union was located outside the sphere of central state planning and control, but this did not mean that the legal dimension had become irrelevant. The Soviet state had acknowledged the impracticality of forbidding certain types of private economic activity, particularly in the sphere of food production and consumer services. This legal sector of the Soviet second economy had become the spring board for a wide range of other activities, from the dubiously legal to the outright illegal. In the USSR, as we shall see, second economy activities normally did not occur in isolation, but in combination. (Feldbrugge, 1984: 528-530).

A vast diversity of illegal and semi-legal production and distribution activities in the USSR was the result of many state prohibitions. The biggest and most studied part of the Soviet legal private economy, as G. Grossman notes, is economic activities in private gardens or plots of land adjoining houses. According to 1974 data the USSR villagers spent one third of their working time in private agricultural activity. Although, in principle, private plots of land and kolkhoz markets were not prohibited, they were often associated with illegal activities. Besides, plot owners illegally got forage, fertilizers, tools and transport from the socialist sector.

A considerable share of private activities was in the construction sector of the Soviet economy. The Soviet laws also allowed private activity for representatives of certain professions – organization of repair works, services, exploration and extraction of some precious metals (gold diggers’ artels) etc. As a rule, private workers were to sell fruits of their labor to the state at fixed prices, selling in any other way to private subjects was prohibited. Any other forms of private entrepreneurships in the production sphere in the USSR were prohibited. Hiring labor by private persons was also prohibited excluding home help. Any buying and resale with the aim of getting profit was considered illegal.

The shadow economy started to rapidly develop in the times of N.S. Khrushchev and L.I. Brezhnev. After Stalin's repressions Khrushchev's thaw was coupled with an increasing demand for consumer goods and services, and the shadow economy was ready to meet such demands. The growth of the shadow economy and corruption acquired a stable character. Analyzing the above, Grossman made a correct conclusion that "the first economy" in many ways works for the development of "the second one" which, in its turn, is a condition of the development for the "first one". (Grossman, 1977: 35-40)

In the USSR second economy activities normally did not occur in isolation, but in combination. Food production on private plots, for instance, which was of vital interest to the Soviet economy, was in itself legal. It could only fulfill its function, however, with illegally acquired seed, manure, and implements, with the plots being cultivated during official working hours, with its produce being transported using borrowed means of transport and being sold through commercial middlemen, with the active or passive connivance of various officials along the line.

This example already indicates that second economy activities take place at various stages of the process of production and distribution, and that they occur in many shapes. The ideal view of the official economy of the USSR (the 'first' economy) is that the state allocates the use of land, raw materials, capital and machinery, manpower and management for the production process; industrial goods and services then become secondary inputs to the production process; and consumer goods and services are distributed by the state to the individual consumer, who may use them only to satisfy his own requirements. The second economy now may mesh with almost any stage of this process. (O'Hearn, 1980; Sik Endre, 1992)

A. Katsenelinboigen, another Soviet emigrant-economist published his article at the same time with G. Grossman and wrote that the socialist planned system of economy gave birth to a whole specter of markets and marked their types with colors. His assessment is expressed in the measure of market legality from the point of view of the goods sold there, sources of getting those goods and methods of selling. The legality is measured with a scale of encouragement or punishment of participating people. According to A. Katsenelinboigen, all markets in the Soviet Union are divided into legal, semi-legal and illegal. Inside each group there are its own subdivisions.

In the legal market there is a red market of selling consumer goods and services by the state which corresponds to its interests the most. Then there is a pink market which is also actively supported by the state, though it is less manageable. Finally, he considers a white market – legal and supported by the state but at the same time of less significance for it. It creates inconvenience in its managing as does not fit the system of strict centralized planning and to a certain extent is spontaneous and contains elements of market mechanism. At semi-legal gray markets population rent privately owned means, get services or resources are redistributed. Illegal markets are of two types: the first one is brown. It is a consequence

of artificially created deficit of goods. As for the black market, the authorities were persecuting its members – speculators, plunderers of the socialist property and other people guilty of penal offences. (Katsenelinboigen, 1977: 62-85)

The Soviet planned agricultural production was carried out on the so-called private plots of *sovkhoz* (*sovetskoye khozayastvo* – Soviet farm) and *kolkhoz* (*kollektivnoye khozayastvo* – collective farm) farmers. (Laird, 1997). But western specialists have long recognized the importance of the private sector<sup>10</sup> of Soviet agriculture to the economy in general and to family subsistence and income in particular. It provides a large proportion of the country's crop and vegetable output (primarily potatoes, vegetables, and fruits) and an even larger share of the products obtained from animal husbandry. In 1966, for example, the private sector produced 64 percent of the USSR's total gross production of potatoes; 40 percent of its meat; 39 percent of its milk; and 66 percent of its egg production. Of paramount significance is the fact that the private sector produced these quantities on only slightly more than 3 percent of the USSR's total sown land.

Despite the traditional economic importance of the private sector, the Khrushchev government in 1958 initiated a stringent campaign to restrict private farming activities. The result was a decrease of one-third in the sales volume of agricultural products at municipal collective farm markets, including a 30 percent reduction in the sale of potatoes and poultry, a 26 percent reduction in the sale of vegetables, and a reduction of almost 40 percent in such products as eggs, milk, and meat obtained from animal husbandry. Still another result of the government's campaign was an 8 percent reduction by January 1, 1966, in the gross output of private plots. On October 15, 1964, the Soviet press announced that Khrushchev had been "released" from his official duties. Less than a month later three republics -the RSFSR, the Ukrainian SSR, and the Estonian SSR - announced the lifting of previously instituted decrees limiting private farming. (De Pauw J.W., 1969:65)

Most of the Soviet population was accustomed to supplying itself with many necessary food products, such as vegetables and potatoes. It is well known that each family on a collective or state farm used to have a so-called household plot. Those plots were not large: on the collective and state farms – 0, 25 hectare each, and city dwellers were allotted even less: 0, 06 - 0,09 hectare.

Based on the data published in 1978, which are far from complete, the proportion represented by the household plots of collective and state farm workers in the total volume of production was: potatoes 61%, vegetables 29%, meat 29%, milk 29% and eggs, 34%. At the same time the amount of land used for individual agriculture did not exceed 1 % of the total land area used for agriculture in the country. It is known that in Central Asia and the

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<sup>10</sup> This is a rendering of the Russian *lichnoe podsobnoe khosiaistvo*, literally "the private subsidiary economy." It is not, however, comparable to private farming in the United States.

Trans-Caucasus private plots not only fed the rural inhabitants, but, in many cases, made it possible to market vegetables and fruit in various, often extremely remote areas of the country.

Boris Rumer in his article has applied the term “second agriculture” to all forms of agriculture which exist and are being developed apart from the collective and state farms, by analogy with the general “second” economy, of which it is a part. The process of development of the “second” agriculture in its various forms began as far back as the second half of the 1960s and became especially dynamic in the early 1970s. By its decisions in 1977-78 the Soviet leadership not only established a legal basis for, but also stimulated the development of the “second” agriculture. (Rumer, 1981: 560, 565)

In 1970s private market trade in the Soviet Union was being intensified and the circulation of money among the population was thereby increasing. Direct bartering between enterprises and between industry and agriculture was developing. The volume of materials used for natural exchange, which are passing out of state inventories and control, was growing. A redistribution of economic resources in favor of agriculture was occurring, which was not planned by the state and not recorded in the statistics, and owing to this production in the other branches of the economy was increasing. (Rumer, 1981:571)

In this period from mid 1960s Soviet Koreans began widely to practice *kobonji* on the vast territory of the Superpower.

## **3.2 Kobonji as a Kind of Ethnic Entrepreneurship in the Soviet Economy**

### **3.2.1. Definition of Kobonji**

In the Soviet agriculture the key words are “to collectivize, mechanize, and specialize”. To accomplish these tasks, all farms were organized as either collective (*kolkhoz*) or state (*sovkhov*) farms. The number of collective farms declined from 67,700 in 1958 to 39,800 in 1962. The number of state farms increased from 3,171 in 1958 to 4,606 in 1962. The average sown area for collectives in 1961 was about 6,600 acres, for state farms about 23,800 acres. Although the Soviet authorities expected a single type of farm to eventually prevail, its exact nature had not been made explicit. State farms appeared highly favored in principle, but there was considerable pride in the relative independence of the collectives. This fact, along with the larger capital investment per worker on state farms, accounts for the reported 1.8 times higher productivity per worker on state farms than on collective farms. (Baker and Swanson, 1964: 36)

Thus, two main pillars of agricultural production under the Soviet system were the '*kolkhoz*' –and the '*sovkhov*'. But contrary to the original intentions when they were first devised, with the passage of time these institutions were unable to avoid continuing declines in both efficiency and production. The agricultural production quotas of the collective farms

were determined in the context of the overall planned economy, and agricultural produce was supplied at prices lower than the market price. The members of these collective farms were bound to suffer considerable difficulties because of the system of exploitation carried out by the socialist middle class under the cloak of socialist principles. (Volin, 1959; Prybyla, 1962; Nove, 1970; Luxemburg, 1971)

The basic unit in either a collective or state farm is the "brigade," a collection of workers organized to accomplish a particular task. For example, there may be a field brigade, whose functions include land preparation, seeding, tilling, and harvesting. There may be a livestock brigade to prepare and distribute feed, to perform the various associated husbandry tasks, and perhaps to process the product of a livestock enterprise. There may be a "complex" brigade, with some functions similar to those of a field brigade (for example, to harvest crops) and some similar to those of a livestock brigade. As a rule, brigades were observed to be defined roughly in terms of enterprises. Their size was measured, typically, in terms of number of workers. A "subdivision" may include three or four brigades and has many of the characteristics of a social as well as an economic unit. A subdivision may include a residential cluster. There may be from three to as many as eleven subdivisions within the confines of a given farm. Some elementary accounting is also done even at the subdivision level. (Baker and Swanson, 1964:38)

Beginning from the 1960s and until the collapse of the Soviet Union Koreans began to move from rural regions to the urban area and practice widely "*kobonji*". «*Kobonji*» is a compound word, consisting of a noun "*kobon*" and a suffix "*ji*." The word «*kobon*» being an archaic word in the modern Korean language means «a plot of rented and cultivated land» and the word-forming suffix «*ji*» (*jil* in standard Korean and *jiri* in the Koryo mar, language spoken by Central Asian Koreans ) means some kind of action or occupation.

According to the testimony of *kobonji* operators themselves, the meaning of *kobonji* is not particularly clear, but it can be defined as "farming activity in the pursuit of individual profit". From this, the meaning of the word *kobon* becomes somewhat clearer. *Kobon* is used to designate the land area tilled by an individual family unit which participates in *kobonji*. But this does not mean that *kobon* is a unit of land measurement. According to the farming abilities of an individual family unit, and according to the proportion of the overall land area tilled by the "purigada" (Russian *brigada* or 'brigade') by its constituent members, the actual area of a *kobon* can fluctuate. For example, if a *kobonji* composed of ten family units leases a total of 30 hectares, in theory the average amount of land allotted each family unit would be one hectare. But because each family unit can differ in its individual farming abilities, the actual amount of land area per household can be more or less than three hectares. In such cases, the average three hectares of land allotted each household would be a *kobon*, but the point is that, depending on the actual conditions of *kobonji* production, the size of a *kobon* can differ. Individual households typically farm just one *kobon*, but households particularly rich in working hands can sometimes work two *kobon*. This is expressed by the Koryo saram

as: *i bone han kobon metta* “This time I was allotted one *kobon*” or *tu kobon metta*, “This time I was allotted two *kobon*.” Thus, *kobonji* is an agricultural activity which cultivates land allocated in this fashion, and which is characterized by the fact that the actual cultivation itself is carried out individually within the brigade as a kind of sub-contract. (Baek, 2001:62.)

Now let us examine the attempts undertaken by many authors to define the main concept and try to give our own interpretation. One of the first publications devoted to *kobonji* was a book by Geron Lee which contains good empirical material collected by the author from different oral and written sources. The book, however, is not of an academic character but is a collection of different materials and data supplied with the author’s comments in some cases. The author referring to the works of some scholars mentions two traditional forms of land rent in Korea and Russian Far East. The first – *sojakji* is an individual form of leasing plots of land which was widely spread at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> c., and *kobonji* – a collective form of leasing which appeared after the deportation of Koreans to Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan. According to Geron Lee the essence of *kobonji* is “a form of labor organization based on mutual interests of performers of a task ( work team) and the customer ( kolkhoz or sovkhov) to produce bigger quantities of final products”.(Ли Г., 2000:143-144). Though as Valery Khan points out in other place Geron Lee provides a wider interpretation of *kobonji* going outside the limits of agricultural leasing: “ the *kobonji* method is used not only in the sphere of land cultivation. Already in the past centuries in connection with exploration of the Siberia and Far East Korean and Chinese labor was used... in gold diggers’ artels for extraction of rare and precious metals, logging... Work teams engaged in extraction of rare metals, construction, road and house repair are still travelling all around the former Union countries”. (Ли Г., 2000:188). It follows from this passage that “*kobonji*” came into existence “already in the past centuries”. In other place G. Lee admits that *kobonji* appeared in the Uzbek Soviet Socialist Republic in the 1941-45s. And the first *kobonji* workers were self-employed or independent: “Independent Korean farms not engaged in kolkhoz production on agreement with leaders of the kolkhozes in the Bukinskii region of the Uzbek SSR started to explore marshy lands on the territory of kolkhozes”. Still in another place the author writes about *kobonji* in the post-deportation years and the areal of its origin is not limited by the Uzbek SSR: “It was then that in some regions of Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan and autonomous republics of Northern Caucuses a mass movement of Korean peasants – *kobonji* was born”.

One of the first foreign works which dealt with this topic was the book by Kho Songmoo, who did not use the term *kobonji* but referred to the fact that “Lenin Kichi” newspaper often used the notions of “team contract” and “collective contract” or “brigade trust system” and “collective trust system” according to the author. Explaining the meaning of these terms Kho Songmoo writes: “This system denotes that the contract between the administrative authority and production workers is concluded concerning quantity and

quality of production, and workers receive the earnings on the basis of the subcontract. In other words, the worker don't have the salary before they complete the work; payment is made by its results ». (Kho Songmoo, 1986:76- 77).

In his dissertation thesis a South Korean scholar Baek Thae Hyong explained the term “kobonji” as follows: “*Kobonjil* is a mobile, lease form of land cultivation when a Korean farmer having made a team on the basis of family cells, realizes the whole process of agricultural production from production itself to selling the products raised on the leased land situated at either a far or near distance and mainly outside the permanent place of residence of this farmer”.(Пэк Тхе Хён, 2000:39)

Valery Khan who devoted some attention to *kobonji* did not attempt to define it and in one of his articles just wrote: “As is known, *kobonji* is a specific (semi-legal) form of lease land cultivation by the Soviet Koreans”. (Khan, 2005:123). In his other article his definition is even shorter: “*Kobonji* ( lease pendulum vegetable growing in which many Koreans were engaged” (Khan, 2007:105). In another article he mentions in passing that “*kobonjil proved its value as a form of entrepreneurship activity in agriculture* and started to be recognized from high rostrums, from which Koreans were given credit for being pioneers. (italics added). (Khan, 2008: 2) Though V. Khan does not offer his own comprehensive definition of *kobonji*, his articles provide insight in the historiography of *kobonji* studies, how this specific form of land cultivation differs from others and how it was transformed during the post-Soviet period. For our research of special importance is mentioning *the form of entrepreneurship activity in agriculture*.

