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Master's Thesis

Research on the Formation Process of
The Ethnic Identity of
Chosŏnjok Migration Workers in
South Korea

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Abstract

Research on the Formation Process of The Ethnic Identity of Chosŏnjok Migration Workers in South Korea

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This research examines comprehensive factors that influence the formation process of the ethnic identity of Chosŏnjok migration workers in South Korea, including political, economic, and sociocultural elements in both South Korea and China. Compared to the ethnic politics of previous administrations before the establishment of People's Republic of China (PRC), new China's favorable minority policies play a significant role in shaping Chosŏnjok's national identity as Chinese citizen. However, the current political, economic and sociocultural situations of Cheseonjok in China are not optimistic. Against the backdrop of the reform and opening up, the overall economic situation in Chosŏnjok's communities has become flagging and lagged far behind other provinces in terms of the comprehensive economic competence, which to large extent hurt Chosŏnjok's ethnic pride and superiority. In addition, Chosŏnjok have not gained as much rights

and privileges as warranted by the CCP in the political sphere and because of their inextricable ethnic ties with Korean peninsula, which consequently contributes to the sentiment of being marginalized in China. Worse still, the increasing outgoing Chosŏnjok population jeopardizes ethnic education and culture. Such detrimental current situations have consolidated Chosŏnjok's another identity as an ethnic minority group in China.

The changing political and economic conditions in South Korea and China have encouraged Chosŏnjok to migrate to South Korea. The moment Chosŏnjok come to Korea, they instantly pick up the lost connection and kinship with native Koreans, and also their identity as the same Korean ethnicity with indigenous Korean. However, the labor polices enacted by South Korean government marginalized Chosŏnjok and contributed to widespread discriminations from native Koreans to Chosŏnjok migration workers. Also, life experiences of Chosŏnjok in Korea further prove that they are pushed aside by indigenous South Koreans. As a result, Chosŏnjok internalize personal dignity and superiority to Chinese national identity in response to the feeling of being discriminated and marginalized in South Korea. However, their identity is not coherent and consistent. They always utilize their Korean ethnic identity when they bargain with South Korean government for better treatment in South Korea.

Key Words: Chosŏnjok, Ethnic Identity, China's ethnic politics, labor polices in South Korea

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Introduction

Jin Zhengyu is a 62-year-old Chosŏnjok woman who is currently working as a babysitter in South Korea. She once worked in a state owned enterprise in Tonghua city, Jilin Province in China before migrating to Korea. With her relative's help, she entered Korea in 1997, leaving her husband and two children in China and worked as illegal migration worker since then. She started her first job working as a domestic worker by the introduction of one of her middle school alumni, who came to Korea one year ahead of her. Her expectation and fantasy towards Korean life was almost fulfilled at the beginning as she received the first salary that was nearly 1.2 million Korean won, which could not only meet her needs, but also satisfy her goal of supporting her family and her children's tuition in China. As time went by, however, her alleged "Korean dream" was completely broken as she was excessively discriminated and marginalized by fellow Korean workers. Worse still, her salary has occasionally been deducted and delayed by the employer. She dare not request for money for the fear that the employer would accuse her of illegal status in Korea. She quit her first job one year later with three months' salary deducted, no mentioning else bonus.

The snapshot of Jin's experiences reflects other Chosŏnjok migration workers' lives in Korea. It brings up many issues that are relevant to this thesis. First of all, why would those Chosŏnjok choose to migrate to Korea rather than stay in China? As the same Korean ethnicity who shares bloodlines with the native Korean, how

do Chosŏnjok feel when treated as a foreigner after coming to Korea? Ultimately, how do they negotiate national and ethnic identities in the context of migration? What kind of external factors can possibly influence the formation process of their ethnic identity? In the case stated above, before migrating to Korea, Jin possesses dual ethnic identity: identity as Chinese citizenship and identity as a Chinese ethnic minority—Chosŏnjok. However, along with the normalization of bilateral relationships between South Korea and China, Jin conceives that South Korea is a relatively prosperous. She comes to realize that she shares the same bloodline with indigenous South Koreans since her grandparents have once lived on Korean peninsula. As a result, She made up her mind to come to Korea to make money in order to support her family. Under such circumstance, Jin’s another identity—as Korean ethnicity—is brought onto the agenda.

Chosŏnjok ¹ refers to an ethnic minority in China who possesses Chinese citizenship but still maintain ethnic ties with the Korean peninsula from which their ancestors had emigrated. Beginning from the 1980s, especially after the normalization of diplomatic relationships between Korea and China in 1992, an increasing influx of Chosŏnjok have migrated to South Korea to earn money as unskilled workers. By February 2015, the number of migrant Chosŏnjok in South Korea is estimated to have reached 595,810². This population has received increasing attention for its ethnic, economic and political influences both in China

¹ They are called “Chosŏnjok” in South Korea and “Chaoxianzu” in China. Chosŏnjok or Chaoxianzu form one of the 56 ethnicities officially recognized by the Chinese government.

² *Ministry of Justice of Republic of Korea*, 2015, pp. 10, http://www.moj.go.kr/doc_html/attach/imm/f2015//20150325220972_4_1.hwp.files/Section1.html (accessed: March 25th, 2015)

and in South Korea. On the one hand, the increasing population of outgoing Chosŏnjok in China further precipitates the down turn of local economic development and it has trapped the national education into dilemma. On the other hand, the rapidly growing figures of incoming Chosŏnjok migration workers burdens labor market in Korea, therefore intensifying social contradictories. Unfortunately, however, this population has been insufficient studied due to latent illegal Chosŏnjok migrants who have not yet registered.

Being aware of critical significance of the study for Chosŏnjok, this research intends to seek factors that influence the formation process of the ethnic identity of Chosŏnjok migration workers in Korea in the context of transnational migration, comprising of political economic, and sociocultural aspects both in Korea and China. The concrete research questions are as follows. First of all, how do Chinese ethnic politics help shape Chosŏnjok's ethnic identity; and what kind of impact does current political economic and sociocultural situation exert on Chosŏnjok's ethnic identity? Secondly, what are the policies that South Korean government enacted in response to massive return Chosŏnjok migrants; and how do those policies affect Chosŏnjok's ethnic identity?

1. Literature Review

Previous researches (Noh 2001; Piao 2002; Seol & Skrentny 2009) have addressed Chosŏnjok issues to examine Korean nationalism and immigration policy in Korea. Seol & Skrentny in their article shows how South Korea, a strong ethnic nation, has managed an influx of ethnic Chosŏnjok immigrants. They further illustrate that Korea has recognized these immigrants as members of the Korean nation but has assigned them a subaltern position. They have elaborated Korean legal policies toward Chosŏnjok yet failed to introduce such political economic factors' influence toward ethnic identity of Chosŏnjok. Noh introduces the process of Chosŏnjok immigration, settlement and adaptation, through which she was able to examine how social and cultural factors affect ethnic identity of Chosŏnjok migration workers in Korea.

Lee (2001) has investigated Chosŏnjok experiences in Korea in a relatively comprehensive and constructive way. She combines both political economic and sociocultural perspectives to analyze how those factors influence the ethnic identity of Chosŏnjok. According to her, the formation of the Chosŏnjok ethnic identity is closely related to the Chinese policy of ethnic groups in China as well as Japanese colonial policy of Korean emigration into the northeast area of China. She pays attention to the dual sense of alienation of the Chosŏnjok, which in her work refers to that Chosŏnjok are alienated in China; while in South Korea, they are also marginalized. However, some of her arguments remain contentious. For example, the extent to which Chosŏnjok are alienated by Chinese Han ethnicity she mentions

are prone to be exaggerated based on my field research and interviews with local Chosŏnjok. Also her perspective that Japanese colonial policy of Korean emigration has great importance while shaping Chosŏnjok identity is denied by interviewees I encountered.

Besides the aforementioned studies, academic researches on Chosŏnjok migration workers in the English language are woefully scant. As we notice that the migrant Chosŏnjok is not unique among contemporary transnational migrants despite their specific ethnic connection with the receiving country enabling them to be distinctive in certain aspect. Japanese Brazilians provide some additional and comparable example that can help to comprehend Chosŏnjok migration workers better.

For example, Tsuda (2003) in his book skillfully presents the contemporary issues of return migration and ethnicity through the study of Japanese-Brazilians living in Japan as temporary migrant workers. Most of the migrants initially go to Japan intending to work only for a short period of time, with plans to return to Brazil as soon as they achieve their savings targets. However, a trend has developed in which temporary sojourners from Brazil have turned into long-term or permanent immigrant settlers in Japan because of both the severe economic conditions in Brazil and a crippling shortage in the supply of unskilled workers for the small and medium-sized industries in Japan.

The important points in this volume are well researched and clearly explained. According to Tsuda, most of the 280,000 Japanese-Brazilians who emigrated to Japan belong to the second and third generations of Japanese immigrants to Brazil

and have become, to varying degrees, culturally and educationally Brazilianized. Therefore, going back to Japan to work is a “return migration” or “reverse migration” for them, in the sense that they are returning to their ancestral ethnic homeland. In this regard, their ethnic identity situation is somehow equivalent to Chosŏnjok who are working as migration workers in Korean society.

The native-born Japanese, however, consider the immigrants’ knowledge of the language and culture of Japan inadequate, and as a result they are rejected and treated as foreigners, even though they are biologically Japanese. What makes Japanese-Brazilians even more like Chosŏnjok is that immigrants of Japanese ethnicity are treated in many ways like other minority immigrants to Japan, despite their ancestral ties and presumed ethnic similarities with the host populace. The Japanese-Brazilians do feel a strong ethnic affinity with Japan and find their ethnic and socio-economic marginalization to be quite unexpected and disorienting. Moreover, they are constantly frustrated and embarrassed as they fail to act and speak in a presumed Japanese manner. As a result, they begin to reflect on their initially perceived Japanese and renew their Brazilian identity.

However, the Japanese-Brazilians do not completely resemble Chosŏnjok in the sense that, despite their not being accepted as real Japanese, it is remarkable that Japanese-Brazilian workers in Japan have not been viewed as problematic from economic, political and social standpoints.

2. Theoretical Framework

2.1 Conceptualization of Ethnic Identity

Ethnicity is defined by Yang (2000: 24) as an affiliation or identification with an ethnic group. Other synonyms of ethnicity, according to Yang (2000:24), are relatively ethnic group membership, ethnic affiliation, and ethnic identity. In light of his analysis, on the one hand, ethnicity is subjective since it is the product of the human mind and human sentiments. It is a matter of identification or a sense of belonging to a particular ethnic group. On the other hand, ethnicity is objective in the sense that it has to be based on some objective characteristics and is shaped by social forces and power relations.

Recently, literatures from the social constructionist school have formed a common consensus that ethnicity and ethnic identity is a dynamic, situational, and contingent concept (Nagel 1994; Pakh 2008). As Nagel addresses in her 1994 paper on ethnic identity and culture:

Ethnic identity, then, is the result of a dialectical process involving internal and external opinions and processes, as well as the individual's self-identification and outsiders' ethnic designations—i.e. what you think your ethnic is, versus what they think your ethnicity is. Since ethnicity changes situationally, the individual carries a portfolio of ethnic identities that are more or less salient in various situations and vis-à-vis various audiences. As audiences change, the socially defined array of ethnic choices open to the individual changes (Nagel 1994: 161).

Ethnic identity can therefore, be perceived as an ongoing negotiation between the ethnic agent and other members of society. One consequence of this is that a single agent may carry multiple identity options; different ethnic identities come to the forefront depending upon the particular social setting (Pahk 2008: 45). In other word, ethnic identity is not coherent or consistent. In light of such analysis, Chosŏnjok are proved to possess different ethnic identities, including the identity as Chinese citizen, the identity as one of ethnic minorities in China, and the identity as Korean ethnicity. Simultaneously, such different ethnic identities' formation of Chosŏnjok largely depends on comprehensive external factors. Also, they are likely to negotiate their ethnic identities due to different social settings as well. As Nagel conceptualized this negotiation as a process of boundary production and maintenance:

Ethnic identity is most closely associated with boundaries. Ethnic boundaries determine who is a member and who is not and designate which ethnic categories are available for individual identification at a particular time and place. Debates over the placement of ethnic boundaries and social worth of ethnic groups are central mechanisms in ethnic construction (Nagel 1994: 162).

This boundary production necessarily entails the formation of ethnic groups, as boundaries determine who is and who is not a member (Pahk 2008). The objective of ethnic cultural production is intended to bestow connotation to such boundaries—to classify what it is that members of the group share:

Culture dictates the appropriate and inappropriate content of a particular

ethnicity and designates the language, religion, belief system, art, music, dress, traditions, and life-ways that constitute an authentic ethnicity. While the construction of ethnic boundaries is very much a saga of structure an external forces shaping ethnic options, the construction of culture is more a tale of human agency and internal group processes of cultural preservation, renewal, and innovation (Nagel 1994:161).

Even though Chosŏnjok are known as one of the ethnic minorities in China, they have been living in compact community for a long time. Among Chosŏnjok communities, they share the same culture, customs and languages, which differentiates them from other ethnic groups in China. Thus, the ethnic actor carries with them a “portfolio” of ethnic identity options that become salient with respect to different audiences; each identity entails communal commitment, obligations, and privileges which the agent must respect and participate in (Nagel 1994: 162). This set boundaries and communities, of expectations and privileges can be thought of as the overarching structure of a society providing the context that gives ethnic choices and actions meaning (Pahk 2008: 45).

2.2 Ethnic Identity Formation

In the literature of ethnic identity formation/construction, three types of explanation have been offered: primordialism, structuralism, and constructionism (Esman, 1994; Le Vine, 1997).

Primordialism, variously known as essentialism, suggests that ethnic identity is

naturally born and essentially made up of an objectively observable core, be it in the form of racial, linguistic, religious, or cultural characteristics. There are three main arguments regarding primordialist school. First of all, ethnicity is an ascribed identity or assigned status, something inherited from one's ancestors (Yang 2000: 28). For instance, if your ancestors are Koreans, then you are also Koreans because you inherit physical and cultural characteristics from them. Second, ethnic boundaries are fixed and immutable (Yang 2000: 28). For example, if you were born Korean, you would be forever Korean, and you could not change your membership to another group (Yang 2000: 29). Finally, common ancestry determines ethnicity (Yang 2000: 29). In other words, people are considered to be members of the ethnic group because they share same biological and common cultural origins and traits. It is an undeniable fact that ethnicity entails common origins and traits like common ancestry or common culture; however, how important are common origins in determining ethnic affiliation, and is ethnicity completely ascribed? Primordialists are prone to offer affirmative answers to these questions, while structuralists and constructionists dissent.