Our attempt to define the conceptual essence of *kobonji* in one sentence has led to the following: «*Kobonji is a kind of ethnic entrepreneurship - specific, characteristic of the Soviet Koreans semi-legal occupation of vegetable (onion) growing and (water) melon growing, based on a group rent of land and headed by a brigade-leader and connected with seasonal territorial migrations*».

### **3.2.2. The History of *Kobonji***

In the second half of the 19th century the issue of land ownership in Korea remained as acute as ever and was in many ways controversial - especially regarding regulations on the character of feudal land property and ratio of the state property and private land ownership. Landownership was akin to private property: according to Korean laws a land owner could sell it, divide and/or leave it as inheritance. (Описание Кореи, 1960:79). The state property on land was a characteristic feature of feudalism in Korea. At the end of the 19th c. many categories of state lands were abolished. Landlords started to dominate and peasants – small landowners – constituted only a small percentage in Korean villages. Private possessions of feudal lords included lands given for their merits or simply granted to them and also state lands and peasants' plots of land seized by them. (История Кореи, 1978:371).

After the 1864 abolition of serfdom Korean peasants mostly turned into lessees of landlord's or state land and at the beginning of the 20th c. in three provinces: Hwanghae, P'yongan P'yongan, Hamgyong, lessees comprised at least 70% of all peasants. In southern, i.e. main agricultural provinces of Korea land leasing became the main type of land tenure. By the end of the 19th c. a class of big landlords had been formed, their lands comprised several hundreds or even thousands of *cho*.<sup>11</sup> The majority of big landlords lived in Seoul and leased their lands to peasants.

An insignificant layer of free peasants – landowners could not compete with landlords and money-lenders and had to bargain away their plots of land. Free peasants lived in village communities. As M.N. Pak writes, “during the Middle Ages free peasants (*yanin*) preserved their village community organization sometimes alongside with blood relations within its frameworks, thus up to the 20th c. in Korea there remained quite a few villages composed of representatives of one clan: Lee, Kim, Chwe etc. Despite some commodity relations existent in Korean villages its social organization remained influenced by community ties. The base of them was joint use of the land, irrigation sources and system without which irrigated cropping was impossible. Peasants all together constructed, repaired and used irrigation systems. Relations of peasants among themselves and with the ruling class were mostly regulated by customs based on collective management practices. This long-established system of social and economic relations was transplanted by the Korean immigrants to the Russian territory. (Описание Кореи, 1960:298-299)

According to Jun S.H. and Lewis J.B, generally, in the old days Korean tenants paid 50 percent of their crop to the owner. The rents are divided between gross rent and net rent. Gross rent was what the tenant paid to the owner at harvest time in the autumn. Net rent was what was left after costs. Although their data is from the south, the authors have to mention regional cultural differences between south and north. In the Northern provinces, in the spring, the owner was responsible for supplying seed, paying tillage costs, paying tax, and repairing irrigation works. These costs fell to the owner, because the harvest was divided in the field and the owner received straw and bran from the harvest. Straw became fuel and carried a higher value than straw in the south, because northern winters are much colder. Straw was also used for thatch, matting, rope, bags, and fodder. Bran became livestock feed and fertilizer in both south and north. In the Southern provinces (Cholla and Kyongsang), the owner was responsible for nothing. The tenant at least had to pay the seeding costs and tax, and might have had to pay the tillage costs and irrigation repair. The owner probably paid for irrigation repairs, but we will return to this point below. An early nineteenth-century political economist, Chong Yag'yong, explains that, in the south, the harvest was taken back to the tenants' houses, where the grain was threshed in their courtyards, and the tenants kept the straw and bran, but in the north, threshing took place in

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<sup>11</sup> cho – land measure equal to 0,99 he.

the field. The result was that the northern tenant's work took place under the watchful eyes of the owner, but the southern tenants had complete control over the production from the fields and presented the owner with the agreed rent at the end of the process. Considering that the tenant may have mis-reported the harvest, the tenant was responsible for costs.

The owners and tenants in Changhung acting in typical southern fashion, probably because the owner-tenant relations were commercial. In the case of neighboring Yong'am, there were more cooperative, "northern-style" relations. In other words, the owner (a village or clan association) generously supplied seed, paid tillage costs and tax, and repaired irrigation works. The tenants still threshed in their own courtyards and kept the straw and bran. The field investigation records the rent presented from a piece of arable land (A), any outstanding rents with the tenant's name (B), any settlements of outstanding rents with the tenant's name (C), and all deferred rents (D). Jun and Lewis calculated the gross rent per *turak* (0.16 acre) by adding up everything, but the real rent was  $A + C - (B + D)$ . Expenditure accounts in spring time of the same year were composed of rice traded for copper cash, brown rice milled into white polished rice, seed, tax, tillage cost, and irrigation repairs. By subtracting costs from income, we can calculate the net rent per 0.16 acre.<sup>12</sup>

As it has already been mentioned, most of Korean settlers in the Russian Maritime provinces had to lease land or become hired labor. Lease payment was in kind like in Korea – 50% of the gathered crop.

Our research has led to the conclusion that widely practiced by Korean peasants leasing of arable or virgin lands both in their motherland and in the Russian Maritime provinces cannot be considered *kobonji* though there may be some features similar to it. Differences are more numerous and they are so significant that it would not be appropriate to speak about direct continuity of land lease system. At the same time one should not deny the role of traditions in the system of land lease, land cultivation, organization of field work which contributed to the success of *kobonji* practiced by the Soviet Koreans.

### **3.2.3. Ethnic Indications of Kobonji**

*Kobonji* like all other kinds of ethnic entrepreneurship possess certain specific characteristics.

#### **Specificity as a Result of Cultural Differences of an Ethnic Group**

Observations and remarks of some Russian authors of the late 19th c. who watched and studied the life of Korean peasant settlers in the Russian Far East can illustrate the specificity of ethnic and cultural features of Koreans. D.I. Shreider in his book «Nash Dalniy Vostok ["Our Far East] " described how the village of Tizinkhe looked at that time, being one of the oldest and biggest settlements of Koreans in the Maritime. " Two or three

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<sup>12</sup> Jun S.H. and Lewis J.B., <http://www.iisg.nl/hpw/papers/jun.pdf>

versts( 1,6 km) before it we had to pass well-cultivated fields without the least sign of weeds. The appearance of the village was different from villages of the European type... Judging by descriptions the other village of Yanchikhe and other Korean settlements in the region looked much the same.

Description of the methods of land cultivation used by Korean peasants is also interesting. Crops were made in rows or seedbeds with the distance between them being from 12 *vershoks* to 1 *arshin* (from 56 to 70 cm).<sup>13</sup> Every year rows and spaces between rows were alternated. Sowing was performed with the help of a special device – a small cylinder with holes in it through which 1-2 seeds got directly into a furrow. Simple and economical. Evenness of sowing was nearly ideal. Every year sorts of plants were changed and it was compulsory to alternate them with legumes. Spaces between rows were thoroughly worked...crop capacity was high though the fields were mostly small as the majority of Korean peasants did not possess livestock and labor was mainly manual.

"Russian settlers stuck to a different crop rotation and did not work the land so thoroughly"- Shreider wrote. "As a result they need more seeds and their crop is at least four times as worse". (Шрейдер Д.,1897).

110 years had passed since that time and a journalist was assigned a task of writing an article about food (vegetable) supply in Orsk oblast' in the Urals. He wrote: "On the fields adjoining the village one can see people moldering, weeding and earthing up agricultural lands. In the village there are no people – everybody is in the fields... we are going to the plantation where a fragile middle-aged woman is weeding tomatoes. Larisa's Russian is impeccable without any accent: "We have come from Uzbekistan. Now it is difficult and for Russian speaking population practically impossible to find job there. We are Koreans but we were born in the USSR and the Russian language is our native tongue. So we have moved to Russia. It was difficult at the beginning, of course, but now we have got citizenship, and we are working. When we came, we decided to work on land at once. We got used to it already in Uzbekistan. There are a lot people there who are engaged in agricultural work. And such work requires inclination, many just cannot bear it, have distaste for it, being complicated and hard. We have three and a half hectares of land; we work ourselves with our children – pointing at two boys of 8-9 years. And also five hired workers. It is all manual labor; we do not have any agricultural equipment. Crops are not very good, the land is bad, sandy and fertilizers are expensive. So we have to work much more for the same output. People think: Koreans have come and have taken the best land from the sovkhov, they are exploiting Russians and they themselves only collect money. Nothing of the kind! We work ourselves and give work to the others: both land and people. Nothing used to grow here, land was bare, only feather grass and nothing else. And we are

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<sup>13</sup> Russian linear measure - about 4,4 cm, used before introduction of metric measures. 16 *vershoks* make one *arshin*.

sowing and fertilizing it. We live like our workers do – here is their house and ours is next to it. We eat together too. There are about twenty families, each has 3-4 hectares of land. Further on there are more villages. We cannot grow much, of course, but the city gets from us local vegetables at a reasonable price”.

After meetings and talks with Russian hired workers and heads of the local sovkhos and city market the author asks a logical question: “I wonder why our sovkhoses are unprofitable but Koreans on the same land without any agricultural equipment and state assistance can make profit? Why a Russian man cannot work the land himself but is willing to become a hired labor? So that he would be fed, given shelter but not himself, not using his own brains and without any personal responsibility!”<sup>14</sup>

*Kobonji* was not a matter of chance but of logics as Koreans had been practicing irrigated farming and acquired great experience in vegetable growing. Persistence, patience and motivation for material success are the features characteristic of Koreans.

### **Ethnic Consolidation as a Prerequisite of Success**

**Brigade.** The most of distinguishing characteristics of *kobonji*, is that it was practiced always exclusively by Koryo saram. One cannot deny the importance of *kobonji* as practically all Koreans during the Soviet period in one way or another were engaged in it or at least familiar with it. The main principle of the Soviet agricultural economy was collectivism as opposed to farmer’s individualism. The collective relationship to the means of production and first of all to the land and goods produced, joint labor were to cultivate among kolkhoz workers the feeling of socialist equality. The main labor groups in the Soviet agriculture and industry were “zveno” and “brigade

The *zveno* or “link” concept is almost as old as collectivization itself, but has changed considerably. A *zveno* is a primary work unit of 3 to 8 people in both state and collective farms, with various degrees of autonomy. It is small and informal enough for a relatively “personal” type of farming with more clearly established, recognized and felt responsibilities for the whole production cycle on a particular piece of land, rather than for a single type of operation. The other and more prevalent principle is based on division of labour, with large “brigades”, each dealing with a particular operation in different sections of the farm (one area today, another tomorrow); pay is by piece-work and does not depend on the final product, except in so far as the total income of the parent farm may depend on the work of each brigade. Thus in the brigade system there is no direct correlation between the income criteria of the farm as a whole and of each individual member of the farm.

*Kobonji* was realized through brigades (in Russian – *brigada*) consisting of around 8-10 as minimal and 25-30 maximal families, the backbone of them being relatives or good

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<sup>14</sup> «Сельхозкорейцы. В хижине дяди Тома зарождается новый класс орских земледельцев» // [http://www.free-lance.ru/users/favaro1/upload/f\\_482c74f01cd3a.doc](http://www.free-lance.ru/users/favaro1/upload/f_482c74f01cd3a.doc)

friends. A brigade was characterized by rotation of its members; however, its blood-related core was permanent. Conventionally there were two types of brigades. The first type is a brigade of relatives mainly consisting of close relatives. The second type – production brigade composed of friends and acquaintances. However, those two types did not differ greatly from each other. We can consider a production brigade as a kind of forced variant of a brigade of relatives.

A brigade was composed by its head – “brigade leader” in two ways. The first way was more characteristic of a brigade of relatives and it was formed long before the beginning of a field season and before leaving the place of permanent residence. Everybody knew each other and they repeatedly went as one brigade to earn money. The second way for a brigade leader was to agree with a kolkhoz about land leasing first and then depending on the size of the land plot to form a brigade. Irrespective of the way a brigade was formed each brigade member was free to decide for himself to join a brigade or to quit it.

Undoubtedly, solidarity of a brigade based on blood relations was much stronger than that of a production brigade as a labor collective. Observations and interviews with respondents from rank-and-file members of brigades and brigade leaders demonstrate that in a brigade of relatives all problems and difficulties could be got over jointly and a brigade member, especially if it was a woman or a newcomer in kobonji, was rendered all-round support and advice.

**Age composition.** Active members of a brigade were represented by people of middle and elderly age, as field work skills and life experience were very important. However, in rural areas the share of young people was quite high due to the limited labor market and unemployment.

**Gender composition.** Men dominated numerically and the share of women with their own plots of land comprised 10-20%. Men played the main role at the stage of preparatory field works and arrangement of accommodation in the new place. At the height of the field works hired labor was used, both men and women. In autumn during the time of crops selling and particularly retail sale of watermelons and vegetables at the markets, the leading role belonged to women whose rows were reinforced by arrived relatives and acquaintances.

**Social and professional composition.** As regards its social origin and professional occupation the composition of a brigade was not homogeneous. Among brigade members there were many people not only with higher education but even those with academic degrees and prestigious positions. Reasons for such a descent to a lower level of the social hierarchy could be different but in most cases they were of the economic character.

#### **Ethnic and family (clan) consolidation**

It was in the brigades that permanent ethnic consolidation was taking place, as after the mass resettlement of Korean kolkhoz workers to the cities brigades remained the only ethnohomogeneous social units. Members of brigades spoke Korean among themselves; they

cooked traditional Korean food and preserved ethnic specificity in relations between its members. Often brigade members who found themselves in a difficult financial situation during the height of field works were given interest-free loans from their kinsmen without any loan certificates or documents. Not infrequently such assistance had the form of working collectively on the *kobon* (plot of land) of one of the brigade members.

Through *kobonji* Koreans acquired their first skills in entrepreneurship, created initial material and financial basis for active integration in the market economy of the post-Soviet period. *Kobonji* has also played its role in preserving ethnic specificity of *Koryo Saram*, elements of their traditional culture and native tongue. Without any exaggeration, one can say that *kobonji* was a specific kind of ethnic entrepreneurship as well as *a specific way and style of life* of a numerically significant group of the Soviet Koreans. (Kim G.N., 2007). After collapse of the Soviet Union and sovereignty of the former Soviet republics *kobonji* was practiced within countries of residence. The market economy presupposes changes in the organizational and production system of *kobonji*, first of all, as regards land ownership laws. Private farmers' economy which is to become the basis of the agrarian sector does not attract Koreans any longer and the number of those engaged in *kobonji* is steadily declining.