Structuralism, or instrumentalism, would posit that ethnic identity is the result of mobilization by some psychologically deprived elites who have perceived discrepancies in the distribution of political power, economic resources, and/or social status (Yang 2000: 29). Indeed, the instrumentalist school views ethnicity as a strategic tool or an instrument for gaining resources, bluntly put, ethnicity exists and persists because it is useful (Yang 2000: 30). The functional advantages of

ethnicity range from “the moral and material support provided by ethnic networks to political gains made through ethnic bloc voting ” (Portes and Bach 1985: 115). One recent formulation of instrumentalism—rational choice theory may better explain such situation. As a social theory, rational choice theory assumes that people act to promote their socioeconomic positions by minimizing the costs of, and maximizing the potential benefits of, their actions (Yang 2000: 31). When applied to ethnic identity, rational choice theory argues that ethnic affiliation largely relies on the rational calculation of the benefits and costs of ethnic association. Therefore, ethnicity is believed to be an option. People select one ethnicity over another or avoid association with an ethnic group because of the utility or cost of such affiliation (Yang 2000: 31). Some people prefer an ethnic affiliation because it is favorable to them, while the others hide or deny an ethnic identity because it may contribute to hostility to them.

Constructionism proposes three major perspectives: first of all, ethnicity is a socially constructed identity, something that is created; second, ethnic boundaries are flexible or changeable and ethnicity is dynamic; third, ethnic affiliation or identification is determined or constructed by society, and ethnicity is a reaction to changing social environment (Yang 2000: 31). The constructionists place importance on external factors including political, economic and sociocultural elements in ethnic construction and formation; it also pinpoints historical and structural forces that shape and form ethnicity; and it better demonstrate the volatility of ethnicity.

When it comes to the research on formation process of Chosŏnjok's ethnic identity, relying on the either logic of aforementioned three schools is not enough. Rather, an integration of valuable ideas is possible and worthwhile. Yang (2000: 32) argues that ethnicity is socially constructed partly on the basis of ancestry or presumed ancestry and more importantly by society, that the interests of ethnic groups also partly determine ethnic affiliation, and that ethnic boundaries are relatively stable but undergo from time to time. This argument contains four specific propositions:

Proposition 1. Ethnicity is partly ascribed because it is partly based on ancestry or presumed ancestry that normally carries certain physical or cultural characteristics and national or territorial origins.

Proposition 2. Ethnicity is largely constructed by society.

Proposition 3. Costs and benefits associated with ethnic group memberships partly determine ethnic affiliation or identification.

Proposition 4. Ethnic boundaries are relatively stable, but they can change from time to time, especially when existing ethnic categories are challenged. (Yang 2000: 32)

In sum, theories of ethnic identity formation address how ethnicities are created and constructed. Primordialism, structuralism, constructionism are the three existing mechanisms that are able to answer the question. Primordialism mainly focuses on the ascription of ethnicity, affirmative ethnic boundaries, and the

significance of biological and ancestral inheritance. Instrumentalism perceives ethnicity as a tool for advancing self-interest and as a rational choice to minimize social costs and maximize socioeconomic benefits. Constructionism emphasizes the social construction of ethnicity, flexible ethnic boundaries, and the importance of social environment. When it comes to the research on formation process of Chosŏnjok's ethnic identity, a clever combination of three schools is necessary. Considering the complexity of Chosŏnjok's ethnic identity, a comprehensive theorization built upon the basis of the social construction of ethnicity and perceiving social structure, ancestry, and the utility and cost of ethnic affiliation as critical factors contributing to the construction of ethnicity is imperative.

2.3 Cross-border Ethnicity

Cross-border ethnic group is demonstrated as a minority group whose previous concentrated area is separated by modern state borders (Jin 2006: 20). Since the 1990s, academic discussions prominently concentrated on the nature of relationship between cross-border ethnic groups with the China and also their ethnic country. Chinese scholars perceive that cross-border ethnicity belongs to cultural and historical realm but not political connotations. In light of such analysis, it does not necessarily contradict national identity as Chinese citizen.

Wang and Du argue that cross border ethnicity is an ethnographic concept, not a political one (Wang and Du, 2000). Zhu (2000: 14) uses the terminology "people across boundaries" in lieu of "cross-border ethnicity" to refer to such minority groups in China. From his point of view, Chosŏnjok and indigenous Koreans do

not constitute a nationality or even an ethnic group; they are simply “people” across the state border that for historical reasons, are culturally similar (Zhu, 2000: 14). He further illustrates that cultural similarities with ethnic country cannot be a root of continual political identification with it (Zhu, 2000: 15).

Academic discussions over cross-border ethnicities are prone to regulate the relationship between the national and ethnic identities of those groups. China consequently is the only state that cross-border ethnicities shall anchor their political national identity, while the ethnic identities embodied in cultural and ethnic affinity only belong to cultural realm. Meanwhile, national consciousness based on the political identification with the Chinese state and nation ought to predominant cultural ethnic identity. Some other scholars address that regardless of origin and culture, all ethnic minority groups in China belong to the “Chinese Nation” (*Zhonghua minzu*). They further argue that ethnic identity is a cultural affiliation that does not contradict political identification with the Chinese nation and state (Wang and Du, 2000). Those arguments make it possible for the coexistence of their national and ethnic identities for cross-border ethnicities.

3. Research Methodology

Before choosing and applying research methods, the first and foremost thing is to identify the research question of the thesis. As mentioned about, this thesis is intended to discover how the political and economic, and sociocultural factors in

Korea and China influence the formation process of the ethnic identity of Chosŏnjok migration workers in Korea. Since qualitative research is especially effective in obtaining culturally specific information about the values, opinions, behaviors, and social contexts of particular populations. Also, qualitative methods are effective in identifying intangible factors, such as social norms, socioeconomic status, gender roles, ethnicity, and religion, whose role in the research issue may not be readily conspicuous (Mack, Natasha, et al 2005: 10). Hence, this thesis is fundamentally conducted in qualitative research methodology.

Next, it is important to select the samples in a systematic way so as to ensure the credibility of the thesis. The study's research objectives and characteristics of the study population (such as size and diversity) determine which and how many people to select (Mack, Natasha, et al 2005: 11). In addition, samples in qualitative research are usually purposive. This means participants are selected because they are likely to generate useful data for the project. To ensure that this sample is credible, and covers the main groups you are interested in, one strategy is a maximum variation sample. This involves selecting key demographic variables that are likely to have an impact on the participants' view of the topic. We can then create a sampling 'grid' and recruit groups that reflect various combinations of variables. For example: age (adolescents, adults, elderly); male/female; low income/high income; rural/urban, etc. My research has intensively focused on the migration experiences of various Chosŏnjok who are currently working as

migration workers in Korea, including both low and high skilled labors.³ There are eleven informants included in my research, among whom six are over forty years old and five are in their late 20s and early 30s. The wide range of age is from 28 to 60 years old, among whom six are male and five are female. The income level varies from person to person. Because of the high mobility of low skilled labors, there is no certain figure of annual income for this group of people. The high skilled labors are likely to enjoy a decent salary, which approximately fluctuates from 35,000,000 to 70,000,000 Korean dollars annually. However, it is fairly easy to tell the huge income disparity between the two groups of people. As for other variables, I found that whether Chosŏnjok had experiences receiving education in Chosŏnjok schools had a great impact on their formation process of the ethnic identity. Nearly all of the elder generation went to Chosŏnjok schools, while majority of younger generation went to ordinary schools. Among five of my young informants, two went to Chosŏnjok ethnicity school and three went to ordinary school.

This research selected this group of people as interviewees based on the following information. To begin with, it is discovered from the statistical data that the middle-aged migrants comprise the majority of the Chosŏnjok in Korea. According to the Ministry of Labor of Republic of Korea (ROK) in 2013, about 60 percent female Chosŏnjok workers were over forties.⁴ Considering that many middle-aged workers including Chosŏnjok have experienced main political

³ Low skilled labors refer to those Chosŏnjok who are doing “3D” (Dirty, Difficult and Dangerous), while high skilled labors refer to those who possess bachelor degree equivalent or above and work in relatively decent working conditions.

⁴ Ministry of labor of Republic of Korea (ROK), 2012, <http://www.moel.go.kr/english/pas/pasMajor.jsp> (accessed: March 31, 2015)

incidents in China such as Cultural Revolution, Reform and Open Policy and State-Owned Enterprises reform; also they are one of the earliest coven of migration workers coming to Korea who have experienced arduous working conditions and hostile policies by Korean government, a research on this population is empirically important in the sense that their ethnic identity is expected to be influenced by the political economic factors in both Korea and China. Besides low skilled migration workers, an increasing population of high skilled Chosŏnjok endeavors to strive for working positions after graduation in Korea, and some of them have already worked in Korea for years. The motivation to observe this group of people is due to two reasons. First of all, it is found out that the majority of existing researches on the migrant Chosŏnjok relatively focus on low skilled labors, neglecting the growing population of young generation and their contribution to the society. Secondly, as new generation of Chosŏnjok who have been receiving China's patriotism education and to great extent influenced by ethnic Han, they are suffering identity crisis after migrating to Korea and benefiting from favorable policies towards high skilled Korean diaspora released by Korean government. Thus, combining two groups of Chosŏnjok experiences is of great significance in order to study Chosŏnjok ethnic identity more comprehensively.

Qualitative research methods in this thesis consist of in-depth interview (life histories mostly) and participant observation. Participant observation is appropriate for collecting data on naturally occurring behaviors in their usual context, while in-depth interviews are optimal for collecting data on individuals' personal histories, perspectives, and experiences, particularly when sensitive topics are being explored

(Jin 2006: 45). They will tell you how much things have changed, evolved over decades and how broader social changes has affected the lives of individuals. Focus groups are effective in eliciting data on the cultural norms of a group and in generating broad overviews of the issues of concern to the cultural groups or subgroups represented (Mack, Natasha, et al 2005: 15).

This research is dedicated to revealing the formation process of Chosŏnjok ethnic identity and in-depth interview forms the core of the research method. I utilized the conventional way of conducting fieldwork: that is entering the lives of Chosŏnjok through a cultural mediator. According to Corbetta, a cultural mediator is a prestigious and credible member of a social group, to whom you can appeal in order to legitimate your presence and observation (Corbetta, 2003: 47). One of my Chosŏnjok friend who is now studying in Department of Medicine, Seoul National University, her parents and her other relatives happen to be plausible interviewees that I have been looking for. In this regard, the friend played the cultural mediator role. She invited her parents and one of her other relatives who is working as a hotelkeeper to her house so that I could conduct the interview at her place. I interviewed them one by one in case that some of their opinions and feelings may be influenced by others. The duration of the each talk varies from one and a half hours to two hours for the sake that three of them are in their sixties, and it takes long to recall and record their life histories.

Fieldwork requires researchers to negotiate and reflect on their own identity because it influences the nature of relationship they can build with researches and thus affects the quality of information collected (Snow et al 1986; Marcus 1995;

Tsuda 2003). My identity of a Seoul National University student plays an important part in the fieldwork when interviewing younger Chosŏnjok generation who has previously received their education in Seoul National University as well. Introducing myself as a school alumni and classifying the fact that even though I am not a Chosŏnjok myself, I have been learning Korean language for over 6 years and I also possess a passion towards the ethnicity, in most circumstances, I encountered no problems in approaching and building rapport with my informants. Moreover, as younger generation, we share plenty of similarities with each other since we were born and grew up in China at almost the same episode, which is rather expedient during the interview process.

In the second round of data collection, I went to restaurants in *Daerim* (Kimbap chonkuk, Saemaeul restaurant, etc.) where Chosŏnjok migration workers concentrated in Korea. From epistemological perspective, participant observation enables researchers to understand situations of others using empathy (Dennis 1993: 18). In the fieldwork, I tried to immerse myself into the lives of the migrant Chosŏnjok and understand their sentiments, worries and expectations. Such observation enables me to see the world through the eyes of the Chosŏnjok and study them in their natural settings.

Following the conventional way of processing data from observation, I recorded and took field notes while I was listening to their narratives after getting their permissions. Throughout data analysis and thesis writing, I struggled to elicit dominant themes of the everyday practices of the migrant Chosŏnjok. As a matter of fact, it is difficult or impossible to make generalizations about group experiences

because of the richness of individual practices, but overemphasis on individual particularities at the expense of generalization makes researchers unable to elicit dominant theme of a group experience (Tsuda 2003: 43). To resolve this problem, I follow Tsuda's strategy that uses specific individual experiences and perception to illustrate group ones while quantitative words such as "majority", "many", "considerable number of" serve to indicate the degree of generalization.

4. Thesis Overview

This thesis contains six parts. Chapter two intends to reveal the immigration history of Koreans to China, the ethnic politics in China, and current economic, political and sociocultural situations of Chosŏnjok in China. Accordingly, Koreans started to immigrate to China from the middle 19th century in order to seek lands in China to make a living. Before the establishment of People's Republic of China (PRC), ethnic politics toward Korean immigrants were different distinct in styles yet remained the same tenet, which was either hostile to them or expel them out of China. The new born PRC and Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has helped to integrate Korean immigrants into Chinese nation state through adopting various favorable minority politics that approach all ethnic minorities in China on equal footings. However, the current situations of Chosŏnjok are not optimistic. Against the backdrop of the reform and opening up, the overall economic situation in Northeast China has become flagging and lagged far behind other provinces in terms of the comprehensive economic competence. In addition, Chosŏnjok have

not gained as much rights and privileges as warranted by the CCP in the political sphere and because of their inextricable ethnic ties with Korean peninsula, the Chinese state always questions their fidelity to CCP. Worse still, the increasing outgoing Chosŏnjok population jeopardizes ethnic education and culture.