### **Authority and Competence of the Brigade - Leader**

*Kobonji* did not originate out of nowhere but within a kolkhoz system, where a brigade leader was a very important figure. The role of a brigade leader in *kobonji* was even more significant than in a kolkhoz, as all important decisions were taken by him. It is not by chance that an experienced, well-respected brigade leader was called “*bugor*” among the common people.<sup>15</sup> A brigade leader was a man who had to possess a number of professional skills and personal traits of character in order to not only rationally organize the production process but also to preserve the atmosphere of tolerance and unity among members of his brigade. If a year turned out to be successful (profitable) and members of a brigade were content with the results of their labor, the leader could keep his titled position for many years. Such a brigade leader who could find the common language with local authorities, agree about all necessary things, organize field works and quick selling of crops at high prices, soon became well-known. According to the interviews and stories of the people who had practiced *kobonji* for many years, it was not a simple matter to become a member of the brigade with an experienced and competent leader. It was necessary to provide recommendations and vacancies had to be available as the number of brigade members was limited by its rational size. Success of *kobonji* similar to the agriculture as a whole, in many ways depended on weather conditions and any brigade could face a failure. If such a situation took place two successive years a brigade would come apart. There were legends about extremely lucky “*bugors*”. Sometimes such experienced and lucky brigade leaders

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<sup>15</sup> *bugor* - in the criminal groups is a person with indisputable authority

had two or even three brigades at the same time.

Brigade leaders were entrusted with a number of functional tasks, the basic ones being:

- Choice of the region and agricultural crops for *kobonji*
- Terms and conditions of the land rent, agricultural machinery and labor hiring
- Provision of materials for construction of temporary dwellings, fertilizers, food products
- Observation of the cycle of field works
- Sale of crops
- Keeping order in a brigade and guaranteeing security for its members

Additionally the brigadier has the right to convoke brigade meeting or to set certain rules with the aim of making the activity of a brigade efficient, maintaining of the working atmosphere and friendly relations among its members and with the local population. A general meeting of a brigade was called as needed – when it was necessary to discuss issues related to the production activity.

Depending on his many functions a brigade leader got remuneration or compensation for his work from his brigade members. When a brigade was small in size, a brigade leader had a *kobon* like others but he did not pay for his share in the total payment to a kolkhoz for leasing land. If a brigade was big, a brigade leader had too much responsibility and many functions making it impossible for him to work on land and participate directly in the production process. In such cases he got remuneration from brigade members. Brigade leaders with a great experience in *kobonji*, as a rule, sooner or later became wealthy people.

### **Marginality and Semi-Legal Character**

One of *kobonji*'s most distinguishing characteristics is the fact that its practitioners spend a certain period each year (typically from March to October) away from their place of permanent residence at the production site, i.e., living and working in the fields. They build temporary camps where they eat, live and sleep for the better part of the year, and indeed, where they conduct all their day-to-day family affairs in the middle of desolate farming fields and solve any and all problems arising in the course of their activities.

In the kolkhoz production participants contributed their labor and knowledge only but in *kobonji* brigade members had also to contribute their financial resources which were considerable. Kolkhoz members were protected by the state in case of bad crops caused by weather conditions or other reasons. *Kobonji* brigade members bore losses either through their own fault individually or by force of some objective reasons collectively by the whole brigade. A brigade as a whole and every member of it could not expect any compensation for their losses. .

It was not infrequent when conflict situations occurred between a kolkhoz and a brigade. Usually it happened when a kolkhoz chairman started to demand more than it had

been agreed upon in the contract. Then a brigade was always the loser as it was common practice to accuse a brigade leader or any of its members in violation of laws or legal regulations. Brigade members themselves admitted that in the process of *kobonji* they had to violate existing laws because if they had stuck to them fully *kobonji* would have been impossible and lost sense. And the sense was getting maximum profit.

While compiling agreements with *kobonji* brigades, kolkhoz chairmen themselves often violated laws as they were interested in getting personal profit from such deals. Different ways to evade laws were found. For instance, *kobonji* brigades were made kolkhoz production units on paper with established plans and tasks and wages. Similar papers faked by kolkhoz chairmen were used for selling the *kobonji* crops.

Legalization of *kobonji* occurred during Gorbachev's perestroika and wide introduction of "brigade contracts" and self-financing. The legal status of Koreans engaged in *kobonji* was strengthened; conditions for better relations with kolkhozes were created, though this, according to our informants, did not affect incomes of brigade members significantly. Nevertheless, as regards the reduction of overhead expenses one can observe some positive effects from legalization of *kobonji*.

### **Innovation and Mobility of Production**

*Kobonji* is a kind of mobile lease farming. In connection with *kobonji*'s mobility, one might wonder whether the Koryo saram really need to leave their area of residence to engage in agriculture. This particular feature of *kobonji* is closely tied to the socio-economic structure and actual production and marketing conditions of the age. The clear economic logic of *kobonji* has always been in trying to maximize private profit. Of course, it is inevitable that *kobonji* would be conditioned by the socio-economic structure of the period in question, but the practitioners themselves would seek out those regions which had the locations most conducive and favorable to the maximization of profit and go there to practice *kobonji*. The locations most conducive and favorable for *kobonji* were those regions most advantageous to production and marketing, and the prerequisites were the richness of the soil, irrigation facilities, existence of market outlets, etc. Once an area has been targeted in this way and a lease contract concluded, *kobonji* activity takes place there over a considerable period of time. (Jensen, 1969; Back Tae Hyeon, 2001; Kvon and Khan, 2004 ).

*Kobonji* differed from the kolkhoz economy in its innovations and quick decision making which in the long run led to the success of it. It concerned determination of a region and place of production, choice of crops and seeds, field works cycle, speed and quality of agro technical work, forms of realization of final products etc.

## **Rationality of Production**

One of the main reasons for *kobonji* success was rationality of production which embraced various components. First of all, *kobonji* was in demand because for the state it was more advantageous to get the necessary products in different regions of the country and not to transport them from one place to another. Korean brigades went to different places all over the huge country at their own expense and grew vegetables and onions there. Secondly, Koreans invested their own money in the production: from buying seeds to selling agricultural products; they arranged their temporary accommodation and other everyday issues themselves. Thirdly, kolkhozes did not have to pay pension allocations for Koreans and did not grant other social benefits or social security to them like they did for kolkhoz members.

On the other hand, there were no unnecessary people in a *kobonji* brigade as often was the case with other labor collectives where such people had regulating and controlling functions. The size, gender-age composition and number of workers in a brigade were always optimal corresponding to the demands of the moment. Local kolkhoz members were happy to have an opportunity to get some additional money as day laborers. All brigade members and the brigade as a whole was aimed at getting profit not wages which little depended on the final results of the work. As a rule, when the season was over brigade members got cash money. A brigade was not tied to one particular kolkhoz but was free to go to another, more favorable place the following year.

*Kobonji* was based on rationality of the market economy, namely – maximum reduction of the cost price of products, well-timed production of high-quality goods and profitable selling, each brigade member calculating his own costs and expenses and his potential profit. Each brigade member on his own decision could leave his plot of land and return home and start everything anew the following year.

Soviet savings banks did not grant any loans to the population, only inconsiderable allowances were provided for families in need from the so called mutual aid funds at enterprises. At times a brigade member could be in need of some amount of money to buy fertilizers, pay to day laborers etc. Delay in payment could lead to profit reduction and even loss of the invested money. Therefore, mutual aid in *kobonji* was a common practice and money, as a rule, was given interest free. Such interest free loans are not characteristic of the market relations but remain inherent in ethnic entrepreneurship even in the economically developed countries.

### **3.3. Second Economy of Kobonji**

#### **3.3.1. Renting of Land and Agro Machinery Services**

The principal issue of *kobonji* was the issue of land and it depended on many circumstances and factors. Final results to a great extent depended on the correctly chosen

region, kolkhoz and land. All USSR regions were divided according to fertility of soil - the better the quality of land, the higher the rent.

During the Soviet period agreements concluded between kolkhozes and Korean brigades were outside the frameworks of land leasing relations. Often it was a whole bloc of agreements and arrangements which was the outcome of many negotiations between a kolkhoz chairman and brigade leader. An experienced leader always tried to protect his brigade against unexpected circumstances and to include into the texts of agreements as many material-financial responsibilities guaranteed by a kolkhoz as he could. Although the land was the most important means of production, success could not be achieved without effective solution of a number of issues like agreed conditions of using agricultural machinery, irrigation system and water, fertilizers supply, provision of construction materials for temporary dwellings, foodstuff supply, transportation of crops from the fields etc. Kolkhoz brigades got all the above-listed free as all the expenses were included in kolkhoz plans and means were allocated for them but with Korean brigades it could or could not be the case. Mechanisms of the “second” (informal, shadow) economy were involved there. For instance, a local tractor driver using a kolkhoz tractor and fuel could plough up the plot of Koreans for three rubles’ cash or a bottle of vodka - its equivalent. A “*merab*” responsible for watering kolkhoz fields could direct water to the Korean land out of turn and so on.

The main points were reflected in agreements but it was impossible to foresee all the details. Besides, it was in the interests of a kolkhoz chairman and brigade leader who wanted to have some freedom of actions. As a rule, the parties reached consensus on all disputes but if it was not possible, the aggrieved party was, of course, a semi legal brigade of land tenants.

The basic difference between the modern and Soviet time land-lease relations for *kobonji* brigades is that the party providing a plot of land is not a kolkhoz (state) but a private landowner. Therefore all legal and economic conditions can be envisaged without any restrictions imposed by existing laws as it was the case during the Soviet period. But the essence of relations between a landholder and tenant remained the same; the first party – landholder initially enjoys more rights and tries to increase the amount of payment for the land, when the second party – a brigade tries to make it lower.

The method of calculating land lease cost and forms of payment varied depending on the period of time and regions of the country. At the initial stage of *kobonji* it was in kind, i.e. a kolkhoz received some part of the produce, usually half of it. Gradually kolkhozes started to transfer to cash payment. However, as our informants testify, even when in kind payment was common practice, it was more profitable for a brigade to sell their crops at state purchase prices or kolkhoz market price than to give it to a kolkhoz at a lower price. At present the amount and form of land lease payment vary depending on regions. As a rule, payments are made in cash after selling of the grown products. Total amount for the land consists of shares paid by each member of a brigade for his plot, collected by a brigade

leader. Besides, each member's share includes expenses for collective use of agricultural machinery, water for irrigation, electricity and other materials, goods and services necessary for the production process.

A common piece of land leased by a brigade is distributed among the brigade members based on possibilities of each member and size of his family. Technically plots are distributed by casting of lots. If a brigade member decides to get a *kobon* for himself, he can do it without casting lots. The most favorable plot of land is considered the one closer to an access road.

The size of one *kobon* varied during the time. Initially when kolkhozes were not well-equipped with agricultural machinery, plots were small in size as labor was manual and local kolkhoz members could not be hired as day laborers. One brigade member with his family could work one hectare of land and they were called "hectarnik" in Russian. Later when conditions changed an average *kobon* area became 3-4 hectares.

### **3.3.2. Management and Agrotechnics**

Initially in the late 1950s early 1960s the main *kobonji* crop was rice. Gradually the area of kolkhoz rice plantations increased and agricultural machinery was introduced which led to less profit for *kobonji* rice brigades. Therefore by mid 1960s Korean brigades started to grow vegetables and namely, onions, cucumbers, tomatoes, eggplants etc. and melons. Growing vegetables on big areas using agricultural machinery was a weak spot of kolkhoz field crop cultivation. Such choice was also explained by the fact that Koreans could use their ethnic agrotechnical methods and could get good crops – 2-3 times as high as average indices of this or that region. Besides, vegetables were in great demand and could be sold quickly both at state purchase market and among local population. Specific agricultural technologies, hard work, possibility of investing their own money, determination to face risks have led to the situation when Koreans for many years have been occupying the niche of onions and water melons growing in the former Soviet Union.

Koreans were well known in the Soviet Central Asia as rice producer, but from 1960s the onion became priority for Koreans. The most significant contribution to development of kolkhoz onion growing was made by the Koreans of the Karatal'skii region. The areas under onions had increased by mid 1950s when a number of kolkhozes got specialized in growing this vegetable. High crops and profitability (at existing procurement prices 60-100 thousand rubles<sup>16</sup> from one hectare) raised interest of kolkhozes and kolkhoz members in onion growing. By early 1960s the Karatal'skii region sold to the state 70% of commercial onions produced in Kazakhstan. (Ким Г. Н., 1989:22-27) .

The technology of onion growing remained practically the same for many years.

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<sup>16</sup> The ruble was denominated in 1961 in a proportion 10 to one. In the beginning of 1960 for one ruble it was possible to buy 20 eggs, or 10 kg. potato, or 5 liters of milk.

Except sowing all other operations were done manually: weeding, fertilizing, pulling of onions, cutting of upper parts, packaging into sacks, loading. Onion sowing starts at the end of March – beginning of April. Harvesting time is in September. During this 5-6 month period it is necessary to fertilize the soil two or three times, to treat it with chemicals 2-5 times and about 5 times to weed it and 10-15 times to water it. The reason why, despite high labor intensiveness, Koreans grow onions lies in considerable return of the products. Koreans regularly made experiments with selection of new sorts of onions. At an experimental farm near the city of Ushtobe a new high class sort of onions was produced – “Karatal’skii”. Due to its qualities this sort of onions was cultivated not only in the whole Soviet Union but also outside its borders. This sort was remarkable for its taste, size, long period of preservation and what is the most important – high crop capacity. (Ким Г. Н., 1989, *ibid.*).

Koreans started to grow water melons in Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan and they learnt a lot from the local population there. Gradually water melons became the main crop for some Korean brigades engaged in *kobonji* in the southern regions of the Soviet Union. Later, having studied the peculiarities of local soils and climatic conditions, Koreans started to grow water melons in western and eastern regions of the country.

Besides, main crops – onions and water melons *kobonji* Koreans also grew other vegetables. They were used both for cooking and selling at local markets. Potatoes, tomatoes, soy beans, peas, corn, cabbage, radishes, garlic, dill etc. were grown in different places: on small plots of land near dwelling places, on the field edges and between rows of main crops. In this simple way many problems were resolved. Firstly, food supply for themselves, secondly, maximal use of resources as field edges were weeded and watered any way. Thirdly, row vegetable system allowed growing between rows additional uncounted products which was sold at markets and was another source for covering everyday expenses. Such efficient use of land plots is a distinctive feature of *kobonji* as compared with *kolkhoz* vegetable growing and private gardening practiced by Russian and other peoples.