After examining political, economic, sociocultural dynamics in China, chapter three is designed to demonstrate such collective dynamics' impact on the formation process of Chosŏnjok's ethnic identity. As a matter of fact, before Chosŏnjok migrate to South Korea, they have already possessed dual identities: national identity as Chinese citizen and ethnic minority identity as Chosŏnjok. Next, chapter three also introduces the motivation that Chosŏnjok decided to migrate to South Korea. The changing political and economic conditions in South Korea and China have encouraged Chosŏnjok to migrate to South Korea.

Chapter four utilizes ethnic return migration theory to examine legal and social dimensions of Korean hierarchical nationhood, including Korean labor policies on foreign workers and native Koreans' attitude towards Chosŏnjok in South Korea. While introducing Korean labor policies, the research manifests that the labor policies released by South Korean government marginalized Chosŏnjok and contributed to widespread discriminations from native Koreans to Chosŏnjok migration workers. Also, the life experiences of Chosŏnjok in Korea further prove that they are pushed aside by indigenous South Koreans.

Confronting with such hostile attitudes from Korean government and Korean natives, Chapter five illustrates how Chosŏnjok migration workers negotiate their national and ethnic identity. Chosŏnjok internalize personal dignity and superiority

to Chinese national identity in response to the feeling of being discriminated and marginalized in South Korea. However, their identity is not coherent and consistent. They always utilize their Korean ethnic identity when they bargain with South Korean government for better treatment in South Korea.

Chapter six is the conclusion part. I summarize core contents and findings of this research and propose the main contribution of this study.

Chapter Two

Immigration and Ethnic Politics In China

1. Ethnic Politic before People's Republic of China (PRC)

Unlike other nationalities in China, Chosŏnjok (*chaoxianzu*) is a cross-border minority that has inextricable ethnic ties with peninsular Koreans (Jin 2006: 43). They had subsequently immigrated to China from Korea peninsular and thus formed one of the latest ethnic minorities in China. It remains contentious about the exact time Chosŏnjok started immigration. But there is no doubt that Chosŏnjok who settled down in the Northeast part of China nowadays mainly immigrated to China after middle 19th century (Jin 2006: 44). There were three culminations of Chosŏnjok immigration in history: the first time was in the late 1860s, the end of Qing dynasty. The second tide was in the 1910s, right after Japan's annexation to Korea; the third time was *Manchuria* period.

Due to the relatively lax immigration policies and an unprecedented disaster and famine on Korean peninsula, scattered and seasonal immigration has transformed into colossal scales of immigration at the end of Qing dynasty. The migration was further accelerated after 1910 when Korea was annexed by Japan as the result of a series of new policies promulgated by Japan to plunder natural resources of the Korea peninsula. Substantial numbers of Korean patriots and intellectuals fled to Manchuria to continue their fight against Japanese imperialism. (Li 2006: 57).

Before the establishment of PRC, ethnic politics toward Korean immigrants were different in styles yet remained the same tenet, which was hostile to them and forced them to assimilate with the majorities (Jin 2006: 46). Qing dynasty enacted assimilation policy, through which Korean immigrants were commanded to change costumes and cut hairs. During that time, Korean immigrations were just in small scale and groups (Li 2006: 57). By and large, Korean immigration to China was mainly an outcome of Japanese imperialism (Jin 2006: 44). The context of migration had shaped the political fate of Korean in much of the early twentieth century. At the early stage, Koreans in China were either perceived as pro-Japanese or anti-Japanese, and the warlord government⁵ in China regarded Koreans as the root of its conflicts with the Japanese imperialism. Gradually, Koreans in China were utilized as the unfortunate, though not always innocent, pawns in political conflicts between China and Japan. The initial conflicts revolved around which country did Koreans in China belong. At the same time as Japan strove to expand its forces in China with the excuse of protecting its alleged citizens, Koreans, the warlord government rejected Japanese demand on the ground of state sovereignty since some Koreans had already obtained Chinese citizenship. The advent of conflicts happened in 1907 when Japanese troops invaded Longjing village in the name of guaranteeing the security of Koreans (Liu 1990: 23). Paradoxically, instead of fighting against Japan, the warlord government and ordinary Chinese

⁵ Warlord government, namely, Fengtian government, was led by Zhang Zuolin and his son Zhang Xueliang, who recognized the legitimacy of Nanjing government by Jiang Jieshi, but was the real power in Manchuria during warlord period.

abreacted their anger on Koreans, who in fact were also victims of the Japanese invasion. Koreans in China were once depreciatingly called “*erguizi*”; a term means that they conspired with Japanese to invade China (Liu 1990: 23).

A second clash between the warlord government and Japan was triggered by the pervasive rebellion rendered by Koreans in China and their effort to mobilize anti-Japanese demonstrations (Jin 2006: 44). In 1925, the warlord government was obliged by Japan to issue an official confirmation of a treaty. The treaty demonstrates that it was the warlord government’s accountability to detain and deliver to Japan any armed and rebellious Koreans who were found in China (Jin 2006: 45). To practically resolve political divergences with Japan, the warlord government further promulgated anti-Korean laws to either dislodge or assimilate Koreans in China. In light of the laws, Koreans in Dongbiandao were obliged to leave instantly. In Jilin and Changchun, the contractual privileges of Koreans were dispossessed. Consequently, Korean immigrants would find their survival intimidated once their land contracts invalid. Moreover, in Jilin, Koreans were required to procure Chinese citizenships within six months (Li 2006: 57). These laws had stretched into sociocultural and educational realms in order to assimilate Koreans completely. It was required that Koreans should change their costumes and furniture to compliance with Chinese style, and they ought to accept Chinese language and textbooks in their education. Encountered increasingly hostile treatment in China, Korean representatives petitioned to the warlord government for ethnic rights. Nevertheless, this action turned out to be futile since these anti-

Korean laws remained to be the backbone of policies on Korean immigrants in China until 1931 when Japan intruded Manchuria (Li 2006: 58).

The Manchuria state founded by Japan enacted new policies regarding ethnic issues, which had fortified and institutionalized ethnic hierarchy. For example, Japan defined Japanese as the first class nationality, whose members were bestowed to consume rice (*dami*); Korean immigrants as the second-class nationality could eat millet (*xiao mi*); and Chinese as the third class nationality who could only have sorghum rice (*gaoliangmi*) (Li 2006: 58).

After the Second World War, Manchuria was consigned to *Guomindang* (Nationalist Party), which influenced by Han chauvinism had continued to enact anti-Korean policies. It renounced Koreans' legal status in China and expropriated Korean peasants' land ownership (Li 2006: 58). *Guomindang* government had a suspicion that Koreans were either communists or Japanese spies, thus they were subject to fallacious persecution and interrogation. The incipient Korean ethnic economy was also jeopardized by recurrent crackdowns from the *Guomindang*. Statistically, over one thousand Korean stores were shut down and properties sequestrated within merely six months from April to September in 1946 (Li 2006: 58).

The situation of the Korean immigrants before 1949 was acknowledged to be delicate and precarious. Except Manchuria state, both the warlord government and the *Guomindang* had promulgated anti-Korean policies, which intended to either expel or assimilate Korean immigrants. As a result, some Koreans, especially Korean compatriots, anxiously anticipated to return to the Korea peninsula. The

destiny of Korean immigrants in China in this period was fraught with uncertainties and agonies.

2. Ethnic Minority Policy of People's Republic of China (PRC)

After the foundation of People's Republic of China (PRC), the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) has helped to integrate Korean immigrants into Chinese nation state through adopting ethnic minority policies that approach all minority ethnics in China on equal footings (Jin 2006: 45). The legislation of ethnic minority policy helped Chosŏnjok formed their ethnic identities: one is the identity as Chinese citizen; the other is the identity as one Chinese ethnic minority—Chosŏnjok. CCP's achievement is noteworthy for the sake that most Chosŏnjok entertain positive positions towards Chinese government and accordingly identify themselves as Chinese citizens.

2.1 Identifying the Ethnic Minority Groups in China

Shortly after the establishment of PRC, the Chinese government began its ethnic minority policy with the identification of different ethnic groups within the territory. China criteria of "ethnic group" (*minzu*) were modified from Stalin's approach developed in 1913. Under the official criteria, an ethnic group refers to a group of people sharing: common history, common means of production, common

language, common culture, common custom, and common psychological makeup (Shen & Ou 2007: 22). Under such criteria, 56 ethnic groups have been identified and recognized by Chinese Central Government. According to the sixth national census conducted in 2010, the population of the entire 55 ethnic minority groups totaled 113.79, accounting for 8.41 percent of the total population of China.⁶

2.2 Characteristics of China's Ethnic Minority Policy

2.2.1 Chinese Multiculturalism

China's multiculturalism is characterized by its Confucian dominated values and state's overriding concerns on unity and economic development (Yuen 2009: 12).

Ren (Benevolence)

Since the after the Cultural Revolution, the Chinese government readopted the tenet of *Ren*—which implies a paternalistic government whose obligation is to show consideration for the weak and the poor. Ethnic minorities are entitled to certain benefits and communitarian support from the government such as right to self-autonomy; higher proportion of representatives in the government; right to bear more children and entitlement to direct economic subsidies from the government (Yuen 2009: 12). Most of these policies are top down policies initiated

⁶ National Bureau of Statistics, 2010, <http://www.stats.gov.cn/tjsj/ndsj/2010/indexeh.htm> (Accessed: March 31, 2015)

from the Central Government and could be reckoned as the majority Han's duty to look after their weaker ethnic minority brothers.

Ronghe (Intermingling)

Upon the cultural distinctions between the ethnicity Han and the ethnic minorities, the Chinese state prefers the policy of *Ronghe* (Intermingling) rather than assimilation upon its ethnic minority policy. *Ronghe* differs from the Sinicization approach in the sense that it recognizes the cultural distinctions between the Han and ethnic minorities, while it does not enforce the compliance of the later to the former (Yuen 2009: 12). To some extent, the policy is rooted in the Confucian principals of "harmony with differences", a mutual respect and responsibility. These principals are demonstrated in the Constitution of the China, which states that:

All ethnic groups in the People's Republic of China are equal. The state protects the lawful rights and interests of the ethnic groups and upholds and develops a relationship of equality, unity and mutual assistance among all China's ethnic groups. Discrimination against and oppression of any ethnic group are prohibited (Wang 2004).

Tuanjie (Unity)

Notwithstanding the dominating influence of Marxism to the CCP, the Chinese government discarded the principal of national self-determination; neither had it

enacted the soviet-style nation federalism. A weaker system of regional autonomy, which is more favorable to the consideration of national unity, was established instead (Yuen 2009: 13). Since the beginning of the PRC regime, the state has identified upholding a “unified multi-ethnic state” and achieving “unity among ethnic groups” as the two most priority agenda in its ethnic policy.⁷ Indeed, unity among ethnic minority groups has critical impact to the national security and territorial integrity of China since the majority of the ethnic minority groups are distributed in border or remote regions.

Economic Determinism

One of the core values under Chinese multiculturalism is economic determinism. In lieu of replacing ethnic identity of different ethnic group with “class consciousness”, Deng Xiaoping, the former leader of China had successfully unified the ethnic groups together under the shared objective of economic development (Yuen 2009: 13). As he pointed out, “Deng’s theory of modernization requires economic development to override any consideration of ethnic identity (Yuen 2009: 13).” Deng’s economic approach to ethnic minority question was promulgated by his successor Jiang Zemin, and Jiang’s successor Hu Jintao, then the current president Xi Jinping.

⁷ Permanent Mission of the People’s Republic of China 1999. White Paper 1999: Ethnic Minorities Policy in China. Retrieved January 14, 2009 <http://www.china-un.org/eng/gyzg/xizang/t420274.htm> (Accessed: January 14, 2015)

2.2.2 China's Multiculturalism in Practice

Generally speaking, China's ethnic minority policy could be illustrated as the hybrid product of Confucian paternalism and Marxist economic determinism (Yuen 2009: 14). In order to reinforce the *Ronghe* policy, the Central Government launches diverse political, economic and social measures to ensure the rights of ethnic minority groups and to uphold and develop the culture of ethnic minorities. These policies are declared to be respecting the ethnic minority and "keeping with China's actual condition and the common interests of all ethnic groups". With the absence of democratic participation among the ethnic minorities in the policy initiation process, nevertheless, the policy shows strong paternalistic nature, and could be perceived as the Han's duty to look after the weaker ethnic minority groups (Yuen 2009: 14). Meanwhile, the Chinese government has embraced economic development as the overriding consideration in its ethnic minority policy. The following section emphasizes some critical areas in China's ethnic minority policy.

Regional Autonomy for Ethnic Minorities

PRC's ethnic minority policy is carried out upon the system of regional autonomy of the ethnic minorities. Such policy could be perceived as the fulfillment of China's *Ronghe* approach over the ethnic issues. Under the system of ethnic regional autonomy, local governmental organs are empowered the privilege to legislation. Also, they enjoy certain level of autonomy over local finance, power

to develop education and ethnic culture, as well as the power to develop and employ the local and written language etc. (Wang 2004)

Practice of regional autonomy uplifts local government's holistic efficiency in its policy enforcement via enabling local governments to make full uses of local resource, and to develop policies that are more compatible to the local condition. By the end of 2003, China has established 155 ethnic autonomous areas. They include: five autonomous regions, 30 autonomous prefectures and 120 autonomous counties⁸. On the basis of the sixth national census, conducted in 2010, 44 out of the 55 ethnic minority groups possess ethnic autonomous areas. The population of ethnic minorities practicing regional autonomy accounts for 71 percent of the total population of ethnic minorities, and the area where such regional autonomy is practiced accounts for 64 percent of the entire territory of China⁹.

There are two features that can characterize the practice of regional autonomy for ethnic minorities in China. One is manifested in the priority of national unity consideration and central authority over the minority rights. Article 5 of People's Republic of China Regional Ethnic Autonomy law (Law on Regional Autonomy) has defined local government's responsibility in preserving national unity, while Article 7 has defined the subordinating position of the local government to the rule

⁸ Information Office of the State Council of the People's Republic of China (2005), Regional autonomy for ethnic minorities in China, retrieved January 14, 2009 from http://www.gov.cn/english/official/2005-07/28/content_18127.htm (Accessed: January 14, 2015)

⁹ National Bureau of Statistics, 2010, <http://www.stats.gov.cn/tjsj/ndsj/2010/indexeh.htm> (Accessed: March 31, 2015)

of central government and the of state interest over the minority rights by stating that:

The organs of self-government of national autonomous areas shall place the interests of the state as a whole above anything else and make positive efforts to fulfill the tasks assigned by state organs at higher level.