Analysis of the data received from the informants engaged in *kobonji* for many years and our personal observations allowed to reveal other specific peculiarities of Korean management and agrotechnical methods. When growing main crops such as onions, water melons and vegetables the decisive factor is thorough weeding and watering. These two agrotechnical methods were used by Koreans on their plots of land more often than on *kolkhoz* fields. However, regular watering of all *kobons* was not a simple matter as there was deficit of irrigation water and order of priority system. Thus the issue of irrigation was often on the agenda of general brigade meetings.

For watering plots effectively it was necessary to carry out labor-intensive operations, some of which were performed collectively by a brigade and some individually on each *kobon*. At first collectively and using machinery a common plot of land was made even and a small irrigation system was created. *Aryks* (small irrigation ditches) passed along the

perimeter of the plot and across its center. Then each *kobon* was individually divided into small parts (*chek*) with earth cushions and *cheks* were thoroughly leveled, a layer of soil was cut from higher places and put on lower places. It allowed quick and even filling *cheks* with water. This method was transferred to onions and water melons growing from rice cultivation practice. In the places where natural irrigation was impossible water pumps had to be used. Koreans usually water their fields once every ten days and leave water for 1-2 days to soak the soil. *Kobonji* specificity did not allow using the created irrigation system second time, it was necessary to construct it every time anew and more often than not on a new plot of land. Thus the process of leveling and dividing the plot into *cheks* was repeated.

Weeding was the most difficult and labor consuming as compared to irrigation. It was of special importance when onions are grown as wild weeds hamper their growth. Deficit and high cost of pesticides practically excluded them from possible methods of fighting weeds. It was in the height of grass stand that families, relatives and even friends came to help brigade members.

When sizes of *kobons* were small Koreans managed to weed them with their family members but as *kobons* became bigger they had to turn for help to hired day-laborers from the local population. Local women and schoolchildren came in the morning and went back home in the evening. In some cases hired labor were brought from a town nearby and then they lived in the fields and were given meals besides cash payment. Agricultural workers were hired during harvesting, cutting of onions, packaging them into sacks and loading onto trucks. Often for such work were hired people who had problems in the society: alcoholics, homeless or former criminals released from prisons.

Koreans were pioneers in using greenhouses in vegetable and melons fields. Private greenhouses were used by flower sellers at that time but they were smaller in size and stationary. Koreans started to use vinyl film to cover sprouts of water melons and other vegetables. Besides, Koreans started to plant seedlings instead of seeds which made the vegetation period shorter. The earlier harvesting was done, the more expensive products became and the bigger was the profit. During the Soviet era of total deficit buying vinyl film and other necessary materials was coupled with breaking trade rules.

According to the Soviet standards the amount of money needed for *kobonji* was quite considerable as it was necessary to pay for everything. Correspondingly, the bigger were the expenses, the smaller was the profit. Even getting a lot of money at the end of the season did not necessarily meant high income. However, it could be very high provided there was luck, hard work and correct management. Often people with university diplomas and good professions joined *kobonji* in order to earn some money as they knew that during one season it was possible to get the money amounting to their five-year salary.

Chances of a failure were also numerous. They included climatic conditions, financial problems, low purchase prices etc. Besides, Koreans used to bear considerable losses through theft of grown products during harvesting time. According to the informants,

there were cases when in some regions groups of local people by force and threats took away their crops. Often people passing the fields in their car, stopped to collect water melons or onions and load them into the trunk. Therefore during harvesting time Koreans used to guard their fields in turn. Sometimes they had to hire local watchmen but it was usually of little use.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union and economic crises which followed, it became next to impossible to be engaged in *kobonji* going a long distance from one newly independent country to another and chances of failure were critical. Koreans who went from Uzbekistan to Russia or Ukraine tried to remain there and adapt to the new places. They did not return after the end of field season and became engaged in selling vegetables and making different Korean salads at home which were in great demand at local city markets. At present long distance *kobonji* has practically disappeared.

### **3.3.3. Selling of Production**

It is well-known that losses of grown produce under the Soviet type of economy were huge. Grain burnt in kolkhoz's threshing floors, was spilled on the roads during transportation, vegetables got rotten in storage places or during long distance transportation all over the country. With such losses *kobonji* would be meaningless. In *kobonji* all stages of production were important but the final result depended on successful selling of products. *Kobonji* income consisted in the difference between invested resources including labor and the cost of sold products. Both during the Soviet period and after it selling of products was done individually by each member of a brigade and his family. However, in the Soviet time a brigade leader had a very important function of delivering grown onions and vegetables to a kolkhoz in payment for the land and to state vegetable storing places at purchase prices. According to the informants, sometimes experienced brigade leaders managed to find a possibility to sell their products to kolkhozes in other regions where plans on vegetable production were not realized. Then prices for vegetables were higher than those at which a kolkhoz land –holder bought. Such deals were mutually beneficial to a kolkhoz and *kobonji* brigade. As a rule after most part of *kobonji* products were sold like that, some part was left and being a personal share of each member of a brigade, could be quickly and profitably sold by him.

In the Soviet Union for individuals it was extremely difficult to sell agricultural products grown by them to the state or other individuals at free prices. But there was a network of local kolkhoz and municipal retail markets where they sold meat, dairy products, vegetables, fruits etc. At such markets besides established official norms of the Soviet trade, there were other effective “bazaar” rules. First of all, it concerned obtaining places at the market which were limited in number and therefore very difficult to get at the height of the vegetable and fruit season. Those places were usually controlled by local sellers. Thus, Koreans had to sell their products to them but at a lower price than in the market or to find

other ways of getting a place and selling themselves at a high price. Sometimes Koreans made barter deals i.e. exchanged products especially for vinyl film, construction materials, small agricultural machinery etc. Selling at markets usually took 25-50 days but if there were too many vegetables some people had to stay till the New Year holidays. The burden of selling in the markets was born mostly by women who stood behind the counters while men brought goods from the fields, unloaded them and arranged small –batch sale.

It was prohibited to sell in places other than markets but kolkhoz members including *kobonji* Koreans sometimes had to violate the regulations; however, the risk was great as their goods could be confiscated and a heavy fine could be imposed. Still stricter could be measures and fines when the products were transported from the fields to the city as all the roads were controlled by the road police that checked the load and accompanying documents. If there were no proper documents, the punishment was not a fine but penal sanctions for stealing the kolkhoz property.

Before *kobonji* was legalized, transportation of agricultural products meant numerous problems and difficulties. And the longer was the distance, the more problems Koreans faced. First of all, it was not easy to load water melons or onions in the fields. Kolkhoz chairman demanded that nothing was taken from the fields until payment for the land was made. However, payment in kind could be delayed and the products had to be sold as quickly as possible. Therefore, Koreans often took out their vegetables secretly, at night. Sometimes there were problems with documents authorizing sale which usually were issued by the kolkhoz authorities.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union and planned socialist system of economy all products were sold under the conditions of free market. First of all, it concerned prices. Fixed state prices remained in the past. Now everything was regulated by the laws of demand and supply. The higher is the demand, the higher is the price. Every family engaged in *kobonji* tried to sell their goods at a maximum price. Free wholesale and small batch sale became possible and it was done not only in the market places but also along busy highways, in uncontrolled street markets. Vegetables could be supplied directly to consumers – cafes and restaurants. However, it would be wrong to assert that the issue of sale for the modern *kobonji* has lost its acuteness. As before Koreans are very much concerned about the way to quickly and more profitably sell their products.

#### **3.3.4. Temporally Dwellings**

Types and character of temporary dwellings or seasonal *kobonji* shelters depended on many factors and circumstances. Above all, on the nature and climate of a region as *kobonji* was practiced on the vast territory from the Baltic republics to the Far East; from severe North to the hot South. Depending on temperatures of some particular location they used to build either dwellings with heat insulation like semi-dugouts or small houses with thick walls which could be heated in cold weather by the traditional heating system – *kuduri*.

In the Central Asia with its warm climate light constructions were made using reed mats, roofing felt, vinyl film, tarpaulin, wood and slate.

Secondly, dwellings and shelters were made while taking into consideration whether a particular plot of land was leased only once or repeatedly. If a brigade leader was not sure that they would return to the place the following year, no serious measures were taken to improve the settlement. If they knew that they would return there, the site was equipped with utilities and everything was done thoroughly. However, according to the informants they had to start practically from zero irrespective of the fact whether it was their first or second time there.

Thirdly, temporary settlement varied depending on the size and composition of a brigade. The more members there were in a brigade, the more dwellings were made, although blood relatives could live together as one household. Thus, the number of dwellings was inversely proportional to the number of direct relatives among brigade members. If a brigade was big and rented a considerable plot of land, its members hired labor that at the height of the season often lived together with them in the settlement.

Fourthly, some brigade members used to have their own approach to the choice of a dwelling. Some younger members preferred to live in caravans on the territory of settlements; such caravans were usually used by construction and road workers. They brought such caravans to the territory of settlements and after the end of the season sold them or left for custody in kolkhoz garages. In Kazakhstan there are cases when brigade members or hired labor live in *yurtas*<sup>17</sup> or military tents.

A place for a temporary settlement was chosen by a brigade leader or the most experienced members of a brigade. Usually it was in the direct proximity of the fields. Availability of drinking and irrigation water and forest plantations were also taken into consideration. An automobile road nearby was also a plus as it was important for transportation of grown products. Another important feature was a possibility to get connected to an electric line in order to get electricity for lightening houses and using electric appliances, radio and TV.

The usual layout of a temporary settlement was a one-way linear street. Houses of a brigade leader and elder members were located in the middle part of it and young people or hired labor lived at the borders. There were some places for joint use on the territory and those were constructed by all male members. The appearance of a settlement and rules of joint residence mostly depended on the personal qualities of a brigade leader who was the head.

Temporary settlements of Koreans which sprung at the field edges in early spring and disappeared in late autumn, for more than six months were places of residence for many people. Nevertheless, people there did not have registration or address which was obligatory

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<sup>17</sup> *yurta* – mobile dwelling of nomadic peoples of the Central Asia

in the Soviet Union. According to the existing rules, it was necessary to get registered in the militia and those liable-for-call up had to register in local military commissariats. But local authorities did not pay much attention to such violations. There were other violations too. For instance, electricity was used without any control; fire-prevention measures, hygiene and sanitary norms were out of the question. Despite their seasonal character for Koreans such semi-dugouts or “*balagans*” were real homes and a settlement was a kind of a village community with its peculiar customs, rules, holidays and sorrows. Such temporary settlements were the places where ethnic and family-clan solidarity was getting stronger, continuity was preserved, native language was used and ethnic culture and ethnic self-consciousness was preserved.

## **4. Collapse of the Soviet Union and Entrepreneurship of Koreans in Kazakhstan**

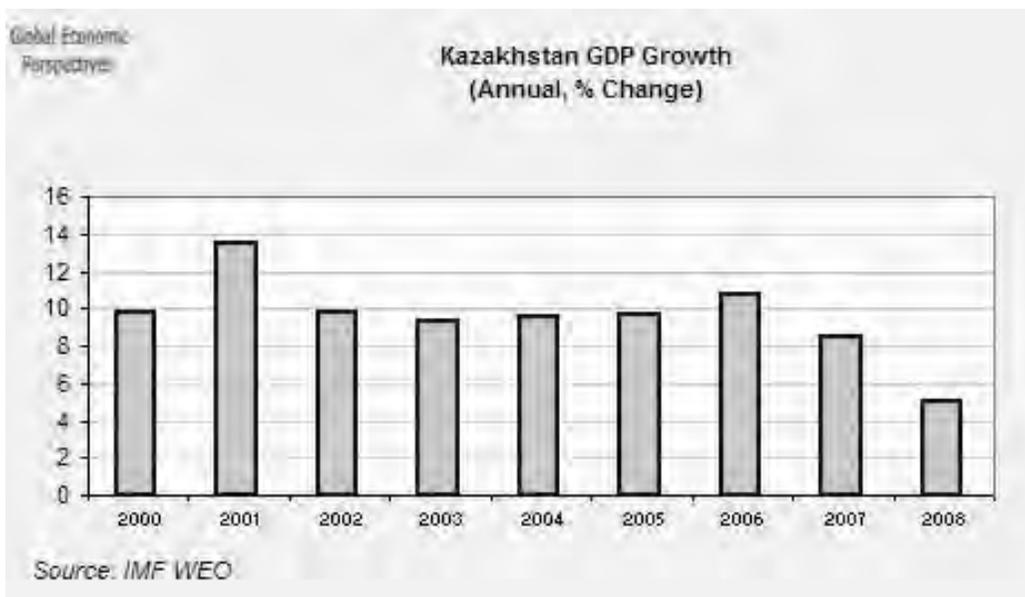
### **4.1. Why about Entrepreneurship in Kazakhstan?**

With its large territory and relatively small population (16 mil.), Kazakhstan is the most sparsely populated of the former Soviet republics. It possesses huge reserves of petroleum, natural gas, and other important natural resources. It also produces 20 percent of the coal of the former Soviet Union. The country's large agricultural sector (that accounts for almost 40 percent of the net material product and employs about 26 percent of the labor force) is centered around grain and livestock. Kazakhstan's economy was geared to the production of raw materials, both agricultural and mineral, for shipment to Russia. Kazakhstan has been dependent on the other former Soviet republics, particularly Russia, for most of its machinery and consumer goods.

Rising prices, falling demand, and disruptions of traditional trade ties have contributed to a sharp contraction of Kazakhstan's economy over the first half of decade after the Soviet Union collapsed. Between 1991 and 1993, the GDP fell almost 25 percent and industrial output declined by 28 percent. The economy has been hit by even greater declines in 1994. Forced out of the ruble zone in mid-1993, Kazakhstan issued its own currency, the tenge, in November 1993. An initial exchange rate was set up at 5 tenges to 1 U.S. dollar. However, high inflation and uncertainty over the stability of the currency have contributed to a sharp depreciation of the tenge, which, by September 1995, declined in value since its introduction to 60 tenge per one U.S. dollar. Wages and, especially, pensions did not keep pace with the rapid change of economic environment putting the bulk of the population and government decision makers in increasingly difficult straits. According to some estimates, minimum wage and social benefits fell to about one-fourth of 1991 levels, and as much as 20 percent of the population could be in serious poverty .

Kazakhstan's economy is now larger than those of all the other Central Asian states combined (Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan). According to Kazakhstan Government forecasts, the economy is expected to expand at an average annual rate of 9.5 percent in real terms from 2007 to 2011 because of both foreign investments and increasing oil exports. At a time of record-high energy prices, rising oil exports are expected to increase private consumption, boost retail sales and construction.

Kazakhstan was the first to pay off its debts to the International Monetary Fund in 2000 following economic reconstruction (seven years ahead of schedule), the first to obtain a favorable credit rating, the first to implement financial institutions approaching Western standards of efficiency and reliability and the first to develop and introduce a nationwide fully funded pension program. Besides rising oil revenues, one of the key elements in Kazakhstan's economic success has been its ability to attract foreign investment, which in



2001-2003 surged to 13 percent of GDP and is currently running at almost ten times the rate of its neighbors. In validating the structural reforms carried out by the Kazakh government the European Union formally recognized Kazakhstan as a market-based economy in October 2000, while Washington accorded Kazakhstan similar recognition in March 2002.