The other characteristic of the regional autonomy practice is that the autonomy is form of integration of ethnic and regional factors and the combination of political and economic factors and the objectives of such practice are to benefit national unity, social stability and ultimately state development¹⁰.

In terms of the establishment of the ethnic autonomous areas, the Constitution of the PRC also provides ethnic autonomous regions special representation right in the National People's Congress (NPC), under which a quota system, which allocates 12 percent of NPC seat to the representatives of the ethnic minorities, was developed (Yuen 2009: 15). Such proportion is higher than the real proportion of ethnic minority population in China. However the effectiveness of ethnic minorities' representation in the NPC has been criticized for its weak democratic foundation (Yuen 2009: 15).

¹⁰ Permanent Mission of the People's Republic of China 1999. White Paper 1999: Ethnic Minorities Policy in China. Retrieved January 14, 2009 <http://www.china-un.org/eng/gyzg/xizang/t420274.htm> (Accessed: Japnuary 14, 2015)

The fact that 12 percent of seats in the NPC are reserved for minorities does not guarantee the effective representation of national minorities, because in most cases, there are no competitive elections for people's deputies and minority representatives are "hand-picked" by the party (Yuen 2009: 15).

Economic Development in the Ethnic Autonomous Regions

In the white paper regarding Ethnic Minorities Policy in China (1999), the Chinese government has asserted "Promoting the common Development of All the Ethnic Groups" as one of the 5 major objectives in its ethnic minority policy. It is conspicuous that in the practice of its ethnic minority policy, economic development occupies one of the most significant places in the government's agenda. As Yeung (2000: 16) addresses,

Assisting ethnic minorities with their economic development, and hence promoting the common prosperity of all ethnic groups is the core idea of Deng Xiaoping's theory on ethnic minority policy (Yeung 2000: 16).

Chinese government's efforts in enhancing economic development in the ethnic autonomous regions are mainly manifested as state-led industrialization projects, state subsidy to agricultural and animal husbandry activities, preferential financial and trade policies for minority areas etc.

To accelerate the development of China's western regions and ethnic autonomous areas, "Great Western Development Strategy" has been launched in

2000. According to the Information Office of the State Council of China, such strategy covers five autonomous regions, 27 autonomous prefectures and 83 of the 120 autonomous counties, under which there are 60 prominent projects accounting for a total investment of 850 billion *yuan*. Majority of the investment is spent on the construction of infrastructure, including the West Project, West-East Natural Gas Transmission Project, and Qinghai-Tibet Railway etc.¹¹

Besides the large-scale industrialization projects proposed by the central government, Chinese government also supply financial subsidies to promote economic development and social progress in ethnic autonomous regions. “Subsidy for Ethnic Minority Areas” and “Stand-by Fund for Ethnic Minority Areas” were established since 1955 and 1964 respectively in order to help boost local economy (Yeung 2000: 17). In 1994, the Chinese Government further reformed the tax revenue management system to promote flexibility of local government in distributing its resources for economic development. The exercise of transitional transfer payment since 1995 has further increased local governments’ capital in developing the economy of the ethnic minority regions.

Education Development in the Ethnic Autonomous Regions

Under the principle of regional autonomy of the ethnic minorities, ethnic autonomous areas are guaranteed the privilege to uphold ethnic education of their

¹¹ Information Office of the State Council of the People’s Republic of China (2005), Regional autonomy for ethnic minorities in China, retrieved January 14, 2009 from http://www.gov.cn/english/official/2005-07/28/content_18127.htm (Accessed: January 14, 2015)

own. This contains the right of learning minority languages and implementing bilingual teaching in the autonomous area. Except the development of diverse of education, another main agenda of the Chinese Government on ethnic minority education is to eliminate illiterate rate among the young and middle-aged population in the ethnic autonomous areas. Funds and faculties have been offered to the ethnic autonomous regions to universalize nine-year compulsory education. During 1995~2000, the Central and local government had planned to provide 10 billion *yuan* in enhancing basic education in the ethnic autonomous area¹². However, the scale of government input in promoting education in ethnic autonomous area was ostensibly smaller than that of in economic development. In addition to direct investment in education, Chinese government also encourages the establishment of public service project, for example the “Hope Project”, to promote fundamental education in the ethnic autonomous areas.

¹² Permanent Mission of the People’s Republic of China 1999. White Paper 1999: Ethnic Minorities Policy in China. Retrieved January 14, 2009 <http://www.china-un.org/eng/gyzg/xizang/t420274.htm> (Accessed: Japnuary 14, 2015)

3. The Current Situation of Chosŏnjok in China

3.1 Economic Situation after the Reform

In light of the statistical data, Chosŏnjok is considered as a minority with high economic status among numerous other minority ethnic groups in China. For example, the urban population ratio of Chosŏnjok (60.47% in 2012) is among the highest in all other minorities in China.¹³ Compared with other nationalities, majority of Chosŏnjok have separated themselves from agriculture and engaged in secondary (20.2%) and tertiary (28.1%) industries. In addition, the population of Chosŏnjok who receive vocational school and above education accounts for 15.96 percent out of entire Chosŏnjok population¹⁴. It has formed a common consensus that Chosŏnjok enjoy relatively higher economic status among other minorities in China.

However, such conclusion is paradoxical since it disregards the excessive economic condition in which Chosŏnjok are embedded. Given the disparate development of regions in China, it is necessary to situate an ethnic group in the local economic condition to discuss their economic status in relation to the rest of China. Therefore, locating Chosŏnjok in Northeast China, I propose that in recent years, the economic reform has degenerated the overall economic condition of

¹³ National Bureau of Statistics, 2010, <http://www.stats.gov.cn/tjsj/ndsj/2010/indexeh.htm> (Accessed: March 31, 2015)

¹⁴ National Bureau of Statistics, 2010, <http://www.stats.gov.cn/tjsj/ndsj/2010/indexeh.htm> (Accessed: March 31, 2015)

Chosŏnjok when compared to the rest of China, even though it provides fractional opportunities to some Chosŏnjok.

It is believed that Northeast China was once among the most developed regions in China. In the 1950s ~1960s, Northeast China was the “industrial cradle of China”, in which an overall industrial system was founded, including airplane, war industry, steel, chemical, heavy machine, automobile and shipbuilding. As a result, during the era of the planned economy, this region was the pioneer of China’s industrialization. Accordingly, Heilongjiang and Liaoning provinces were among the highest in China in terms of the industrial gross output value in the 1980s. The general annual wage in the enterprises of these two provinces was also higher than the national average in the 1980¹⁵.

Against the backdrop of the open and reform policy, nevertheless, the economic situation in Northeast China has become flagging and lagged far behind other provinces in terms of the comprehensive economic competence. The term "Northeast Phenomenon" is highlighted and employed to depict the economic problems of this region. It has formed a common consensus that the problems in the secondary and tertiary industries contribute to the economic downturn of Northeast China. State-Owned Enterprises (SOE) in the secondary industry, which underpinned the local economy in the past years, is now suffering from oversize,

¹⁵ State Statistical Bureau of People’s Republic of China. 1981, 1990, 1995, 2004 and 2010 and 2010 China Statistical Yearbook (1981, 1990, 1995, 2004 and 2010). Beijing: China Statistical Publishing House (In Chinese). (Accessed: March 31, 2015)

heavy losses, low efficiency and conservative management (Jin, 2006: 24). The old industrial base is deteriorating.

In addition, when compared to other regions in China, the proportion of the tertiary industry in the economic structure of Northeast China is relatively low. In 2010, in terms of the ratio of tertiary industry, Jilin and Heilongjiang ranked 24 and 31 respectively in total 32 provinces and cities in China; in gross output value, except that Liaoning ranked higher (7), Jilin (14) and Heilongjiang (24) lagged far behind other regions in China¹⁶. Statistically, the level of income in this region has declined dramatically in comparison with the national average¹⁷.

The economic growth of Yanbian Korean Autonomous Prefecture is stagnating when compared to other regions in China after the reform and opening up. As mentioned above, Yanbian, an ethnic minority prefecture, enjoys preferential treatments in tax, finance and export. Due to the hysteretic nature of Yanbian's response to the outer market, those preferential policies did not actualize economic development. Yanbian is still immersed in the economic predicament of the imbalanced industrial structure, backward technology, reactionary management, and low productivity. Notwithstanding tertiary industry in Yanbian has experienced rapid growth, nevertheless, finance, real estate, insurance and consultation, the sectors in tertiary industry that represent new economic power are still immature.

¹⁶ State Statistical Bureau of People's Republic of China. 2010 China Statistical Yearbook 2010. Beijing: China Statistical Publishing House (In Chinese). (Accessed: March 31, 2015)

¹⁷ State Statistical Bureau of People's Republic of China. 2010 China Statistical Yearbook 2010. Beijing: China Statistical Publishing House (In Chinese). (Accessed: March 31, 2015)

Thus, Yanbian has never surpassed Jilin and national average in terms of per capital GDP¹⁸.

Above all, after the economic reform and opening up, the overall economic situation in Northeast China has lagged behind rather than promoted when compared the rest of China. As a result, Chosŏnjok who are living in this region have experienced deprivation in the economic realm.

What is worth mentioning is that, however, the economic reform did provide some Chosŏnjok with infinite new opportunities. The increase of South Korean investment in China after the open door policy has offered some opportunities for Chosŏnjok to improve their lives. In 1992, there were 72 transnational companies invested by South Korea in Yanbian area; the number increased to 393 in 1997. By the end of 1997, it is estimated that investment from South Korea accounted for 53 percent of the total foreign investment in Yanbian (Jin 2006: 50). Chosŏnjok are more inclined to be hired by South Korean companies or do business with them in that they are proficient in Korean and Chinese language. Comprehending China's situation and sharing similar culture with South Koreans are also of great importance when applying for jobs in those Korean enterprises. In addition, after the restoration of diplomatic relationship of bilateral relationship between Korea and China, Chosŏnjok can go to South Korea to make money.

In sum, the overall economic situation of the Chosŏnjok residence area has deteriorated when compared to the rest of China for the sake of the economic

¹⁸ State Statistical Bureau of People's Republic of China. 2010 China Statistical Yearbook 2010. Beijing: China Statistical Publishing House (In Chinese). (Accessed: March 31, 2015)

downturn of the Northeast China in recent years. However, thanks to the increase of South Korean investment in China, a substantial number of Chosŏnjok migrate to South Korea to earn money. This has brought an alternative channel for Chosŏnjok to improve their lives. In other words, their economic condition is getting better as their interactions with South Korea are increasing.

3.2 Political Situation of Chosŏnjok

Despite Chinese government has distinctly articulated to approach ethnic minorities on equivalent footings, Chosŏnjok, like numerous other minorities in China, are not able to equally participate into state's affairs. The central government's attitude toward Chosŏnjok is dichotomic. Chosŏnjok' contribution to the establishment of PRC has definitely won them a huge credit from CCP (Choe 2003: 33). Consequently, apart from during the Cultural Revolution, externally, Chosŏnjok have been depicted as a model minority who uphold the authority of CCP and the unity of PRC. However, this should not blind us to see the government's prudence in dealing with Chosŏnjok issues and its suspicion of Chosŏnjok loyalty to PRC because this population at the same time possesses inextricable ethnic ties with the peninsular Koreans (Li 2006: 55).

The constitution and minority policies of China have endowed all minorities in China the right to vote or stand for election and the right to criticize or make propositions to any state organs. In ethnic concentrated communities, ethnic minorities are allowed to establish autonomous region to practice self-government

and the head of such government shall be elected from the minorities; their right to participate as equals in the state's affairs is warranted on the regulation that all minorities shall have their own representatives to sit in the National People's Congress (NPC), the highest organ of state power in China (Li 2006: 55). In 1998, of the 2979 deputies elected to NPC, 428 were from minority groups¹⁹.

Along with these policies, Chosŏnjok have set up Yanbian Korean autonomous prefecture and Changbai Korean autonomous county in Jilin Province. Both leaders of the autonomous governments are Chosŏnjok and the proportion of Chosŏnjok cadres out of Chosŏnjok whole population who are working in the local autonomous government is usually higher than that of ethnic Han in Yanbian (Xu 2004: 64).

On the central level, there were 9 were Chosŏnjok elected to participate into the Twelfth National People's Congress in 2013 out of 2987 deputies. In the central government, the previous chief director of State Ethnic Affairs Commission of China was Li Dezhu; Zhao Nanqi was previous Minister of Logistics Department and Vice chairman of the CPPCC. Both of them were the only two Central Committee members of Korean origin. Therefore, Chosŏnjok, along with other ethnic minorities, were asserted as masters of China and they have shared the equals participating in the management of state's affairs in China.

¹⁹ Ministry of Education and State Ethnic Affairs Commission of People's Republic of China. 1999. "Notice on Developing National Unity Education among Primary and Secondary Schools in China" Retrieved February 16, 2006 (In Chinese). <http://202.205.177.137/jyzx/zhengce/guojia/9903-11.htm> (Accessed: February 16, 2015)

However, such assertion is dubious in some perspectives. To begin with, I propose the inquiry whether the statistical numbers mentioned as above can prove that there are sufficient political deputies of minorities in China. It is significant to be aware that all minorities account for 8.41 percent of the entire Chinese population²⁰. Hence, even though the cadre or deputy ratio of minorities is higher than that of Han, the ratio itself does not weigh too much in judging political representations of minorities in China (Jin 2006: 30). For example, in Yanbian Korean autonomous prefecture, most of cadres (more than 50 percent) in the local government are ethnicity Han. On the national level, all ethnic minorities representatives merely accounted for 13.9 percent of the total in the Twelfth National People's Congress. Above all, it is still ethnic Han that lead the governments and state organs at all levels.

In addition, it is worth noticing that all of the ethnic minorities have to be under the leadership of CCP; the practices of the minorities' autonomous governments have to be subject to the supervision of the central government or political organs that are higher than them. Hence, Yanbian Korean autonomous prefecture must periodically report work to Jilin province and unconditionally enforce the policies conveyed by Jilin or central government. Moreover, any political decisions, economic and financial plans, regulations, or other flexible measures put forward by Yanbian government should be endorsed by Jilin province before being released.

²⁰ National Bureau of Statistics, 2010, <http://www.stats.gov.cn/tjsj/ndsj/2010/indexeh.htm> (Accessed: March 31, 2015)

Third, the central government bolsters its manipulation over minorities through selecting, training and reshuffling minority cadres. In a document released by the State Ethnic Affairs Commission and Chinese Communist Party (CCP) in 1993, the government stresses that training minority cadres is of utmost importance in correctly implementing China's minority policies, consolidating the unity of China, maintaining social stability and promoting the common prosperity of all ethnic groups in China²¹. In accordance with core spirit of the central government, Jilin province has been actively engaged in appointing and training Chosŏnjok cadres in Yanbian. For instance, in 1997, Jilin ethnic affair commission scrutinized the election and promotion of Chosŏnjok cadres and directly selected "appropriate" Chosŏnjok cadres to the prefectural and provincial governments. The commission also cooperated with the academic institutions such as Jilin University to help train Chosŏnjok cadres²². The content of the training comprises of two parts: first, to promote and enhance knowledge and competence of cadres' administration; second, more importantly, to inculcate China's ethnic minority policies or ideologies to those ethnic cadres. The central government therefore, to great extent intervenes in the Chosŏnjok Self-government through appointing and training "appropriate"

²¹ State Ethnic Affairs Commission of People's Republic of China and Chinese Communist Party. 1993. "Advice on the Reinforcement of Work on Minority Cadre Training and Selection" Retrieved March 15, 2005 (In Chinese). <http://www.wenbao.net/html/whyichan/lsmc/zhenche/zc003.htm> (Accessed: March 15, 2015)

²² State Ethnic Affairs Commission of People's Republic of China. 1998, 1999, 2000 and 2004. China Nationality Yearbook (1998, 1999, 2000 and 2004). Beijing: Nationality Publishing House (In Chinese). (Accessed: March 31, 2015)

minority cadres (Li 2006: 56). Apart from the aforementioned aspects, CCP's attitude towards Chosŏnjok has been dichotomic. Externally Chosŏnjok have always been depicted as a model minority because they have devoted themselves into the establishment of PRC and constantly plunk for the rule of CCP. In some aspects, nevertheless, CCP still considers Chosŏnjok as potential separatists who may menace the integrity of Chinese Nation for the sake of their inextricable ethnic ties with the Korean peninsular.

The first conflict recorded between Chosŏnjok and CCP regarding the legal status of Yanbian region in the 1940s (Lee 1999: 65). In order to establish an integrated Chinese nation state, CCP contemplated to absorb Yanbian as a minority autonomous region which was one part of China. Chosŏnjok representatives at that time objected to this proposition and purported to establish Yanbian as a republic imitating the model of Soviet Union or unite Yanbian with North Korea, which had been pledged by CCP in the anti-Japanese war episode. It is obviously that such proposition was unacceptable for CCP, who always gave priority to the integrity and unity of Chinese nation state. Eventually, CCP won this combat and as a result, Chosŏnjok autonomous region was founded in 1952. However, the Chosŏnjok autonomous region shortly degraded to the autonomous prefecture in 1955, which largely constrained the political power of Chosŏnjok.

The government's incredulity of Chosŏnjok's fidelity to PRC reached the summit during the Cultural Revolution. Chosŏnjok were regarded as "ethnic extremists" or "local nationalism", which could menace the integrity of Chinese nation state. Some distinguished local Chosŏnjok cadres were on the accusation of being

involved in anti-party and anti-socialism activities that embraced the interests of pan-Korean nationality. Under such circumstances, most Chosŏnjok government officials were dismissed from the positions in the local government and during the culmination of the Cultural Revolution; Yanbian region forfeited its autonomous privileges and was directly controlled by Shenyang Military region (Li 2006: 56).

Chosŏnjok shortly retrieved their ethnic rights with the demise of Cultural Revolution. However, one thing for sure is that the central government has never loosed its control over Chosŏnjok for the fear that the pan-Korean sentiment overspreads (Li 2006: 57). Especially in the last few years, as China constantly cooperate with South Korea in the economic sphere, Chosŏnjok have enhanced their ethnic connections with South Korea, which instantly draws special attention from the central government. A South Korean scholar demonstrates that the vice minister of the Security Bureau in China, Tian Qiyu, announced at a meeting that Chosŏnjok may impose threat to China's national integrity for the sake of their ethnic connections with South Korea (Lee 1999: 66).

Also, other message has showed the vigilance of the central government in managing Chosŏnjok issues. For instance, the Chinese government is particularly concerned about the legal status of the Chosŏnjok in South Korea in that South Korean government was trying to embrace Chosŏnjok as overseas Korean compatriots and warrant them work and social rights in South Korea. Chinese government regarded this as intervention towards China's domestic affairs and it may trigger pan-Korean sentiment among Chosŏnjok and thus menace the integrity of China. The spokesman of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs articulated that China

is a united multi-ethnic country and beyond any dispute, Chosŏnjok is an inextricable part of the “one big family of Chinese Nation (*Zhonghua minzu dajiating*)”. The Chinese government reiterated that dual citizenship of Chosŏnjok is unacceptable²³.

South Korean government therefore had no choice but to exclude Chosŏnjok from the definition of Overseas Koreans in South Korea via enacting *The Law in Ethnic Koreans Abroad*. At the same year July 8th 1999, the South Korean Consulate General in Shenyang was officially established with permission of Chinese government. In 2002, China rejected the visa application of four South Korean officials who planned to investigate the current situation of Chosŏnjok for the amendment of *the Law in Ethnic Koreans Abroad* in South Korea (Lee, 1999: 67). Chinese government explicitly expressed that it was unnecessary for Korean government to do the investigation, and China has already articulated its stance on this issue²⁴.

Above all, due to the relatively propitious minority policies that are confirmed by constitution in China, Chosŏnjok are enjoying ethnic rights and they are warranted to participate into state’s affairs equally. Because of their devotion to the foundation of PRC, Chosŏnjok have obtained trust from CCP and thus are often described as a model minority among numerous other ethnic minority groups. As a

²³ Ministry of Foreign Affairs of PRC, 2002 “Spokesman of Ministry of Foreign Affairs Sun Yuxi Answers Questions from Journalists” Retrieved March 15, 2005 (In Chinese). <http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/ce/ceth/chn/xwdt/t86205.htm> (Accessed: March 15, 2015)

²⁴ Ministry of Foreign Affairs of PRC, 2002 “Spokesman of Ministry of Foreign Affairs Sun Yuxi Answers Questions from Journalists” Retrieved March 15, 2005 (In Chinese). <http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/ce/ceth/chn/xwdt/t86205.htm> (Accessed: March 15, 2015)

matter of fact, however, Chosŏnjok have not gained as much rights and privileges as promised by CCP in the political sphere and for the sake of their inextricable ethnic ties with the peninsular Koreans, the Chinese government always questions their fidelity to CCP.

3.3 Ethnic Education and Culture of Chosŏnjok

Chosŏnjok hold positive attitudes towards their ethnic culture and tradition. Chosŏnjok were allowed to sustain and develop their ethnic education and culture partially due to the favorable ethnic minority policies. In the last few years, however, as ethnic education deteriorated, ethnic culture and tradition was immersed into dilemma.

Chosŏnjok harbors fairly positive attitudes toward their ethnic education and culture. Using honorific phrases to the elders, advocating ethnic education and appreciating daily courtesy have long been regarded as the excellent ethnic traditions that are possessed by Chosŏnjok. Moreover, Chosŏnjok is the best-educated minority group with high educational achievement among other minority groups. In light of the statistic from the sixth national population census in 2010, only 1.29 percent Chosŏnjok never attend school; 8.01 percent graduates from universities; 0.55 percent has received postgraduate education²⁵. Due to this reason, majority Chosŏnjok enjoys a feeling that they are superior to ethnic Han and other ethnic minorities culturally and ethnically (Li 2006: 57).

²⁵ National Bureau of Statistics, 2010, <http://www.stats.gov.cn/tjsj/ndsj/2010/indexeh.htm> (Accessed: March 31, 2010)

The central government ascertained to reserve and reserve Chosŏnjok ethnic education and culture. Endorsed and protected by China's constitution and minority policies, Chosŏnjok are allowed to develop their own ethnic traditions, customs and languages. The government sponsors ethnic art and cultural undertakings and it patronizes to help Chosŏnjok to develop ethnic education. The central government also encourages teachers to use Korean language and textbooks to educate Chosŏnjok students in ethnic schools. Also, educational programs and curricula can be designed based on the ethnic condition. In addition, Chosŏnjok students can choose to take Korean language while attending the college entrance examination and as minorities, they are given priority in the admission to the higher education, for example, getting extra scores, etc.²⁶

Despite these achievements, some potential disadvantages and emerging problems regarding ethnic education and culture are worth drawing attentions. First, the central government still remains high control and involvement in the ethnic education. For instance, there should be Party organization in all ethnic schools in terms of the education policy. There are programs and curricula required by the central government that all ethnic schools should follow. In addition, textbooks and teaching materials have to be rigidly scrutinized by Ministry of Education of China. Even though minorities are warranted the privilege to revise curricula and textbooks following the specific ethnic condition, they must be ratified by higher-

²⁶ Jilin Government. 1998. "Ordinances on Minority Education in Jilin Province" *China Nationality Education* 1999(1): 19-22 (In Chinese). (Accessed: March, 2015)

level political organs before being released. Moreover, ethnic schools are obliged to teach CCP's minority theories and policies and infuse patriotism into minority students²⁷. Hence, the central government enhances its strong manipulation over minorities throughout ethnic education.

In addition, the recent challenges for developing ethnic education and culture are even more overwhelming. Before the reform and opening up, Chosŏnjok used to live separately with Ethnic Han in the form of solitude rural Chosŏnjok communities. After the economic reform, however, high population mobility leaves traditional Chosŏnjok communities on the verge of collapsing in the sense that Chosŏnjok are increasingly intertwined with ethnic Han. As a result, ethnic education is jeopardized and ethnic culture is trapped into dilemma.

In recent years, tremendous number of Korean ethnic schools in rural China is suffering from the increase outflow of ethnic teachers and students. Many Korean ethnic schools are therefore combined with each other. In some worsen scenario, the schools have to close down due to lack of students resources. Declining interest in learning ethnic language among younger generation Chosŏnjok is another severe problem in ethnic education. They would like to improve their Chinese skills in order to be enrolled in famous universities like Peking, Tsinghua or move to large cities. Nowadays, majority of the classes are taught in Chinese

²⁷ Ministry of Education and State Ethnic Affairs Commission of People's Republic of China. 1999. "Notice on Developing National Unity Education among Primary and Secondary Schools in China" Retrieved February 16, 2006 (In Chinese). <http://202.205.177.137/jyzx/zhengce/guojia/9903-11.htm> (Accessed: February 16, 2015)

language except that only Korean language classes are taught in Korean language in most of the Korean ethnic schools.

Another striking phenomenon is that many Chosŏnjok parents, especially in large cities out of Yanbian region, would like to send their children to ordinary schools despite there are Korean ethnic schools available near the neighborhood. Take Yanji city for example, the proportion of Chosŏnjok primary school students and Chosŏnjok middle school students in ordinary schools were respectively 3.6 percent and 6.16 percent in 1998; the proportion in 2002 increased to 13.7 percent and 12.7 percent; by the year 2008, the proportion reached 31 percent and 40 percent (Li 2006: 57). The increasing number of Chosŏnjok students who prefer to go to ordinary school largely decreases the student resources of Korean ethnic school, which consequently resulted in the crisis of ethnic education. Thus it is common phenomena that young Chosŏnjok generation are not able to understand and speak Korean language. Bear in mind that language is not only a tool of communication, but a cultural tie that links with ethnic history and culture, an increasing number of ethnic scholars are concerned that Chosŏnjok, like many other ethnicities, eventually would loose its roots in China and completely assimilated by ethnic Han people.

Chapter Three

The Formation of Chosŏnjok Ethnic Identity

Among aforementioned three of ethnic identity formation theories, Primordialism demonstrates ethnicity is an ascribed identity or assigned status, something inherited from one's ancestors (Yang 2000: 45). They suggest that ethnic identity is naturally born and essentially made up of an objectively observable core, be it in the form of racial, linguistic, religious, or cultural characteristics. Constructionism emphasizes the social construction of ethnicity and the importance of social environment. The constructionists place importance on external factors including political, economic and sociocultural elements in ethnic construction and formation; it also pinpoints historical and structural forces that shape and form ethnicity; and it better demonstrate the volatility of ethnicity.

Chapter two has examined Chosŏnjok's historical immigration experiences to China, which on the other hand illustrates that they have inextricable bloodlines with Korean peninsula; they share the same ancestor, culture, and history with Korean people. However, China's ethnic minority policies, and current economic, political and sociocultural situations of Chosŏnjok to large extent reshape their identity and therefore, make it more complicated to analyze. In this chapter, I will mainly utilize primordialism and constructionism theory to discuss where Chosŏnjok's ethnic identity comes from and how China's ethnic politics, China's

social environment and Chosŏnjok's current situations influence the formation process of Chosŏnjok ethnic identity.

1. Ethnic Identity as Korean Ethnicity

Choe (2003: 26) explained that Chosŏnjok's Korean ethnicity is based on the *Dangun* myth, in which all Koreans are descendants of *Dangun*, and Koreans have established and maintained a notably homogenous culture for centuries (Jeong, 2001: 27). The perception of common ancestry and cultural homogeneity are the basis of ethnic nationalism, which has been gradually established and developed in Korea over centuries. The *Joseon* dynasty (1392-1910) established and maintained a common culture, educational system and centralized bureaucracy, which linked all Korean people to the central authority. Although at this stage there was no Korean national identity, maintaining cultural homogeneity and establishing a common cultural identity among the Korean people paved the way for modern ethnic nationalism (Choe, 2003: 26).