From 2000-2007, the Kazakhstan economy enjoyed an extended period of very rapid growth, with real GDP growth averaging 10 percent annually. The expansion was underpinned by the development of the oil sector, prudent macroeconomic policies, structural reforms, and increased access to global financial markets. As a result, real per capita incomes have doubled since 2000 and social indicators have improved.

In the first quarter of 2007 Kazakhstan's GDP increased more than 10 percent while output grew 11 percent in the manufacturing industry and 19 percent in machinery and equipment production. The nominal wages of Kazakh citizens increased 26 percent in the first quarter of 2007 alone. Kazakhstan's state statistics agency reported that in 2007 the country's GDP reached \$104.5 billion. The U.S. State Department in 2005 estimated Kazakhstan's Gross Domestic Product at \$125.3 billion, its GDP per capita income at \$8,300. Highlighting the discrepancies between foreign and indigenous statistics, in 2006 Kazakhstan's Statistics Agency calculated the monthly income level of the lower middle class to be 35,000 tenge (\$290) per month, for an annual salary of \$3,480. Despite the disparities, however, the incontestable fact is that after a period of economic turmoil immediately following independence, incomes in Kazakhstan have not only stabilized but consistently risen over the last decade.

Kazakhstan has become the first country in the CIS to feel the impact of the

American Mortgage Crisis. The main causes of the problem are the huge foreign debts of Kazakh banks and the increasingly lopsided trade balance. But according to domestic and western expertise economic growth is expected to remain relatively subdued. Real GDP is forecast by the IMF to grow by 5 percent and 6.25 percent in 2008 and 2009 respectively. The current account is projected to move into surplus in 2008 following the large deficit last year, due to higher oil and commodity prices and much slower import growth.

One of the first and highest priorities of Kazakhstan's government in the years immediately following independence was to privatize state property, which began in 1993. As the program picked up pace it was then extended nationwide, with the government privatizing trading companies, food suppliers and other services. Most importantly for the nascent middle class, as part of a parallel process, the mass privatization of apartments created a private housing market. The ambitious program three years later saw private companies account for around 80 percent of the economy, while private ownership of agricultural production soared to 97 percent. According to official estimates, Kazakhstan's GDP grew by about 13 percent in 2001, the highest rate among the former Soviet republics. A notable Western criticism of Kazakh economic reforms is the Heritage Foundation<sup>18</sup> According to the Index criteria for 162 countries of the world, Kazakhstan rates as "moderately free", ranking 78. The report gave Kazakhstan 56.5 for "Business Freedom," 86.2 for "Trade Freedom," 80.1 for "Fiscal Freedom," 84.7 for "Government Size," 71.9 for "Monetary Freedom," 30 for "Investment Freedom," 60 for "Financial Freedom," 30 for "Property Rights, 26 for "Freedom from Corruption" and 80.0 "Labor Freedom."

In Kazakhstan the reforms of economic system and formation of the new class of entrepreneurs and businessmen, stand in contrast to events in the other post-Soviet "stans" - Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan. While in the immediate aftermath of the dissolution of the USSR Kyrgyzstan was initially regarded by many Western analysts as the most reformist post-Soviet republic in moving swiftly towards Western-style political and economic infrastructures, it is in fact Kazakhstan that has emerged as the most progressive regional economic reformer.

#### **4.2. Changes in Occupations and Social Structures**

During the Soviet period a numerically large group of scientific, pedagogical intelligentsia and workers of art and culture was formed in Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan. As regards the number of academic workers and university lecturers - Candidates and Doctors of Sciences Koreans held one of the leading positions among other nationalities. Koreans were widely represented in such professions as school teachers, medical doctors, in art and culture.

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<sup>18</sup> Wall Street Journal 2008, Index of Economic Freedom

Many Koreans were officers in the Ministry of Internal Affairs but only an inconsiderable number of young Koreans chose a military career as there used to be some covert limitations in choosing a career. It is well-known that during the Stalin era there existed «Berufsverbot» on both official and everyday levels - the so-called “ban on professions” based on ethnicity principle; thus only few Koreans were engaged in railroad, air or sea transport. A number of professions referred to peculiar ethnic niches, for instance, shoemakers were mostly Armenians, watchmakers, jewelers and tailors were Jews. Among Soviet Koreans also there were certain preferences regarding professions; especially depending on the gender – many Korean women were engaged in factory and individual dress-making.

The collapse of the USSR negatively affected the economical and socio-political cooperation between the former Union republics and led to the establishment of sovereign states on the post-Soviet territory. The socio-political conditions of diasporas in the post-Soviet period in the former Soviet republics acquired new qualities( as compared with the Soviet period) caused by the internal policies of their home states. This policy was different in every single post-Soviet state and affected socio-political and migration activity of the population. At the same time it is possible to trace a number of common trends in the transformations in the sphere of inter-ethnic relations affecting internal political processes in the post-Soviet states:

- Vague legal status of a Diaspora;
- Domination and priority of ethnic identification of a title-nation in the state ideology;
- Accent on the priority role of a title-nation in the state-building process;
- Narrowing of the functional space of the Russian language;
- Administrative approach to a wider use of a title-nation language;
- Transfer of all paperwork into the state language in the Central Asian states;
- Renaming of administrative units, settlements, geographical names, personal names from Russian into state languages;
- Revision of the history of relations with Russia and the Russian people;
- Politization of national mass media;
- Use of ethnic factor for political purposes

The above-mentioned trends are making the position of ethnic minorities including Koreans even in the relatively stable countries of the CIS uncertain and their socio-psychological state – discomfoting.

The analysis of the social composition of the post-Soviet Koreans encounters certain objective difficulties: lack of any systematized empirical materials as in the state statistical reports Koreans were included in the section “and others” and so far there has not been any special ethno-sociological research regarding them. Thus changes in the social and occupational composition of Koreans have not so far become a topic of any independent

research and there is a need to fill this gap. The materials of the First Census in Kazakhstan contained questions related to the population employment which allows making a preliminary analysis on the national scale. (Pak A.D., 2002)

According to the 1999 Census data about 30% of all Koreans or 38% of the population at the age of 15 and older were occupied in the sphere of economy and on the whole in the republic this indicator was 27,9% and 39,1% correspondingly. A lower second indicator for Koreans can possibly be explained by the fact that in the age group of 15-24 among Koreans there is a considerable number of schoolchildren and students.

By regions this indicator for Koreans varies from 23,5% in Kzylorda oblast' and 25,8% - in South Kazakhstan to 37,5% - in Astana city and 38,0% - in Mangistau oblast'. The employment rate directly depends on the region and place of residence, i.e. in labor excessive Southern regions it is lower than the average and in the North, West, East and the Central part of the country it is higher. The highest employment rate is in Astana, the new capital and it is the case for all ethnoses. When Astana was made a new capital of Kazakhstan there appeared vacancies in many institutions and correspondingly opportunities for career-making. To the new dynamically-developing capital moved a lot of young energetic people from other regions in order to make business which looked more attractive and profitable for them there. Relatively low employment rate in Almaty is explained by a more considerable share of older age people as compared to Astana.

Out of the total number of employed in the republic top managers of all levels comprise 8,3%; for Koreans it is 17,3%, Kazakhs - 7,9%, Russians - 9,3%, and the leading position is occupied by Jews - 27,5%. These figures themselves are of little meaning as it is important to know what particular spheres are meant. As is known, Kazakhs as representatives of the title-nation dominate at all levels and in all branches: legislative, executive and judicial. The key positions in the economy, mass media, education, science and culture are also occupied by representatives of the "*titular nation*". However, proceeding from the fact that the total number of Koreans is less than one per cent of the population one can make a conclusion that they are sufficiently widely represented at the leading positions for example:

- Kim Yuri Alekseyevich – Chairman of the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Kazakhstan
- Ni Vladimir Vasilyevich – Administrator of the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan at the Economic Management Department of the President and Government
- Kim Georgi Vladimirovich – Minister of Justice of the Republic of Kazakhstan
- Sher Raisa Petrovna – Deputy of Mazhilis ( lower chamber) of the Parliament of the Republic of Kazakhstan
- Kim Afanasiy Grigoryevich – Deputy Minister of Sports, Youth and Tourism
- Kan Viktor Petrovich – Deputy Minister of Internal Affairs

Koreans were promoted Generals. The rank of Major General of the Ministry of Internal Affairs was given to Tskhai Boris Alexandrovich , Major General of Justice , State Counsellor of III class was awarded to Khegay Arkadiy Yurievich .

In 2007 in Kazakhstan elections to the Central and local bodies of power were held, and Koreans turned out to be well-represented on all levels there. Totally 20 Korean deputies were elected in the country, among them: Tskhai Yuri Andreyevich, President of the AKK was appointed Senator of the Parliament and Tsoy Viktor Yevgenievich, Chairman of the Board of the construction company “ Ak Aul”, Chairman of the Public foundation “Social Consortium of the Assembly of People of Kazakhstan” was elected a deputy of the Mazhilis. Ten Koreans became city maslikhat deputies, six – district and two – of oblast’ maslikhats. (see Anex)

Among Koreans in Kazakhstan there are owners of small and medium size companies and firms or heads of some state departments and institutions of no priority importance. On the whole, if we sum up shares of top managers and main specialists, it will turn out that at least two thirds of those employed occupy leading positions in the places of their employment. If we distribute the employed Korean population by their occupation, the majority of them is in the sphere of services, housing and communal sphere, trade - 17,5% and agriculture -12,2%; in the industry, construction, transport and communications - 7,6%.

The transfer from the planned socialist system of economy to the market economy, privatization of the state sector, reforms of the socio-political system created new possibilities for private entrepreneurship in the post-Soviet period. A layer of businessmen had been formed which during a short period of time acquired experience in private businesses and covered the way from the so-called commercial kiosks (stalls) and small retail trade to big corporations and financial-industrial groups. Changes in the social structure, professional composition and finally in financial and property status of Koreans reflect a common trend which is characteristic of all post-Soviet population. Among Koreans like in the society as a whole we can observe three asymmetrical, as regards the number, social layers: well-to-do, middle class and low-income people.

A professional middle class is beginning to emerge in Kazakhstan. While estimates vary, according to some analysts it constitutes 25 percent of the total population, representing people who consume 50-80 percent of the financial value of all goods sold in Kazakhstan. Analysts further divide this group into two sections, a lower middle class, with individual annual incomes of \$6,000-9,000, (an estimated 70 percent of the stratum,) and the "upper" middle class, with annual individual incomes of \$9,000-15,000, (30 percent of the total group.) According to official Kazakh statistics, salaries increased by 21 percent in 2001 and by 12 percent in 2002 and have consistently risen each year since.

The principal criterion used by analysts to define Kazakhstan's middle class is not the nature of labor, professional association or property, but income level. Other Kazakh experts give figures on the extent of the group as ranging between 18 percent and 60 percent of the

population. In Kazakhstan, approximately 50 percent of the population lives in urban areas, and this is where the middle class is concentrated. As noted above, in 1998 Kazakhstan adopted an economic reform that impacted every citizen, a pension reform program based on the Chilean model, which introduced private pension funds. By 2004 nearly six million people, accounting for almost eighty percent of the economically active population, were participants in the program.

### **4.3. Ethnic Consolidation and Community Organization**

During the Soviet period, the State suppressed all attempts made by ethnic communities to self-organize; such attempts by deported Diasporas were especially suppressed. Korean immigrants transferred their centuries-old tradition of the rural community, including its structures and functions, to the Russian Far East. In Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan Koreans formed independent collective farms preserving some features of their former communities – for example, one-man management and respect for the leader, councils of elders with advisory functions, general participation in official holidays, and also ceremonies celebrating life milestones. The community organization was characterized by group labor activity and collective use of land, buildings and premises, and equipment and tools. (Kim G.N. 2004: 985-993).

In Soviet cities there could not be any *chinatowns* or *koreatowns* like in Los Angeles where Koreans live compactly. Without such compact living arrangements, life in large cities weakens relations not only within ethnic communities, but within families, finally leading to stronger individualism. In rural areas, even people living on the opposite ends of a village communicate, but in cities, tenants of the same apartment building hardly know each other. In addition, Koreans have never been united by a common religion, as was the case with Soviet Germans and Jews, for whom churches and synagogues played significant roles.

During the last decade in the post-Soviet countries, dozens of Korean associations, unions and centers were established and officially registered. The main priorities for such associations are as follows: renewal of the Korean language, national customs and traditions; study of Korean history; development of traditional Korean culture, arts and literature; protection of the legal rights and interests of Korean Diasporas; strengthening friendship among nations; development of international cultural and economic ties. (Kim G.N., Han V.S., 2000). Over these years, the associations have organized Korean language instruction programs; festivals of ethnic culture and art, including exhibitions of Korean artists; and published books on the history of the Koryo saram. The Korean Diasporas and their leaders are very loyal to the ruling regimes in their respective countries of residency, and therefore, the associations are cultural rather than political.

The first Korean cultural centers were established almost simultaneously in Tashkent (Uzbek Republic), Almaty (Kazakh Republic), Moscow, and other cities with substantial

numbers of Koreans who were also potential intellectual leaders. The constituent congress for the VASK (Vsesoiuznaia Assotsiatsiia Sovetskikh Koreitsev, or the All-Union Association of Soviet Koreans) was held in Moscow on March 19, 1990. At the second VASK congress, held in Almaty on February 29, 1992, the organization decided to change its name to MKKA (Mezhdunarodnaia Konfederatsia Koreiskikh Assotsiatsii, or the International Confederation of Korean Associations) in accordance with the sociopolitical sequelas of the breakup of the Soviet Union.

The pace of formation of the new Korean organizations was uneven. In some cases, as in Uzbekistan, it took more than two years from the formation of the inaugural groups to the date of official registration. There were several reasons for such delays. First, local officials were reluctant to solve questions related to the registration of social groups; they preferred to wait for instructions from higher-ups. Red tape and bureaucratic inertia led to a number of critical articles in the press about the registration of the Korean centers. Second, many local officials interpreted the "Korean question" in their own way and acted according to this understanding rather than following the letter of the law - a characteristic feature of the Soviet administrative practice. Third, interference by local authorities in the registration of Korean cultural centers was largely related to opposition to Korean groups and to complaints and protests at the local level. Finally, the delay can be explained by the fact that from the very beginning, everyone involved in the Korean social organizations -especially members in outlying areas - lacked experience with the workings of the Soviet system. (Kim G.N., Khan V.S., 2001:117-119)

Once formed, all Korean organizations throughout the USSR declared as their primary mission and highest priority the revival of the Korean language, culture, traditions and customs. We assume that this narrow focus was not a coincidence, as their basic goals reflected the interplay of several factors. First, the notion of "revival" was characteristic of the perestroika period in general. All the reforms of that period proceeded under the slogan of "reviving" something that had been lost. Second, in spite of the fact that the laws about social organizations granted the right to form any and all sorts of organizations (with the exception of extremist organizations), in practice the registration was not so much a matter of simple "declaration" or "filing" as it was of obtaining permission to exist. Third, the theme of cultural revival among ethnic minorities was less risky not only to the power structure, but also to the Koreans themselves. Fourth, insofar as Koreans in the USSR did not constitute a proper "nation" in the strict sense of the word -a republic or other territory with an official language of administration -but only an ethnic group, they based their primary identification on their national culture: language, customs, rituals, traditions, cuisine, songs, dances, etc. These folkways were what comprised the ethnic identity and self-consciousness of the Koryo saram. In other respects, the Soviet Koreans were no different from other citizens of the USSR. It was only natural that under changed conditions that allowed new possibilities for ethnic self-realization, the Koreans turned to those ingredients in their

collective consciousness that distinguished them from others to resolve questions of group identity. At this point in time, the Korean collective identity recognized no other distinctions. Lastly, Koreans did not yet regard themselves as subjects of political activity during the formative period of their new organizations - their political consciousness had not yet awakened.