During the era of Japanese colonization (1910-1945), ethnic nationalism gained dominance in Korea. As a strategy to achieve independence from Japan, Korean nationalists eagerly instilled in the Korean people the belief that they belonged to a *minjok* with a common ancestry (*Dangun*) and culture, which were distinct from those of Japan. An immutable and eternal Korean nation deserved an independent Korean state. Although the Japanese colonial government made efforts to suppress Korean ethnic-based nationalism, it survived and spread. Choe (2003) explains that this was primarily because Japanese ethnic prejudice instigated Koreans to preserve

their national identity and secondarily because private Korean middle schools successfully propagated Korean nationalism (Choe, 2003: 26).

After the liberation of Korea and establishment of Republic of Korea, ethnic based national identity has intensified among South Koreans, not only because ruling parties exploit it but also because the national quest to unify North and South Korea calls for ethnic nationalist sentiment. President Park Chung Hee relied heavily on nationalistic rhetoric to anchor his power and authority. Shin (1998:152) points out that “his coup was an effort to realize national renaissance and achieve modernization of the fatherland; his 1972 *yusin* reform was a save-the-nation movement necessitated by changing domestic and international conditions.” Park’s concept of the Korean nation fell into the tradition of emphasizing common ancestry and cultural homogeneity. In addition, ethnic nationalism retains its currency because it cultivates a national feeling that transcends ideological differences and is thus conducive to the unification of North and South Korea.

Ethnic nationalism “rendered both emotional and psychological support to movements for Korean national solidarity and independence” and “provided a basis for the inevitability and desirability for a national unity transcending ideological and class difference” (Jeong, 2001: 27). As a result, ethnic nationalism prevails in South Korea (Choe, 2003; Jeong, 2001; Shin, 1998). South Koreans’ national identity is based on the perceived common origin and homogenous culture, so they make little distinction between ethnic and national identities (Yoo, 2002:25). It is an undeniable fact that Chosŏnjok share bloodlines and ethnic culture with the

native Koreans, which poses real and profound meaning to them as the same Korean ethnicity.

...When I was young, my parents used to teach me how to speak Korean language and taught me our family history, for example, how my grandparents moved to China from Korean peninsula, and how their hometown look like, etc. I was unconsciously influenced by those old stories and realized that my family had inextricable connections with Korean peninsula. (Interview with Han Xuefeng, 15th March 2015, Han's home)

From Han's perspective, we are able to perceive that even though Chosŏnjok have immigrated to China for years, they still maintain inextricable connections with Korean peninsula. Their identity as Korean ethnicity is inherited from their ancestor which is deeply embedded in the language they are using, culture and tradition they are appreciating.

2. National Identity as Chinese Citizen

Chosŏnjok perceive the China to be “their country” and they are Chinese citizens (Kwon 1996: 15). Before the establishment of the PRC, Chosŏnjok were intangibly distinguished along with the Japanese or Manchu, but they did not confess that they were citizens of Japanese Imperialism or the Manchuria Empire. After the foundation of PRC, Chosŏnjok regarded China as their country officially and

psychologically despite the fact that the majority of them speak totally different language with ethnic Han people and they live together in rural compact communities. Such a radical shift in political identity can be illustrated by the establishment of a strong unified socialist state and the Chosŏnjok's survival strategy in the new situation (Kwon 1996: 15).

To understand the formation of Chosŏnjok's political identity in China, their appreciation of the Chinese socialist government based on their historical experiences is of critical importance (Li 2006: 60). As mentioned above, the majority of Korean immigrants were once destitute peasants. They immigrated to Northeast China to seek lands to cultivate food to meet their basic need of life. At first, lives in China for them were rather arduous because of Japanese suppression and political instability in China during that period of time. The establishment of the PRC was a relief for the destitute Korean peasants in that the CCP pledged to give them land of their own. This blessing given by CCP was a great transition compared to the former regimes. Some old generation who had suffered from considerable hardship described it as "from hell to heaven" (Li 2006: 60). It is not hard to conceive that the majority of the elder Chosŏnjok generations regard China as their own country with gratefulness and sincerity. What's more, most of Chosŏnjok in China accepted the Communist ideology as a means of independence from the Japanese Imperialism; they played a significant role in the liberation of the Northeast China as CCP members, and fighting against the *Guomindang*. Chosŏnjok in China were appreciated by the CCP as brave fighters in the Chinese Revolution and were accepted as citizens of PRC. It seemed to be a better strategy

for them to stay in the new China as Chinese citizen rather than to return to Korea where the situation was very precarious (Li 2006: 60).

After the establishment of PRC, CCP has accelerated to intermingle Chosŏnjok into Chinese nation state through enacting the minority policies and articulating the discourses focusing on the “United Multi-ethnic State” to approach all ethnic minorities in China equally (Li 2006: 61). CCP’s accomplishment is prominent in the sense that the majority of Chosŏnjok uphold positive attitude towards Chinese state and identify themselves as Chinese citizens. The PRC was founded after driving out *Guomindang* out of mainland to Taiwan. Legitimated and defined as proletarian sovereign state, PRC regarded class as its fundamental feature. Therefore, reactionaries like traitors and landlords were criticized and denounced on the one hand in terms of the criteria of class. On the other hand, all ethnic minorities, especially Chosŏnjok who were devoting into revolutions along with CCP, were regarded as the victims of imperialism, feudalism and bureaucratic capitalism and hence were accepted as part of the Chinese nation state. As a proletarian party, CCP promised to represent and act on behalf of the mass oppressed in China (Li 2006: 60).

After the reform and opening up, along with the decentralizing of central power and the declining of national solidarity, the discourse of CCP has altered to focus on the historical ties and cultural commonalities among distinct ethnicities in China. Discourses on the “Chinese Nation (*zhonghua minzu*)” and “Multiculturalism” have obtained ascendancy throughout the society (Li 2006: 60). In a word, CCP has adopted various minority policies to consolidate the “United Multi-ethnic

Country”. Coincidentally, the ethnic history of Chosŏnjok is appropriately represented and interpreted to highlight the alleged historical link of the ethnic minority groups with the Party and PRC.

The origin of Chosŏnjok ethnic group is officially acknowledged by the CCP; however, the policies laced emphasis on the differences between Chosŏnjok and indigenous Koreans on the peninsula or underline the link of Chosŏnjok with Chinese history and culture (Li 2006: 62). Chosŏnjok are extolled as pioneer, along with ethnic Han who developed the once excessive barren land of Northeast China and transformed this region into prosperous and harvestable one. Meanwhile, Chosŏnjok have deeply inherent in the economic and social lives in this region. In addition, Chosŏnjok have formed and developed into new cultural characteristic through continuous interactions with ethnic Han people in China, which makes them rather different from indigenous Koreans on the Korean peninsula (Li 2006: 66). For example, some scholars (Li 2006) demonstrate that the unique Chosŏnjok culture in China derives from a clever combination of both Chinese characteristics gained from the continuous interactions with ethnic Han in China and Korean elements that inherited from the Korean peninsula. They further argue that the Chosŏnjok is not only a group based on descent, but also a political and cultural entity, constructed and developed in close association with the Chinese history (Li 2006: 66). In light of such comprehension, it is admittedly that the culture of Chosŏnjok has been entirely incorporated into the totality of Chinese National culture in terms of both content and format.

The united Multi-ethnic state discourses have strengthened the historical consanguinity of Chosŏnjok with China. For instance, it is underlined that the anti-Japanese Imperialism activities organized by Chosŏnjok was not only for the Korean independence, but for the salvation of China as well. Likewise, their participation in the civil war against *Guomindang* attached them with CCP. This suggests that Chosŏnjok in China has already become an inseparable part of the Chinese nation state. The Han's grandfather's case below clearly demonstrates how China's ethnic politics influence Chosŏnjok's identity.

... My grandfather was born in the 1930s in China and attended Korean War. He was a faithful Chinese Communist member. He went to photo studio to take souvenir pictures in order to celebrate China's National Day and some other critical festivals in a year. At this point, my grandfather commits himself as a Chinese citizen. (Interview with Han Xuefeng, 15th March 2015, Han's home)

To foster and sustain Chosŏnjok's fidelity to PRC, CCP's propitious policies towards Chosŏnjok are highlighted when compared to that of the former rulers in Northeast China. The Chosŏnjok history before 1949 was fraught with rulers' repressions comprising of Qing Dynasty, warlord government, Japanese Imperialism and *Guomindang*. After the establishment of PRC, Chosŏnjok were endorsed as the host and share the same footings with other ethnic minorities in China. Subsequently, the Yanbian Korean Autonomous Region was established in 1952. The enactment of the new minority policy fundamentally warranted ethnic

education in their own language, respect for the traditions and customs of minorities, and political participation via national regional autonomy measures. Except for Cultural Revolution period, during which minority policies have been hostile to ethnic minorities, majority of the time the minority policies remain favorable and preferential for ethnic minorities in China. As a result, majority of Chosŏnjok in China are in favor of the recent Chinese minority policy, which is conceived to contribute enormously to the promotion of life in general and their economic and educational development as well. This positive attitude towards PRC's ethnic minority policy strengthens their identity as Chinese citizens (Li 2006: 66).

The central government's rigid control and widespread involvement in the ethnic education, for instance, ethnic schools are forced to teach CCP's minority theories and policies and inculcate patriotism to ethnic students, to large extent helped shape Chosŏnjok national identity as Chinese citizen. Jin's experience elaborately explains that CCP style of education deeply influence their identity formation as Chinese citizen.

... Although all of the classes were conducted in Korean language, the contents were pretty much the same with those of ordinary schools. We were studying Chinese history, patriotism and China's national heroes, such as Leifeng, Dong Cunrui, Huang Jiguang, and Liu Hulan, etc. In politics class, we studied the history of Communist Party. Majority of the teachers at school were Party members and persuaded us to join the Youth League. We did not study Koreans'

nation heroes and nationalism... (Interview with Jin Zhengyu, March 17th 2015, Jin's home)

Last but not the least, the increasing interactions with ethnic Han and on growing outflow Chosŏnjok population into large cities gradually obliterate their ethnic characteristics on the one hand; and their ties with ethnic Han and China is strengthened, which reflects that their identity as Chinese citizens (Li 2006: 66). After the economic reform in 1978, Chosŏnjok started to leave their rural communities to look for opportunities in large cities to earn money. Due to the aforementioned “United Multi-ethnic State” discourse, there were no obstacles or discriminations when they interacted with ethnic Han and other ethnic minorities in China. As a matter of fact, Chosŏnjok share substantial number of same characteristics with northeast ethnic Han people. For example, they are friendly and fond of drinking, etc. Those characteristic traits enable them to pick up Chinese language quickly and make a lot of Chinese friends. They were spontaneously swirling with ethnic Han people wherever they go due to such moderate characteristics of compatibility. Simultaneously, ethnic Han accept Chosŏnjok as their own siblings and never treat them harshly because of their special identity as ethnic minorities. From An's perspective, An says that “ethnic Han” people is a kind of thought rather than a group of people. In his point of view, ethnic Han people have strong power of assimilation and they are more inclined to accommodate and tolerate other minorities.

I think that the terminology “ethnic Han” is not described as a group of people; it is a kind of “thought” that contains assimilation and comprehension. In ethnic Han people’s point of view, if the ethnic minorities are living with them, speaking the same language with them, and they will regard those ethnic minorities as ethnic Han. In order word, ethnic Han people have a strong power of assimilation. In Chinese history, many ethnic minorities were integrated and assimilated with ethnic Han and disappeared, such as Khitay, Jurchen, etc. (Interview with An Taiying, March 18th 2015, An’s home)

Li’s case further illustrates that ethnic Han and other ethnic minorities are getting along well with each other. Under some circumstances, ethnic Han people are more likely to be concerned about minorities because they are relatively vulnerable group within society.

I went to ordinary school when I was young. The friends around were aware of that I am Chosŏnjok. I was not discriminated by them. Rather, the teacher and classmates used to particularly take care of me. (Interview with Li Na, March 22th 2015, Li’s home)

3. Ethnic Minority Identity as Chosŏnjok

Chosŏnjok is culturally fairly different from any other ethnic minority group in China. Their traditions, language, life style and cultural values are distinct from those of the ethnic Han and other ethnic minority groups.

The biggest differences between Chosŏnjok and Chinese Han embody in manners. We are using the honorific when we talk to our parents at home. Also we have to show our respect to them. Majority of my Chinese friends are coddled by their parents and they do not have to show as much respect to their parents as we do at home. In addition, our eating habits are utterly different. Although sometimes we eat Chinese cuisines in the restaurants, we used to eat our nation's food, such as bean paste stew, kimchi, etc. Honestly speaking, Chosŏnjok living habits are deeply influenced and assimilated by Chinese Han. For example, there were initially no traditions to set off crackers and post new-year scrolls to celebrate Chinese Spring Festival. Assimilated by Chinese Han people, we began to enjoy fireworks and visit relatives when it comes to Chinese New Year. (Interview with Han Xuefeng, March 15th 2015, Han's home)

Han's experience proves that even though Chosŏnjok moved to China for years, they still appreciated their own ethnic culture. While Li's case below illustrates that because they go to ethnic school, they feel different from other peers living around them.

...The main reason I feel that I am different with the children in my neighborhood is because I went to ethnicity school. The contents we learnt in ethnicity school are partially different. And the classes were basically conducted in Korean language...

(Interview with Li Na, March 22th 2015, Li's home)

The vigorous ethnic identity of Chosŏnjok in China derives from geopolitical background of Manchuria and their unique cultural characteristic traits. They have never lost their ethnic identity nor been obliged to desert it ever since they immigrated to the northeast part of China. During the Japanese colonial time, they had formed a strong ethnic identity as the result of cruel oppression. After the establishment of the PRC, the minority policy of New China permitted them to utilize their own language and to possess their own ethnic education. The policy of isolation has been sustained as the Chosŏnjok autonomous region was founded in 1952. No large scale or planned integration through cultural assimilation has been enforced by the government with regard to Chosŏnjok as well. Having been conceived as one of the model ethnic minority groups among minorities in China, Chosŏnjok have enjoyed superior ethnic pride (Li 2006: 66).

Another significant factor that helps Chosŏnjok remain strong ethnic identity is the Korean language. As mentioned above, language is not only merely a tool of communication, but also a cultural tie that connected with a nation's culture and history. It was understandable for the Korean immigrants to establish a "compact community" from their collective villages. This was not only due to their traditions

or way of life but also due to language barriers. The Korean language has been proved to have had the function of isolating Koreans from other ethnic groups, mainly from the ethnic Han people and Manchurians. The Chosŏnjok autonomous prefecture government has been trying any efforts and any channels, such as advocating ethnic education, encouraging to publish newspapers and magazines, developing ethnic mass communications, in order to make sure the preservation of Korean language. Also, the fact that Chosŏnjok are generally living together in compact communities played an important role in preserving the linguistic homogeneity of the Chosŏnjok identity. This is the reason why ongoing Chosŏnjok population to large cities is judged to weaken Korean ethnic consciousness. Many young Chosŏnjok generations who have attended ordinary schools in urban areas are not able to speak Korean language. Chosŏnjok leaders and intellectuals have been underlining the important correlation between language and ethnic identity by pinpointing the fact that the Manchu have been assimilated into the ethnic Han because they lost their language and cultural homogeneity.

In our generation, as I recall, majority of Chosŏnjok lives in compact. There was relatively sparse opportunity to have interactions with Chinese Han people in our daily life. We were constantly using Korean languages as communication tool. We could hardly speak Chinese mandarin neither since we mainly went to ethnicity school... (Interview with Jin Changzhi, March 23th 2015, Jin's home)

I was not able to speak Chinese mandarin when I joined the army when I was 16 years old. There were 38 Chosŏnjok in our village chosen to serve the military, only 3 of us could understand and speak Chinese language. At first, new recruits soldiers were receiving military training together. Therefore, these three Chosŏnjok were responsible for translating and interpreting meeting contents to the rest of us who were not capable of understanding Chinese. Later on, when we finished military training from new recruits community, we had had to be dispatched to local army. Unfortunately, I was the only Chosŏnjok in the local troop; I began to learn Chinese from my comrades from then on. (Interview with Li Renjiu, March 27th 2015, Li's home)

Both Jin and Li's cases illustrate that the majority of elder generation of Chosŏnjok go to ethnic school and they are able to speak fluent Korean language. Due to this reason, they maintain strong ethnic culture and history within the Chosŏnjok community compact.

In terms of ethnic characteristics, Chosŏnjok in China intend to differentiate themselves from ethnic Han People. The standard referred to is the ethnic Han in the Northeast part of China, who immigrated into this region during the same episode as the Koreans, predominantly from Shandong province. As a matter of fact, Chosŏnjok's viewpoints and comprehension of other ethnic groups are likely to be superficial, and they have not formed a close relationship with them in that they always live together in Chosŏnjok compact communities. Chosŏnjok has mainly had interactions with ethnic Han and has lived surrounded by them.

Lacking comprehensive understanding of Han culture and characteristics, Chosŏnjok are prone to reckon that they are distinct from Han Chinese in their way of living and thinking, life styles, including food, clothing, and residence, etc. Chosŏnjok's distinctive "ethnic characteristics" appear to be even more obvious through examining these differences. Also, Chosŏnjok have managed their lives embraced by the Chinese and Han cultures that possess fairly vigorous assimilate powers. Living in a ethnic Han dominant society, it is inevitable for Chosŏnjok to feel limitations, such as obstacles in promoting their social status or enlarging political participations. The Cultural Revolution, which threatened the basic premises of Han-minority relations, is said to have had a devastating impact upon the Korean ethnic identity (Li 2006: 67). Starting from 1966, minority education and language were excessively jeopardized. This experience has remained in the collective consciousness of some elder Chosŏnjok generations, who have conceived themselves as marginal since their immigration to China.

During the episode of Cultural Revolution, all of my friends in my generation living in the county or city, no matter Chosŏnjok or Chinese Han, were sent to villages to receive education. However, some of the elder were not that lucky. Especially during the time when relationship between China and North Korea worsened, the elder who worked for the government were criticized and denounced by the red guards. They were conceived that they had personal connections with North Koreans and they are regarded as national sinners or national extremists.
(Interview with Jin Changzhi, March 23th 2015, Jin's home)

The feeling of being marginalized reappeared among Chosŏnjok right after open door policy. In the collectivist agricultural society, Chosŏnjok was extolled as one of the model ethnic groups with outstanding characteristics of diligence and high efficiency. Under period of industrialization and modernization in China, however, Chosŏnjok conceived their home, particularly Yanbian, as a geo-economic hinterland when compared to the coastal areas. They are aware of the fact that they might become less competitive and less connected in business than the ethnic Han in current open and competitive society. From this perspective, some negative sentiments of the Chosŏnjok are usually induced as the result of stagnation to progress.

In addition, Chosŏnjok in China often satirize themselves with the expression of “host and guest.” Despite conceiving themselves as citizens of the China, they do not reckon that they are the mainstream of Chinese society. They think of themselves not as “host” of the country but as “guest”. The Chosŏnjok mass media often reports instances of Chosŏnjok who have accessed the mainstream of Chinese society as high-ranking cadres, military generals, researchers and professors, lacing an emphasis on the importance of trying to have “ownership” of the country. However, Chosŏnjok still hold an awareness of being marginalized in their collective consciousness.

I am not sure whether this kind of phenomenon (ethnic minorities cannot make it to higher ranking class) exists and there is still an ambiguous threshold or definition on what is a high political position. I myself was elected as the school principal

when I was 40 years old. I think I received lots of preferential incentives because of my identity as Chosǒnjok. Also, there are some critical political leaders working in the central government, for example, Zhao Nanqi, who was working as the vice chairman of the CPPCC, is also Chosǒnjok. (Interview with Jin Changzhi, March 23th 2015, Jin's home)

My eventual position when I served the military was regimental commander. I had stayed in the military for more than 20 years. Based on my personal experiences, I did not think there were discriminations towards us as ethnic minorities. But one thing is for sure is that you have to have personal connections within the military when there are promotion opportunities. It is usually the case that there are several persons qualified to receive promotion, yet due to the limited quota, only those who bribed related personnel or had affiliations with them can enjoy the opportunity. Under such circumstance, Chosǒnjok, as ethnic minority, do not have intensive personal connections within the military, are not able to get promoted quickly as Han people do. However, in most cases, promotion largely depends on individual competence and behaviors. (Interview with Li Renjiu, March 23th 2015, Li's home)

It has formed a common consensus that ethnic minorities cannot be elected as critical leaders in the government, or it is quite hard for us to get promotion, despite that the minority policy articulates that all Chinese nations are sharing the same footings. I did not know about what is going on within government and the

system; I heard those stories from my parents and other elders. (Interview with Li Na, March 22th 2015, Li's home)

For comprehensible reasons, the CCP is reluctant to renounce its influence over personnel appointments, especially in China's ethnic minority autonomous regions and prefectures. Practically, this has indicated selecting Han Chinese leaders to serve in the most significant positions in administrative sections. Meanwhile, top Chinese leaders have acknowledged the importance of maintaining ethnic minority cadres work in the Party-State elite, both for propaganda intentions and to encourage minority peoples to perceive the system as comprising chances for their own advancement and thus compliance with the system rather than against it. Those ethnic minority cadres who have been selected by the CCP Organization Department have usually gone through intensive scrutiny to ascertain that they are constant to the CCP and will obediently follow the leadership of CCP.

Chapter Four

Ethnic Return Migration: Chosŏnjok in South Korea

State responses to the phenomenon of ethnic return migration, or the movement of people to their ancestral homeland, can present challenges to the horizontal understanding of nationhood (Seol & Skrentny 2009: 147). It is true that the majority of the ethnic return migrants nowadays are generations removed from the kin state, and they are not typically full members of the nation, despite the fact that they might be preferred over other foreigners. In other words, co-nationality can be recognized but fully equality denied (Seol & Skrentny 2009: 148).

Hierarchical nationhood may present a significant challenge to theories of the nation and nation building because it indicates that the nation-defining practices are both more and less inclusive than previously considered (Seol & Skrentny 2009: 149). On the one hand, particular freedom endorsing to co-ethnic foreigners indicates that the definition of nations may be beyond territories. For example, the state recognition of co-nationality from Chosŏnjok to Korea would possibly encroach on the sovereignty of host states (China in this case), because it invites loyalty to the kin state (Korea in this case). On the other hand, those co-ethnic return migrants may be over other foreigners, yet not equal to native-born citizens. They are close to and part of the nation, but are not the same as indigenous people. There is still an “imagined community”, but it is not always the equal, horizontal

conception argued by Anderson (1991). As denied citizenship, these co-ethnic return migrants cannot share in the rights and opportunities of indigenous people. Similar but still identifiable, there are high possibilities that they may face discrimination at work and daily life.

Hierarchical nationhood is also different from transnationalism, which typically describes migrants who never severed ties with their homeland and actively maintained ties of various kinds during their stay in another state (Waldinger and Fitzgerald, 2004). In contrast, ethnic return migration usually involves individuals who did not maintain ties and in fact may be generations removed from the original sending state—and have never set foot in their ethnic or ancestral homeland (Seol & Skrentny 2009: 160). As discussed above, Chosŏnjok have not maintained its ties with South Korea due to political reasons, which makes them fall into ethnic return migration catalogue.

Hierarchical nationhood can be characterized on two dimensions of subaltern status (Seol & Skrentny 2009: 160). First is a legal dimension, where the state draws lines between the indigenous members and other co-ethnic return migrants by offering the latter diverse opportunities for citizenship, residence visas and work formally, practicing a variety of work permits. Second is a social dimension where indigenous members draw lines informally, practicing diverse types of discrimination against co-ethnic return migrants even under the circumstances that they recognize their kinships.

Drawing on a population of about 1,830,909 in China²⁸, Chosŏnjok is the largest group of ethnic return migrants to South Korea and also the largest group of foreigners in Korea. Chosŏnjok have also been the target of majority of policy-making in terms of ethnic return migration. Chosŏnjok residents living in Korea can be roughly divided into three categories: (1) migrant workers and job seekers; (2) wives or husbands of Korean citizens and (3) others, which includes mostly students and short-term visitors (Seol & Skrentny 2009: 149).

Thus, in this chapter, I will look at the legal dimension of Korean hierarchical nationhood regarding Chinese Korean and show how policy maps onto the Korean state's economic and geopolitical interests. Next, I will examine the social dimension, highlighting Korean citizens' attitudes towards Chosŏnjok. Then I will show how the hierarchical nationhood identified in policy and law is manifested in these attitudes.

1. The Legal Dimension of Korean Hierarchical Nationhood: Labor Policies on Foreign Workers in South Korea

Ong addresses “capitalist discipline operates through a variety of control mechanisms in social, political and work domains both regulate and legitimate

²⁸ Population Census Office under the State Council, People's Republic of China. 2010. Tabulation on the 2010 Population Census of the People's Republic of China. Beijing: China Statistical Publishing House. (Accessed: March 31, 2015)

unequal relations between capital and labor” (Ong 1987: 121). In light of such analysis, it is necessary to explore power in different domains that influences the Chosŏnjok migration workers. I began with inspecting government policies because the economic and social policies enforced by the modern states are the constitutive elements of capitalist industrial relations (Jin 2006: 70).

In South Korea, adopting the “grow first” policy, the previous authoritarian rulers amended labor laws to allow their draconian intervention in labor disputes, which helped secure capitalist expansion at the expense of laborers’ interests (Jin 2006: 70). After South Korea has gone through democratization movement, the previous labor laws have been changed to undermine state power in labor disputes. However, the state still played a significant role in constructing and normalizing industrial relations in South Korea. As I will discuss in the following section, it is embedded in the construction of power imbalance between foreign workers and capital through enacting systems that are preferential Korean employers and marginalize unskilled migrant workers. In the following, I will mention this point through examining the labor systems introduced by South Korean government to import unskilled foreign workers.

1.1 Relative Visiting

Chosŏnjok trips to South Korea started full scale in 1989 in the form of visiting relatives. It is estimated that by 1996 more than 120,000 Chosŏnjok had paid a visit to South Korea, which is over five percent of the total population of the Chosŏnjok

population in China (Jin 2006: 70). Having borrowed money at a high rate of interest in China to purchase Chinese medicines, the first coven of visitors from China brought those medicines to sell to South Koreans. It was not until the winter of 1993 that Chosŏnjok medicine peddlers became a social problem in South Korea. Hundreds of Chosŏnjok were in major streets in the major cities in Korea, and majority of the medicines were detected to be spurious. The problem was settled when the South Korean Red Cross bought all the medicines. Realizing that peddling Chinese medicine had become profitless and because some peddlers were ruined by the debts they incurred when they bought the medicines, Chosŏnjok began to find jobs in Korea, especially in the construction field and in restaurants (Jin 2006: 70).

1.2 Industrial Technical Training Programme (ITTP)

The first foreign worker programme released by government was named the Industrial Technical Training Programme (ITTP), which brought low-skilled workers (majority of them were Chosŏnjok) for “3D” (dirty, difficult and dangerous) jobs (Jin 2006: 70). The ITTP was ostensibly for teaching and educating working skills to workers from less developed countries. It was initially proposed to limit Korean companies with investments or partnerships with overseas firms. From 1991, the government continually broadened the programme (with a brief break in 1997-8 due to the financial crisis) to offset worker shortages in low-skilled job vacancies. The programme has never met demand, and

consequently there have been huge numbers of undocumented and illegal workers in Korea. As a matter of fact, the majority of foreign workers in Korea were undocumented during that time (Li 2006: 77). Many foreign workers came to Korea by tourist visas and easily found jobs and overstayed. Many trainees also ran away from the firms that patronized them and work illegally for other companies in order to pursue higher wages.

Even though legally distinguished as foreigners, Chosŏnjok always possessed a favored place among numerous other foreign workers in the ITTP. Admittedly, indigenous Koreans' first preference for foreign workers was for these fellow Koreans because they would "pose less of a threat to South Korea's tight-knit, homogenous society" (Li 2006: 78). Policy makers endorsed Chosŏnjok a huge quota in the ITTP and paid them higher wages in the early years of the programme (Jin 2006: 70).