From its very inception, the Korean movement could not avoid confrontations among its various organizational components. Representatives of the academic and nomenklatura intelligentsia - particularly scholars and social scientists - gained the upper hand in the struggle for initial leadership of the Korean cultural centers and associations. One particularly telling feature of this leadership stratum was its inclusion of representatives of the ideological disciplines (philosophy, scientific Communism, history of the Communist Party of the USSR, etc.) closely related to the Party's nomenklatura. There are several reasons for the predominance of social science faculty in the leadership of Korean associations in the former USSR. To begin with, their ties to the Party and its government organs gave them access to the power needed to quickly resolve organizational questions related to the establishment of Korean cultural centers. In addition, these same ties also allowed them to lobby on behalf of the Korean centers. Furthermore, their professional specialization and work experience in Party organs meant that the professors were better grounded in the preparation of statutory documents, conceptualization of cultural centers, and management of organizational work. Finally, since these faculty members were already organic elements of the Party-state system, their role as leaders of such questionable associations as cultural centers was agreeable to the organs of power.

The changes began with the leadership of the Korean associations, and here we do not simply mean new faces. Leadership positions passed not only to representatives of a new generation, but to representatives from a different profession, namely business. The change in leadership from academics to businesspeople was also a natural development. The age of the professorial leaders had become apparent in the results of the activities of their associations. Second, the academics' lack of business savvy showed in the deplorable financial basis of the Korean cultural centers. In addition, the age and conservatism of the former leaders made it hard for them to change their customary work habits. Even more important for the Korean movement was the integration process in Kazakhstan. The size of the Korean population in that region is significant, as is its role in the development of Korean culture and the overall Korean movement in the former USSR.

In recent years, the Kazakhstani regional Korean societies and the leadership of the central organization have carried out an ambitious plan of work. Among other successes of the AKK, is the consolidation of all various Korean groups in Kazakhstan. The ties between the center and the regions have been strengthened, as well as the relationships between businesspeople and the academic and cultural intelligentsia. Moreover, the goal of reviving Korean language and culture has been made a priority, both in the regions and in the center.

Over the past four years the regional, city and oblast' centers and branch chapters have worked to awaken ethnic consciousness. Finally, the AKK has helped to raise the professional and political profile of the Korean Diaspora.

#### **4.4. The Entrepreneurial and Business Success of Koreans in Kazakhstan**

Kazakhstan's development as a rising petro-state from the debris of the collapse of the USSR in 1991 is Central Asia's leading success story. During the post-Soviet years Koreans have achieved considerable success in business which was conditioned not only by legal and social-economic prerequisites common for the country population but also by other reasons.

Firstly, education, professional experience and organizational skills allowed them to occupy some niches in the private sector of the economy. Koreans are also noted for their hard work, persistence, communicative skills, ability to get on well with different people – all these traits are necessary in the new business relations.

Secondly, at the initial stage Koreans had some advantage as they had already possessed some starting capital made during the Soviet time by their seasonal agrarian activities.

Thirdly, a part of Koreans who managed to keep their leading positions in state institutions and other enterprises got a possibility to participate in the process of privatization of those enterprises.

Fourthly, establishment of diplomatic relations with the South Korea, dynamic development of economic ties between the two countries created favorable conditions for setting up joint companies and partnership relations between compatriots.

Fifthly, Koreans living in big cities are mostly engaged in urbanized types of entrepreneurship. Only a small part of Koreans are engaged in farming.

Sixthly, a number of Koreans were able to create and head big companies with multi-national staff, some of them numbering several dozens thousand of workers. For instance a very powerful in the 1990s semi-state corporation “KRAMDS” headed by Viktor Cho; “KAZAKHMYS” company – Vladimir Kim, a group of companies controlled by Yury Tzkhai, “BANK CENTERCREDIT” – Vladilav Li, “KASPIISKY BANK” – Vyachslav Kim, construction corporations “KUAT” – Oleg Nam, “VEK” – Yuri Li; AK AUL – Viktor Tsoy; the three giants of Kazakhstan home electronics trade - “SULPAK” – Andrey Pak, “TEKHNODOM” – Eduard Kim, “PLANETA ELEKTRONIKI” – Vyacheslav Kim etc.<sup>19</sup>

The richest Korean of the world is a citizen of Kazakhstan. Vladimir Kim heads

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<sup>19</sup> Content-analyze of the newspaper “Koryo Ilbo”, 1995-2007

**Table 3. The Forbes Rating of Kazakhstani Billionaires, 2007**

<u>Rank</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Citizenship</u>	<u>Age</u>	<u>Net Worth (\$bil)</u>	<u>Residence</u>
214	<u>Vladimir Kim</u>	Kazakhstan	47	4.7	Kazakhstan
334	<u>Alijan Ibragimov</u>	Kazakhstan	54	3.3	Kazakhstan
428	<u>Timur Kulibaev</u>	Kazakhstan	41	2.7	Kazakhstan
428	<u>Dinara Kulibaeva</u>	Kazakhstan	40	2.7	Kazakhstan
677	<u>Nurzhan Subkhanberdin</u>	Kazakhstan	42	1.8	Kazakhstan
1062	<u>Bulat Utemuratov</u>	Kazakhstan	NA	1.0	Kazakhstan

“Kazakhmys”, the world’s tenth-largest copper producer. It has 16 copper mines across Kazakhstan. The Group had a wildly successful London offering in October 2005. In less than two months Kazakhmys joined the FTSE 100 index of Britain’s biggest companies. A descendent of Koreans forced by Stalin to move to Kazakhstan, Kim joined Kazakhmys during Kazakhstan’s early 1990s privatization and eventually raised his stake to about 45% today. Net Worth: **\$5.5 bil.**

### **Koreans in Banking Business**

The JSC Bank Caspian is in the top 10 banks of Kazakhstan with assets exceeding KZT 269 billion (USD 2.2 billion) and consolidated shareholders equity of KZT 41 billion (USD 341 million). The Bank maintains its leading position in consumer lending serving its retail and corporate clients via 147 branches and service offices and over 500 points of sale. SME and consumer loans make up more than half of the Bank’s loan portfolio.<sup>20</sup>

As of 1 October 2007 the major shareholder of the Bank (96,08 % placed shares) is a banking holding CASPIAN GROUP B.V. (Amsterdam, Kingdom of Netherlands), rated with BBB by Fitch. Baring Vostok Capital Partners, investment fund and Vyacheslav Kim, Chairman of the Board of Directors of Caspian Bank, hold 51% and 49% of the shares in Caspian Group B.V. respectively. BVCP is a member of Baring Private Equity Partners International, a \$2.5 billion global private equity group with affiliates in Asia, India and CIS. Vyacheslav Kim is one of the most successful retailers in Kazakhstan. Prior to Caspian Bank he was a co-owner of retail stores network of ‘Planeta Elektroniki’ (‘Electronics Planet’) and the Chairman of the Board of Directors of JSC Caspian Investment Holding. His main target in Caspian Bank is to create the best retail bank in Central Asia.

A very important role in establishing of «JSC Bank Caspian» belongs to Tskhay Yuri, who organized purchase of the bank by joint efforts of Korean businessmen of Kazakhstan, Russia and South Korea. He used to be the Chairman of the Board of the bank. In 2002 the

<sup>20</sup> <http://www.bankcaspian.kz/>

head of the bank became Igor' Kim, a young banker from Russia, born in Kazakhstan. At present I.Kim is the owner and big shareholder of a number of banks in Russia and Kazakhstan. His total assets amount to \$1,5 billion.<sup>21</sup>

In the shareholders register of the bank as of April, 2006<sup>22</sup> the following shareholders owning 5 and more percent of shares are registered:

1. Kogay M.B.-9,87
2. Khegay L.A.-9,29
3. Li Yu.V. -8,87
4. Kim R.U. -8,29
5. Kim A.E. - 8,28
6. Tsoy T.M. -7,92
7. Kim L.S. -7,39
8. Tsoy A.Yu. - 7,35
9. Kim V.S. - 7,22
10. Tskhay Yu.A. - 5,88
11. Company «PALIXOL BUSINESS LTD» - 5,44.

The above data are sufficient to understand why “Caspian Bank” is called the Korean bank in Kazakhstan.

“SC Bank CenterCredit” is the sixth largest bank in Kazakhstan in terms of assets and total deposits, which as at 31 December 2007 equaled KZT 880,424 million and KZT 313,444 million, respectively. Operating structure of the Bank was composed of 207 branches throughout Kazakhstan, as well as four local subsidiaries concentrated in brokerage, asset management, leasing and pension collection services. In addition, BCC has a well-developed alternative channel distribution network including internet banking, 303 ATMs and a call center. Shareholders of JSC Bank CenterCredit signed share purchase agreement with Kookmin Bank of Korea, whereby the latter will acquire a 30.0% stake in Bank CenterCredit and further will achieve a controlling stake of 50.1% or more in BCC. The Chairman of the Management Board is Vladislav S. Lee, who is one of the principal shareholders of the Bank.

As it has already been mentioned, Korean businessmen managed to occupy top places in the ratings of largest companies in the spheres of construction, electronics and home appliances selling. However, the majority of Koreans remain small and medium businesses owners.

#### **4.5. Small and Medium Size Enterprises of Koryo Saram**

Kazakhstan became the first country to sign a joint development agreement

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<sup>21</sup> [http://www.fedpress.ru/lib/persons/person\\_568.html](http://www.fedpress.ru/lib/persons/person_568.html)

<sup>22</sup> [http://www.kase.kz/emitters/scan/csbn/csbnp\\_2005.pdf](http://www.kase.kz/emitters/scan/csbn/csbnp_2005.pdf).

directly with the US Government, known as the Program for Economic Development, which will fund the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) at increasing levels per year in terms of programs focused on entrepreneurial and economic development in Kazakhstan. Thereby the USAID and the Government of Kazakhstan (GOK) have now begun to jointly fund projects such as the Kazakhstan Small Business Development Project, which will provide assistance to business support providers that in turn will strengthen and build SMEs (Small and medium enterprises). And, during January 2007 Kazakhstan became the first Central Asian country to become accepted in to the GEM<sup>23</sup>

As of October 1, 2006 data of the Statistics Agency of the Republic of Kazakhstan reports 823156 small business entities are registered, yet the agency also reports that only 48739 are active enterprises. The Statistics Agency also reports 168130 legal entities and 116550 operating entities. Despite the fact that the number of small businesses during 2006 grew by 22.7% from 2005, still the number of actively operating small business entities is rather small and constitutes only 29%. In Kazakhstan, the primary reason for this lack of strong growth in entrepreneurship is a coinciding lack of knowledge and experience in creating new business. The highest entrepreneurial activity continues to be noted in the trade sector, where 341632 entities are registered with a total of 533181 employees. As of this time, there has not been a sufficient level of innovation to counter the downturn in production. The share of small business (small business and households) in the GDP of the republic amounted to 35.2% in 2006. The number of registered small business entities amounted to 739122 in 2006, 569127 of them are operating, which constitutes 77%. An analysis of regional small business within Kazakhstan indicates by the number of registered entities that Almaty is undoubtedly ahead of the rest of the country - 35 %, followed by Astana - 9.1 %, and then South-Kazakhstan region - 9.1 %. An industry analysis regarding the development of small business within Kazakhstan indicates that the trade sector still shows the highest level of entrepreneurial activity - 45.8% of entities with the number of 161 500 workers, construction follows - 13.8%, industry - 10.9 % .

The number of companies established in the former capital in early 1990s by representatives of the Korean diaspora was about one thousand. For the past years many of them have either disappeared or changed their names which makes analysis of their activities complicated. At the same time new companies were established, the total number remaining nearly the same in early 2000s.

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<sup>23</sup> Global Entrepreneurship Monitoring) Consortium, as a result of assistance provided through USAID's and GOK's Kazakhstan Small Business Development Project.

**Table 4. Private Companies and Enterprises Owned or Run by Koreans, Almaty, 1998-2003.**

Total by districts of Almaty	State institutions, societies, cooperatives of apartments owners etc.	Private companies	Heads - women	Heads - men
Alamlinskii district - <b>308</b>	45	201	62	246
Bostandykskii district - <b>246</b>	47	199	66	180
Zhetysuiskii district – <b>160</b>	16	144	39	121
Auezovskii district – <b>161</b>	23	138	37	124
Turksibskii district – <b>92</b>	19	73	16	76
Medeuskii district - <b>211</b>	26	185	52	159
<b>Total - 1178</b>	<b>176</b>	<b>940</b>	<b>272</b>	<b>906</b>

Calculations made by the author on the basis of the data of the Department of Statistics of Almaty, 2003.

Thus out of 1,178 enterprises and institutions of the state sector and private entrepreneurship Koreans mostly owned private companies – 940 or 78,8% of all leading positions. Korean women are widely represented as top managers - 272 women which comprises 23% of the total number on the whole in Kazakhstan. All labor-active population at the age of 16-60 comes to 60 thousand people or about 60% of the total number of the population. In Almaty with a big number of schoolchildren, students and retired people the share of actually employed is lower than the average national rate. Hypothetically of the 20 thousand Korean population in Almaty less than half is employed. Thus among all employed Koreans in Almaty about 12-15% occupy leading positions whereas in Kazakhstan on the whole this figure is higher - 17,3%.

Korean entrepreneurs occupy strong positions at the Kazakhstani market in the following branches: finances and banking, construction, whole sale and retail trade, production and sale of home appliances ad electronics, rendering of medical, legal, consulting services, services to the population and leisure.<sup>24</sup>

The available data of the Department of Statistics of Almaty allow us to consider distribution of Korean leaders by types of their production activities. As an example one of Almaty districts was chosen – Bostandykskii, where 246 Koreans head different state enterprises and private companies in such branches as:

- trade – 79
- commodities production -16
- architecture and construction – 26
- education – 9
- catering – 5

<sup>24</sup> Content-analysis of the newspaper “Koryo Ilbo”, 1995-2007

- publishing and advertising business – 7
- computers, repairs and software - 11
- public health – 5
- public organizations and foundations – 5
- services – 23
- leisure and entertainment – 8
- real estate business -10
- science and research activities -11
- legal services and security – 8
- tourism, transport, installation of equipment etc. – 23

The district data confirm our supposition that Koreans are noticeable in the sphere of commerce, construction, rendering of services, science and education. Probably in other districts of Almaty the results will be different but the general picture of Korean entrepreneurship is evident.

Small business has already become a rather powerful sector in the development of economy of modern Kazakhstan; however, appropriate governmental support is needed to the specificity of this sector of economy. The question Kazakhstan must grapple with what is appropriate government support, as the private sector generally creates economic growth. Today small business has a number of branches and regional associations, qualified to protect and voice the entrepreneurs concerns, provide input into developing laws and regulating acts through advisory councils. An extensive system of training and consulting in the area of small entrepreneurship has been created in the country, however, not every beginning-entrepreneur is able to succeed in these courses, therefore, the government should provide such an opportunity for them through its development institutes.

## Conclusion

Working on this research project we have realized empirically and instrumentally that the field of ethnic entrepreneurship in the Soviet Union and post Soviet Central Asia is generally in its infancy in a dual sense. On the one hand, at present there are no reliable statistical data which would prove the existence of such a phenomenon as «ethnic entrepreneurship», but on the other hand, there are no researches of domestic and foreign scholars related to the analysis of this phenomenon from our point of view, namely «ethnic entrepreneurship in the diasporic (not immigrant!) community. The Western researchers, proceeding from the theoretical and pragmatic purposes have paved the way for basic theoretical models and have described a set of concrete historical examples of immigrants business constructed on the use of ethnic social networks. However, these models and many theoretical conclusions do not fit the matrix of the Soviet and post Soviet reality on the whole and of the diasporic entrepreneurship in particular.

Thus, realization of the research project was carried out in two main directions. Firstly, collection, systematization of available data and creation by other means of new data on emergence, development and transformation of ethnic entrepreneurship of the Soviet and Central Asian diasporas. Secondly, constructive analysis of the Western historiography and working out of an independent theoretical construction. The work done for realization of this research project allows us to make the following main conclusions which are of preliminary nature.

It is necessary to consider development of ethnic entrepreneurship of a Diaspora in its inseparable connection with the concrete historical situation in the country of residence. Origin and development of ethnic entrepreneurship which is a process of transformation of some diasporic co-ethnics into entrepreneurs and occupation of certain economic niches by them, is determined by two basic groups of factors. To the group of external determinants refer legal regulation of entrepreneurship activity, competitive other-ethnic environment, ties with the historical motherland. Immanent internal premises consist in the activity of a Diaspora in creating its ethnic networks, socio-cultural and psychological peculiarities of a diasporic sub-ethos, social and economic status (image) of a Diaspora, predisposition to certain kinds of activities etc.

The nearly a century and a half long history of Koryo saram can be considered as a history of permanent territorial and social mobility and they themselves can be called eternal wanderers. Moving to the Russian Far East, resettlements from the border regions to the Northern regions of Russia, deportation to Kazakhstan and Central Asia, adaptation on the new lands, labor army mobilization, relocation of Korean kolkhozes, seasonal migration connected with *kobonji* and also urbanization of the Soviet Koreans, radical changes in the social structure – this is an incomplete list of the Koryo saram permanent movements.

During the last century and a half several generations of Koryo saram changed. At present the third and fourth generations dominate numerically, who have a rather high degree of ethnic self-consciousness. Like their ancestors modern Koreans of the Central Asia and Russia are trying to preserve their ethnic culture, customs and traditions. At the same time Koryo saram are facing the problem of acquiring their national identity which is to replace the identity of “a Soviet citizen”.

After the 1937 deportation and death of Stalin Koreans due to their hard work and yearning for success managed to turn from uneducated rural people into an urbanized ethnic group characterized by high level of education and professional qualification. Non-material achievements of Koryo saram alongside with their financial well-being acquired through *kobonji* and their ability to get on well with other surrounding ethnoses allowed Koreans to less painfully in comparison with other ethnoses adapt to the market conditions. Some positive influence on the formation and development of ethnic networks and entrepreneurship of Koryo saram was exerted by contacts established with their historical motherland – economically developed South Korea, countries of residence and ethnic organizations of Koreans.

During the Soviet period Koryo saram like other national minorities were deprived of the possibility to build and use ethnic networks, however, they were engaged in *kobonji* which was a semi-legal form of entrepreneurship and played a very important role in their ethnic consolidation and preservation of their ethnic identity.

The world practice of running business has demonstrated that the effect of an ethnic factor in modern enterprises can be traced only in small and medium businesses. In bigger organizations the influence of the ethnic factor is lower or non-existent, which is partially confirmed by our research. In Kazakhstan Koryo saram were able to adopt the specificity of entrepreneurship in the transition period from the planned economy to the market. Korean businessmen managed to determine economic niches for themselves and to achieve stable competitiveness. As compared to Kazakhstani Koreans, Koreans in other republics of the post-Soviet Central Asia found themselves in a disadvantageous position; however, they are also achieving great success in entrepreneurship within the limits of existing possibilities and legislation.

Ethnic entrepreneurship undergoes successively three stages in its development. The first stage – “ethnic consolidation” of diasporic co-ethnics is characterized by their readiness to create and maintain their ethnic networks. At this stage for representatives of a diaspora it is typical to preserve their culture and language, customs, traditions and other elements of their ethnicity. The second stage – “bloom of ethnic entrepreneurship” manifests itself in a rapid development of their so far undisclosed business potential. Ethnic entrepreneurs define spheres of their activities which are usually represented by weakly protected or free economic niches. The third stage – “stabilization” of the position of ethnic entrepreneurs, when entrepreneurship acquires the character of stable business.

For nearly ten years the economy of Kazakhstan has been undergoing the period of sustained growth, in its context entrepreneurship including what we call ethnic entrepreneurship has also been rapidly developing. Koryo saram in Kazakhstan created hundreds of small private companies based on family principle. However, those companies as opposed to similar immigrant companies on the USA provided services, produced and sold goods not only to their ethnic clientele but to the peoples of Kazakhstan. That is the set of ethnic components and participation in diasporic entrepreneurship of Koryo saram is different than that of an immigrant community entrepreneurship. During the primary period of “wild privatization”, “spontaneous capitalism”, lack of any legal basis and legal nihilism it was entrepreneurship that started to develop very quickly with all inherent risks, need to reorganize and novelties in activities. At present in Kazakhstan the entrepreneurship is gradually acquiring the features of what is called business in the West.

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## ANNEX

### Number and Distribution of Koreans in the USSR and Soviet Republics. 1939-1989

Republic	1939	1959	1970	1979	1989
<b>USSR</b>	<b>182 339</b>	<b>313735</b>	<b>357507</b>	<b>388926</b>	<b>438650</b>
Azerbaijan SSR	14	90	139	130	94
Armenian SSR	4	34	45	30	29
Byelorussian SSR	15	115	277	478	638
Georgian SSR	11	115	231	129	242
Kazakh SSR	96 453	74019	78 078	91984	103315
Kirghiz SSR	508	3622	9 404	14481	18355
Latvian SSR	-	49	166	183	248
Lithuanian SSR	-	29	75	140	119
Moldavian SSR	-	99	106	212	269
RSFSR	11 462	91445	101 369	97649	107051
Tadjikik SSR	43	2365	8 490	11179	13431
Turkmen SSR	40	1919	3 493	3105	2848
Uzbek SSR	72944	138453	151 058	163062	183140
Ukrainian SSR	845	1341	4 480	6061	8669
Estonian SSR	-	40	96	103	202

Calculated and compiled by the author on data of All-Union censuses of population 1939, 1959, 1970, 1979, 1989.

## Number and Distribution of Koreans in the Post Soviet space, 2007

**Kazakhstan - 100.000**  
**Uzbekistan - 178.000**  
**Russia - 148.000**  
**Kyrgyzstan - 30.000**  
**Ukraine - 15.000**  
**Belorussia - 3.000**  
**Tajikistan - 2.000**  
**Turkmenistan - 3000**

**In total: around 500,000**  
**Koreans in the FSU**



### Number of the Korean Population in Kazakhstan. 1999, 2004, 2005

Oblast (provinces)	Census 1999	For January, 1, 2004	For January, 1, 2005
<b>Republic of Kazakhstan</b>	<b>22 600</b>	<b>100 235</b>	<b>100 973 (+ 738)</b>
1. Akmolinskaya	1 489	1 360	1 337 (-23 )
2. Aktyubinskaya	1 383	1 358	1 349 (-9 )
3. <b>Almatinskaya*</b>	<b>17 488</b>	<b>16 669</b>	<b>16 765 (+ 96)</b>
4. <b>Atyrauskaya</b>	<b>2 600</b>	<b>2 616</b>	<b>2 636 (+ 20)</b>
5. Zapadno-Kazakhstanskaya	731	749	737 (-12 )
6. Dzhanbylskaya	14 000	13 188	13 090 (-98 )
7. <b>Karagandinskaya</b>	<b>14 097</b>	<b>13 511</b>	<b>13 518 (+ 7)</b>
8. Kostanayskaya	4 160	3 987	3 987
9. Kyzylordinskaya	8 982	8 091	7 966 (-125 )
10. <b>Mangystauskaya</b>	<b>716</b>	<b>681</b>	<b>698 (+ 17)</b>
11. Yuzhno-Kazakhstanskaya	9 780	9 997	9 917 (-80 )
12. <b>Pavlodarskaya</b>	<b>1 013</b>	<b>962</b>	<b>995 (+ 33)</b>
13. Severo-Kazakhstanskaya	534	498	495 (-3 )
14. Vostochno-Kazakhstanskaya	1 574	1 521	1 479 (-42 )
15. <b>City of Astana</b>	<b>2 028</b>	<b>3 530</b>	<b>3 657 (+ 127)</b>
16. <b>City of Almaty</b>	<b>19 090</b>	<b>21 517</b>	<b>22 347 (+ 830)</b>

\* In bold are indicated areas with the steadily growth of Koreans

### Ethnic Composition of Population in Kazakhstan, 1999

Ethnic groups	1999	1989	1999 as percentage of 1989	Ethnic group as a percentage of total population in 1999
Total population	14,953,126	16,464,464	90.82	100.0
Kazakhs	7,985,039	6,534,616	122.19	53.40
Russians	4,479,618	6,227,549	71.93	29.95
Ukrainians	547,052	896,240	61.03	3.65
Uzbeks	370,663	332,017	111.63	2.47
Germans	353,441	957,518	36.91	2.36
Tatars	248,952	327,982	75.90	1.66
Uighurs	210,339	185,301	113.51	1.40
Belarusans	111,926	182,601	61.29	0.74
Koreans	99,657	103,315	96.45	0.66
Azerbaijanis	78,295	90,083	86.91	0.52
Poles	47,297	59,956	78.88	0.31
Diingaos	36,945	30,165	122.47	0.24
Kurds	32,764	25,425	128.86	0.21
Cbecbens	31,799	49,507	64.23	0.21j
Tajiks	25,657	25,514	100.56	0.17
Bashkirs	23,224	41,847	55.49	0.15
Moldovans	19,458	33,098	58.78	0.13
Ingush	16,893	19,914	84.82	0.11
Mordva	16,147	30,036	53.75	0.10
Armenians	14,758	19,119	77.19	0.09
Greek	12,703	46,746	27.17	0.08
Kyrgyz	10,896	14,112	77.21	0.07
Bulgarians	6,915	10,426	66.32	0.04
Lezgins	4,616	13,905	33.19	0.03
Turkmen	1,729	3,846	44.95	0.01
Other ethnic groups	166,342	203,626	81.68	1.11

Source: Census of Population in Kazakhstan, 1999

### Distribution of Koreans in Kazakhstan by Occupation (elder than 15 years)

Occupied population			Percentage									
		Heads of all levels	Experts of a highest level of qualification	Experts of an middle level of qualification	Office employees	Workers of sphere of services, trade and related kinds of activity	Qualified employees in agriculture	Qualified workers of the industrial enterprises, constructions, communications, handicrafts etc.	Operators of machineries, mechanics etc	Unskilled workers		
	Total number of persons	Shares of occupied persons in the total population										
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
<b>Republic of Kazakhstans</b>	<b>29842</b>	<b>30,0</b>	<b>17,3</b>	<b>18,4</b>	<b>10,1</b>	<b>2,1</b>	<b>17,5</b>	<b>12,2</b>	<b>7,6</b>	<b>7,2</b>	<b>6,5</b>	
Akmolinskaya	487	32,7	20,3	18,1	10,9	2,7	9,7	9,9	7,0	10,3	8,4	
Aktyubinskaya	449	32,5	19,4	19,6	11,8	2,7	14,3	6,9	6,5	8,9	8,0	
Almatinskaya	5259	30,1	10,6	11,7	8,2	1,2	16,1	31,1	5,1	6,2	8,1	
Atyrauskaya	718	27,6	16,3	19,2	10,9	2,4	19,9	3,1	7,7	11,6	7,1	
Vostochno-Kazakhstanskaya	558	35,5	21,1	21,0	9,0	2,0	16,8	7,3	6,6	7,5	7,0	
Zhambylskaya	3992	28,5	9,9	15,2	9,4	2,0	22,9	21,5	5,8	7,3	5,1	
Zapadno-Kazakhstanskaya	200	27,4	20,5	20,0	10,5	0,5	15,0	9,5	9,0	9,5	5,0	
Karagandinskaya	4736	33,6	19,2	20,0	10,3	2,5	14,1	2,2	14,9	10,0	5,9	
Kostanaiskaya	1219	29,3	16,1	12,1	11,1	2,2	21,7	9,6	9,2	8,0	8,9	
Kzylordinskaya	2110	23,5	12,3	22,6	14,7	3,2	14,7	8,0	8,7	9,3	6,0	
Mangistauskaya	272	33,0	21,7	20,1	10,3	2,6	17,6	0,7	11,0	9,2	5,1	
Pavlodarskaya	368	36,6	24,7	21,7	10,9	2,4	12,5	2,2	14,4	5,4	5,2	
Severoe-Kazakhstanskaya	186	34,8	25,8	16,7	15,1	3,2	7,5	7,0	5,9	8,6	7,5	
Yuzhno-Kazakhstanskaya	2522	25,8	12,7	19,2	10,3	2,2	22,5	15,1	5,8	5,4	6,2	
City Astana	761	37,5	27,9	22,9	12,6	2,2	15,5	0,9	5,4	4,5	6,4	
City Almaty	6005	31,5	27,4	23,2	9,5	2,2	17,6	3,2	4,9	4,7	6,3	

### Distribution of the Biggest in Number Ethnic Groups in Kazakhstan by Occupation (elder than 15 years)

Occupied population			Percentage									
			Heads of all levels	Experts of a highest level of qualification	Experts of an middle level of qualification	Office employees	Workers of sphere of services, trade and related kinds of activity	Qualified employees in agriculture	Qualified workers of the industrial enterprises, constructions, communications, handicrafts etc.	Operators of machineries, mechanics etc	Unskilled workers	
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
<b>Total</b>	in	4179052	27,9	8,3	12,9	12,3	2,2	9,5	17,9	10,8	13,9	9,8
<b>Kazakhstan including:</b>												
		2125354	26,6	7,9	14,5	12,3	2,0	8,5	24,2	7,0	11,5	9,4
		1339569	29,9	9,3	12,1	13,3	2,7	10,6	6,5	16,4	16,6	10,2
		105080	29,7	7,1	7,9	11,4	2,4	8,3	13,3	15,2	21,1	11,5
		2189	32,5	27,5	33,8	10,6	1,3	8,9	1,6	5,4	5,4	4,5
		70903	28,5	9,6	12,6	12,6	2,5	11,9	7,0	15,8	15,2	10,6

Source: Census of Population in Kazakhstan, 1999

## Koreans -Deputies of the Central and Local Bodies of Kazakhstan. 2008

Name	Position	Name of body
1 Chwe Jury A.	<b>President AKK*</b>	<b>Deputy of the Senate of Parliament RK</b>
2 Tsoj V.E.	Chairman of « Social Consortium APK»	<b>Deputy Mazhilis of Parliament RK</b>
3 Nam O. Y.	Chairman of Board of directors SK " KUAT "	Almaty city Maslikhat**
4 Shin B.S.	General Girector of JSC "Almatyinzhstroy"	Almaty city Maslikhat
5 Kim A.F.	Director of Company "Bakhus-Astana "	Astana city Maslikhat
6 Kim V.F.	Director of State company "Zhetysu-Vodokanal"	Taldykorgan city Maslikhat
7 Li V.L.	Director of the agricultural Company «Shygys-Karatal»	Karatal rayon Maslikhat
8 Kotova L.E.	Director of the high school	Karatal rayon Maslikhat
9 Em L.H.	Businessman	Karasay rayon Maslikhat
10 Kan E. V.	Doctor of city hospital	Tekeli city Maslikhat
11 Sin V.A.	Businessman	Ili rayon Maslikhat
12 Kim V. Yn.	Director of the Company " HOMM "	<b>Karaganda oblast Maslikhat</b>
13 Tsaj B.A.	Secretary of Rayon Maslikhat	Abajskiy rayon Maslikhat, Karaganda oblast
14 Tsaj V.L.	Director of Zhezkazgan polytechnic college	Satpaev city Malslikhat, Karaganda oblast
15 Kan R.A.	Director of the Company "Avtotranssignal"	Taraz city Maslikhat
16 Kim S.	Businessman	Taraz city Maslikhat
17 <b>Tkhay K.V.</b>	Vice-President of Zhubanov University, <b>Chairman of Aktyubinsk branch of AKK</b>	Aktobe city Maslikhat
18 Tskhe V.A.	Director of the Company "Kaztsinkmash"	<b>East Kazakhstan oblast Maslikhat</b>
19 Pak M.V.	Businessman	Burlinskiy rayon Maslikhat, Zapadno-Kazakhstanskaya oblast
20 <b>Khan E.V.</b>	Director of the "Ecology ", <b>Chairman of Severno-Kazakhstan branch of AKK</b>	Petropavlovsk city Maslikhat

The data received from AKK, June, 2008.

\* Leaders of AKK

\*\* Maslikhat – local council of representatives (deputies)

**Composition of a *Kobonji* Brigade Operating in the Suburb of Bishkek by the End of 1990<sup>th</sup>**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Place of residence</b>	<b>Involvement of the spouse</b>	<b>Involvement of children or relatives</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Hyon Valentine	48	Bishkek	Dzhan Alla (42), retail trade in the market and helped occasionally	second son helped during vacation	Brigadier
Pak Lev	55	Bishkek	Ho Zinaida (47) years), retail trade in the market and helped occasionally.	relatives	
Ho Aexander	31	Chirchik (Uzbekistan)	It is single		Kobon is shared with mother Ho Yuliya (62 old)
Ko Bronislav	42	Dzhizak (Uzbekistan)	Elder brother of Ko Rudolf and Ko Eduard		Kobon was shared with mother Ho Lyubov
Ko Rudolf	37	Dzhizak (Uzbekistan)			Mother Ho Lyubov helped
Ko Eduard	39	Dzhizak (Uzbekistan)			Mother Ho Lyubov helped
Ho Lyusya (female)	45	Ak-Kurgan (Uzbekistan)	Divorced	Hwan Nadya (8 ), Hwan Sonya (6)	She was heavily supported by brother – Ho Alexander, mother – Ho Yuliya and sister - Ho Ljubov
Hyon Valentin	48	Ak-Kurgan (Uzbekistan)	Lim Aigul (43)	Hyon Evgeny (21), the elder son, and Hyon Alexander (14)- second son	In selling helped the senior married daughter together with her son Dmitry.
Pak Jury	25	Ak-Kurgan (Uzbekistan)	Li Antonina (25)		In selling helped sisters Hyon Valentina and Hyon Galina (67)
An Roman	47	Bishkek	Lim Pavlina (45), was selling Korean saladas in the city market and helped occasionally	Pak Stanislav (20)	The family moved to Bishkek from the Ak-Kurgan in 1993

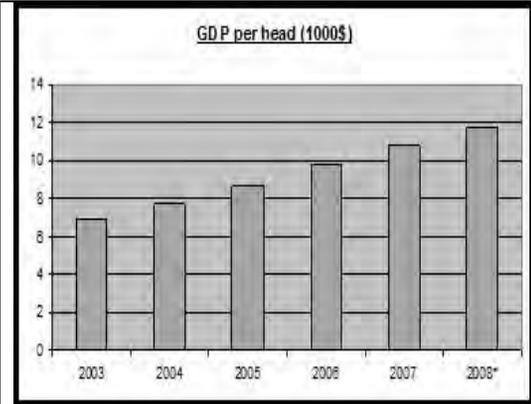
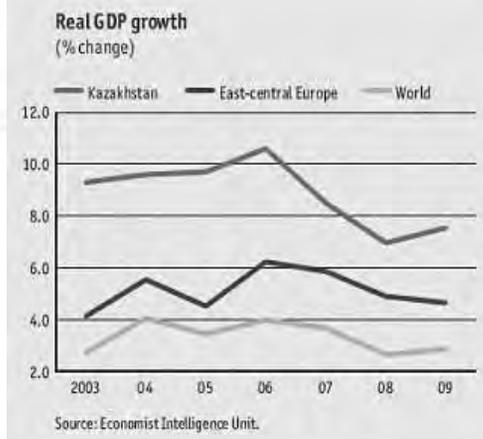
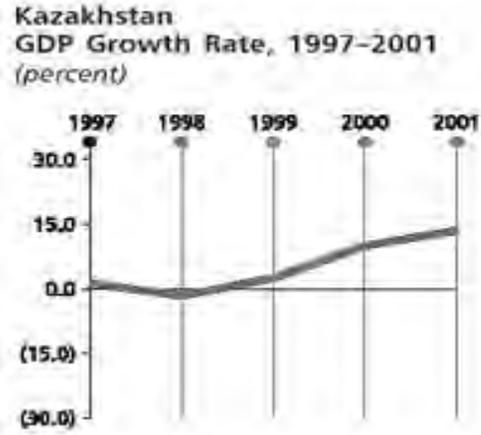
Source: Baek Thae Hyong (2000).

**Composition of Brigade, Size of *Kobon* and Horticulture Produced by a *Kobonji* Brigade near Ushtobe, 1995**

Name	Age	Place of a residence	Involvement of spouse and children	Size of kobon in hectare	The size of the plot used for horticultures		Notes
					onion	water-melon	
Hyon Vladimir	47	Almaty	Lim Larisa (38)	4.5	4.5		Brigadier and elder brother of Hyon Lyudmila
Son Ruslan	37	Ushtobe	Pak Alina (34)	3	1.5	1.5	The younger brother of the brigadier
Hyon Vyacheslav	40	Eskeldy	Kim Nonna (35)	3	3		
Hyon Lyudmila	43	Almaty	Single	4	4		The younger sister of the brigadier
Tsoi Sergey	31	Ushtobe	Lim Natalia (24)	2	2		
Kim Viktoriya	52	Taldykorgan	Married, but a single kobon holder	4	4		
Li Evgeny	26	Ushtobe	Li Alla (22)	2	2		
Kim Anatoly	42	Ushtobe	Li Valentina (43)	2	2		
Sergey	45	Ushtobe	Kim Galina (45), Son - Vladimir(15)	2	2		His father is a Russian and mother a Korean.
Kim Vyacheslav	24	Ushtobe	Kim Ella (25)	2	2		Kim Ella born in interracial marriages
Son Roman	44	Ushtobe	Kim Antonina (43)	2	2		The brother of the brigadier
Kim Vladimir	34	Ushtobe	Single	2	2		

Source: Baek Thae Hyong (2000).

### Kazakhstan GDP Growth Rate, 1997-2008.



Source: International Monetary Fund - 2008 World Economic Outlook

\*expected rate

## Uzbekistan GDP Growth Rates 1998-2006

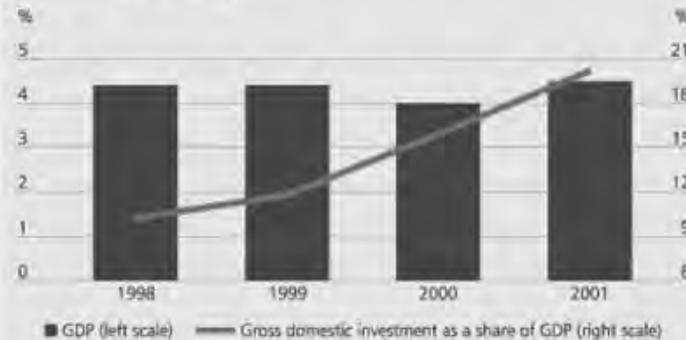
### Country Forecast Overview (3 Year)

Key Indicators	2006	2007	2008
Real GDP Growth (%)	5.60	5.90	5.60
Consumer Price Inflation (av;%)	19.80	16.00	14.50
Budget Balance (% of GDP)	.50	-.40	-.10
Current-Account Balance (% of GDP)	16.50	14.40	12.30
Exchange Rate US\$:Euro (av)	1219.83	1255.42	1302.50
Exchange Rate US\$:Euro(year-end)	1238.00	1270.00	1330.00

Year	GDP in Billions of USD PPP	% GDP Growth
2002	41.96	2.50
2003	44.65	2.68
2004	49.45	6.13
2005	54.51	5.50
2006	60.15	5.60

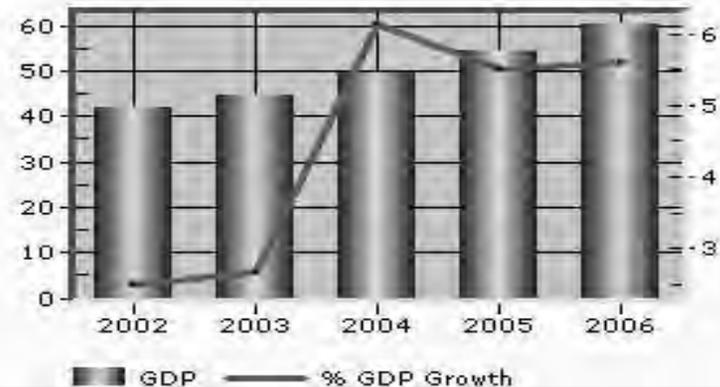
Source: EIU Country Data

FIGURE 2.26 GDP Growth and Gross Domestic Investment Ratio, Uzbekistan, 1998-2001



Sources: Government of Uzbekistan; staff estimates.

### Uzbekistan GDP PPP & GDP Growth Rates 2002 – 2006



### Data of Enterprise in the Register of the Kazakhstan Agency for Statistics\*

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Code OKPO	30937342
Name	“OPTIMUM” Company Ltd.
Date of registration	26.03.1996
Body issuing Registration	Department of JUSTICES Kokschetau oblast (province)
Registration number	420-1935-TOO
Date of renewal of registration	22.02.2001
Body of renewal of Registration	Department of JUSTICES Kokschetau oblast (province)
Number of the Certificate of renewal of Registration	3211-1902-TOO
Index	475000
Legal address	CITY OF KOKSHETAU, Gorky street, 21, Apt 17
Actual address	CITY OF KOKSHETAU, Gorky street, 21, Apt 17
Phone	5-22-95
Fax	---
Director	<b>PAK ERIK SENHOVICH</b>
Basic activity	51709 - Wholesale trade in wide assortment of the goods
Activity	Actively working
Type of the enterprise	Small Enterprise
Number of employment	< = 5
Form of Property	Enterprise without foreign investments
Legal form	Ltd.
Place of activity	Akmolinskaya oblast
Social security code	361800036579
Sector of economy	Private (individual)
Country - partner	NO

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Proved by: Saifutdinova Zh.N. (3272 42-42-72, July, 23, 2003)

\*As one sample of 1775 companies owned by Koreans in Kazakhstan

## About the author

German Kim is one of the leading experts on Korean Diasporas in Central Asia. He received his Ph.D. from Kazakh National Academy of sciences and Doctor of sciences degree from the Kazakh National University. Currently he is Director of the Center for Korean Studies and Professor in KazNU. He has written and edited a large number of books and published over hundred articles, originally in his native Russian, but translated into several languages. He presented papers in over 50 international conferences, seminars and workshops in Asia, North America and Europe. He is a member of the International Commission on Sources of the History of Korea; Korean Studies Associations in Europe, Asia and USA. Since 1996 he is the Chief-editor of the journal “Newsletter of Korean Studies in Central Asia” and is a Member of the editorial board of the journal “Acta Koreana» (Los Angeles), «Korea Forum» (New York), «International Area Review (Seoul).

German Kim got research and field work grants of the Korea Research Foundation (1991, 2001), Korea Foundation (1992, 2004), British Academy (1992), Soros Foundation (1998), Japan Museum of Anthropology in Osaka (2002), IREX (2003), Academy of Korean Studies (2005, 2006), A. Mellon Global Foundation (2006), POSCO (2007), IDE JETRO (2008) and Center for Slavic Studies Hokkaido University (2008).

As visiting Professor he was teaching special courses in the Hangeuk University of Foreign Studies (Seoul, 2004) and in the Institute of Humanities University Michigan (Ann Arbor, 2006).

10 years long he is serving for Korean community as Vice-President of the Association of Koreans in Kazakhstan (AKK); from 2000 he is a member of the NUAК (National Unification Advisory Council).

For academic, educational and social efforts he was awarded certificates of merit of KazNU, Ministry of Education and Sciences and the highest title of the “Honored worker of the Republic Kazakhstan” (2007).

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