The classification of Chosŏnjok as foreigners and their inclusion in the ITTP, or their status as undocumented labors, virtually manifests more to the exclusion and lower ranking of Chosŏnjok than it first appeared (Li 2006: 78). Violation of trainees' human rights still remains as a big issue, and trainees' contracted wage remains to be low when compared to indigenous and illegal workers. The ITTP was flagrant among NGOs. Along with the news media that continuous reported violations of human rights due to the ITTP and NGOs protests for migration workers, South Korean government was determined to substitute the programme in August 2004 with the "Employment Permit System (EPS)", which gives short-term

visas to those migration workers, and at the same time endorsed them worker rights similar to those enjoyed by Korean citizens (Jin 2006: 71).

1.3 Employment Permit System (EPS)

The new system disclosed the government's willingness to better harbor foreign workers. For instance, the government articulated that foreign workers working in this system ought not be categorized as trainees. In light of this, foreign workers have become formal workers who enjoy labor rights prescribed by the existing labor laws and cannot be paid less than indigenous Koreans in South Korea. As a result, foreign migration workers who enter South Korea through EPS can organize labor unions to bargain with Korean employers or take other channels to improve their conditions in South Korea.

Besides this refinement, there are numerous other advantages in EPS that are able to better protect foreign migration workers (Jin 2006: 72). For example, the government required that the employers should take out departure guarantee insurance or departure guarantee lump-sum trust with foreign workers as beneficiaries (Li 2006: 72). Companies should take out guarantee insurance to ascertain foreign migration workers against belated wages. The government also patronized organizations that provide counseling, education and other services to foreign workers²⁹ (Jin 2006: 73).

²⁹ Ministry of Labor, Republic of Korea. 2003. Act on Foreign Workers Employment ETC. Retrieved March 15, 2005 www.molab.go.kr (Accessed: March 15, 2015)

No matter how the system changes externally, however, EPS remains to be a system that acts in the interests of capital to consolidate the power imbalance between labors and employers. This is manifested in its regulation on labor mobility. Within EPS, only in the subsequent conditions could foreign workers leave contracted firms: employers refuse to prolong labor contract; employers violate labor laws; the company go bankruptcy so that foreign migration laborers are not able to work in the contracted company any longer etc. Above all, EPS rigidly bans foreign migration workers to change jobs in pursuit of higher payment.

However, the system bolstered the discretionary privilege to employers in dismissing foreign migration workers. For example, under the following circumstances, Korean employers can dismiss foreign migration workers: workers' incompliance with the labor contract, workers' absence without leave, workers' refusing to response to employers' justifiable instructions or damaging companies' property. In addition, disease, indulgence in alcohol, abnormality of character could also be reasons for employers to fire foreign migration workers. In case that those foreign migration workers are dismissed by the anchor companies, they have to leave South Korea within two months after dismissal if they cannot be re-employed by other companies. These arrangements manifest that EPS is virtually proposed to help Korean employers to exploit foreign migration workers.

Civil groups like Association for Foreign Workers' Human Right in Pusan (FWR) have condemned EPS. Besides the constriction on labor mobility, FWR reveals that Ministry of Labor has suggested Korean employers to pay migrants less than the

indigenous Koreans, to which extent encourages differential treatment in South Korea. Some political activists argue that EPS would not successfully settle the problems facing foreign migration workers (Li 2006: 75).

1.4 Other Programmes

Another part of the legal dimension to Chosŏnjok subaltern status is a programme implemented at the end of 2002 to provide short-term service work visas for Chosŏnjok. Chosŏnjok who are over 40 years old and with family (cousins or closer relatives) in Korea would obtain special two-year visas to work in the labor intensive service industries, for example, providing cheap labors to restaurants, cleaning companies and nursing facilities. In 2007, the South Korean state enlarged the programme beyond service work and entitled it as “Visit and Employment Programme for Ethnic Koreans with Foreign Citizenship”. It enables all overseas Koreans over the age of 25 to obtain a “Visit and Employment” (H-2) visa. This type of visa allows free entry and departure from Korea for at least five years and employment by any companies in Korea for three years. It mainly targets at economic sectors that need unskilled labors, such as construction, manufacturing and services (Yoo 2007: 20). Even though this was initially intended to technically open to the more highly skilled Korean Americans, in reality the majority of people who are using it are Chosŏnjok.

Last but not the least, a policy initiated to solve the problem of undocumented workers in Korea was released in 2005, The Ministry of Justice created a

programme, the “Voluntary Departure Programme” to regularized Chosŏnjok undocumented migration workers. It warranted that Chosŏnjok who are staying in Korea without proper visas could return to Korea and work for up to three years if they voluntarily registered at government, departed the country and then stayed abroad (outside South Korea) for one year. This option was not available to foreign workers migration who are not co-nationals. The programme immensely reduced the number of illegally residing Chosŏnjok in Korea (Seol & Skrentny 2009: 170).

1.5 Law on Overseas Koreans

The law on Overseas Koreans passed in 1999 in South Korea is an emblem of globalization and the new deterritorialized Korean nation (Seol & Skrentny 2009: 174). It guaranteed overseas Koreans the privilege to invest capital, possess property, and be employed in both the private and public sectors. The definition of overseas Koreans, nevertheless, is controversial in the sense that the Law categorized them as people who once lived within South Korea (established in 1948) as citizens and also the descendants of these people. This definition excludes Chosŏnjok in China and other members of the colonial diaspora in Russia and Japan as well. Enacted and released during IMF crisis period, the Law is generally reckoned as a desirable channel to allure Korean Americans’ capital. While on the other hand, Chosŏnjok were excluded due to the fact that they are generally low skilled (Seol & Skrentny 2009: 149).

Since it is the Chosŏnjok among numeral other overseas Koreans who have mainly migrated to South Korea, the issue is focusing on whether Chosŏnjok would be permitted legal visitation and employment in South Korea. Chosŏnjok and their advocates have initiated and led the Campaign, and formed the Committee to Reform the Law on Overseas Koreans. Later on, along with the intervention of the National Council of Churches (NCC) in the final moment of the Campaign, the South Korean parliament eventually passed the revision in February 2004. The revised law embraces the category of Korean compatriots those who had left Korean peninsula prior to 1945 (Seol & Skrentny 2009: 147).

2. The Social Dimension of Hierarchical Nationhood: Chosŏnjok's Life Experiences in South Korea

2.1 Experiencing Differences

Lives for the first batch of Chosŏnjok who migrated to South Korea as industrial trainees were fairly arduous. The difficulties derive from vast differences between them and native Koreans, comprising of language, food, and labor concepts etc.

First of all, Korean Chines are used to speaking Korean dialects, which are distinct from Korean language that native Koreans are using. Chosŏnjok from Jilin province are fond of using North Korean dialects, while Heilongjiang Chosŏnjok are using Gyeongsang dialect in a way quite different from Gyeongsang Koreans

are speaking. Besides distinct dialects, majority of the words Chosŏnjok used to speak are more likely to be a combination between Korean language and Chinese, which can be confusing for native Koreans to understand at times. In addition, Chosŏnjok speak Korean in a much higher tone than native Koreans do. Under some circumstances, for example, a quiet cafeteria, a relatively high voice might be utterly disturbing while others are eating. Chosŏnjok therefore received capacious complaints and discriminations because of their strange dictions.

...it seems to me that language is not a problem when I firstly came to Korea. However, there was sometimes that I am quite confusing about the words that native Koreans use. They are used to combining English and Korean together. For example, one of the guests asked me to give him “memoji”. I had no idea what “memoji” is because we do not say it in China. But I know “ji” means paper. I brought him toilet paper instead. The Korean guest laughed at me and said “memoji” is the paper that you can write something on it. This is just only one example among numerous others that embarrassed me because of the language... (Interview with Jin Changzhi, March 23th 2015, Jin’s home)

...That was the time when I worked as a domestic worker in a rich family. The daughter-in-law was quit harsh to me. One day, she asked me to bring her “napkin”. She pronounced “napkin” in English way that I could understand. I then went to find another native Korean fellow worker and asked her what “napkin” is. She told me “napkin” means “tissue”. I became rather confused and asked her

again, “what is tissue?” She did not know how to explain it. She fetched some “napkin” for me. I then realized that the “napkin” they were talking about is called “huazhangji” among Chinese Koreans. (Interview with Jin Zhengyu, March 17th 2015, Jin’s home)

Second, Chosŏnjok and Native Koreans hold assorted eating patterns. Chosŏnjok have been partially influenced and assimilated by Chinese Han people in the sense that they are inclined to add extra oil into their soup or eat deep fried food. Therefore, they could not adapt to the food in Korea at the first time they arrived. Majority of my informants noticed that they always feel hungry even though they ate a lot during the meal, just simply because there are limited amount of oil and meat in the food.

...As I recalled the first year when I was here, I was always hungry. I usually ate at the cafeteria in our company. Well, probably because there was no oil in the soup and also scant meat in the food. I used to eat instant noodles when I went back to my home... (Interview with Han Xuefeng, 15th March 2015, Han’s home)

Third, Chosŏnjok who previously worked in the type of work units possess a different sense of work, which is not consistent with capital way of working. China’s work units before the economic and labor reform were characterized by workers’ high dependence: “social and economic dependence on the enterprises,

political dependence on management and personal dependence on superiors” (Li Jing 2006). Job security is tightly associated with workers’ dependence, commonly acknowledged as iron ice bowl (*tiefanwan*) in China including egalitarian wage system and tremendous fringe benefits ranging from health care, recreation to children’s education etc. Under such circumstance, diverse rewards largely depend on workers’ tactful interpersonal relations (*guanxi*) in *danwei* rather than their productive skill or efficiency. Thus it has formed a common consensus that exploitation did not exist in China during that time. In capitalism economy, nevertheless, production for earnings and accumulation is the utmost important purpose of all or most of production; workers are recruited and regimented in the workplace in a hierarchy, under the control or authority of the capital owner. Chosŏnjok have been complaining about ceaseless and painstaking work and they could not entirely accommodate to the authoritarian management in Korean companies; when they fail to get rewards from good personal relations with the native managers, they criticize South Koreans as two-faced.

The disciplinary forces in South Korea have made Chosŏnjok attitudes and behaviors consistent with capitalism. They have internalized self-reliance and competitiveness. Despite that they suffer from long working hours, poor working conditions and relatively low wage, many Chosŏnjok believe that as long as one work hard, he/she can earn and save money in South Korea (Li 2006: 77).

2.2 Ethnic Hierarchy in the Labor Market and Workplaces of South Korea

Along with the government policies that marginalize low skilled foreign migration workers, the labor market and work forces in South Korea are extremely hierarchized along the ethnic line.

First, foreign migration workers like Chosŏnjok are only able to seek employment in small and medium-sized enterprises where working conditions are poor and they have to work for long hours. Native Koreans try to avoid such companies due to bad conditions. Foreign migration workers cannot enter large companies not only because of the political hurdles, but also due to the native Koreans' unfriendly attitude towards them. Chosŏnjok are particularly conceived as undesirable foreigners who take jobs away from the native Korean.

Second, the ethnic hierarchy prevails in workplaces in diverse ways. For example, workers' wage directly manifests this hierarchy in South Korea. The native Korean workers are generally paid more than Chosŏnjok. In a word, native Korean people can be paid higher than other unskilled foreign workers mainly due to the ethnic affiliation with the country. Differential treatment rooted in ethnicity is also revealed in promotion. Many informants told me that managers are generally South Koreans in their companies; Chosŏnjok may be promoted to overseer, but generally it is impossible for them to access to higher managerial position. Other non-Korean foreign migration workers, unfortunately, are usually at the bottom. Korean companies generally treat low skilled foreign migration workers this way, but it may vary according to the Korean employers' characteristics and styles. There are

some kind Korean employers who treat foreign workers equally, while a lot others have much stronger ethnic discriminations against them. Given that foreign migration workers only enjoy limited labor rights in South Korea before 2004, they were more vulnerable to the capricious authority of Korean employers.

When we (with her husband) first arrived here, the boss was stern to us. He told us he would know if we were not working even though he was not here in that there were CCTV equipped at every corner of the motel, and he can watch our behaviors though his mobile phone from time to time. Later on, as he began to know we were diligent and hardworking couple, he gradually changed his harsh attitude and started to talk to us about his family. Yesterday, he went back to his hometown and left all of motel stuff to us. He said if we were not here, he would not have the chance to go back to his hometown with the motel open... (Interview with Jin Zhengyu, March 17th 2015, Jin's home)

I am doing the same job as the native Korean do. The only difference is that I watch the motel during the day, while the other Korean guy has to stay up during the night. As a matter of fact, however, he always sleeps because there are not many guests after midnight. I receive 1,200,000 Korean dollars every month, while another Korean gets 1,500,000 Korean dollars. Sometimes I feel unfair. When thinking about this amount of money is even higher than the money I have ever made in China, I stop complaining... (Interview with Jin Changzhi, March 23th 2015, Jin's home)

Third, relations among workers are greatly depends on ethnic line. Although there are some Chosŏnjok who get along well with the native Korean workers, there are more complaints about the discriminations from the native Koreans. Some of my informants complained that the native Korean workers sometimes urged the managers to distribute dangerous and dirty jobs to foreign workers, or ask migrants to serve or work for them. Most Korean Chinese found it difficult to refuse these demands for the fear of being reported by others due to their illegal status in South Korea. Even some Chosŏnjok have already obtained relatively higher position in the company, they may still occasionally confront with disobedience from the native Korean workers who are ranking lower than them.

...We are all working for restaurants. Externally we are doing the same job, but actually it is not always the case. There are three Chosŏnjok here in this restaurant, as you can see, we all working in the kitchen. We have to clean the dishes, wash vegetables and prepare foods. No matter there are guests or not, we have to work all the time. On the contrary, the native Koreans are working outside the kitchen. They are busy when there are guests eating here. But other times when there are no guests, they are free. The unfair thing is that we receive the same amount of salary. I intended to complain to our boss but I did not. I assumed that there would be numerous other Chosŏnjok waiting in a line who want to do this job despite of the unfairness. On thinking of my family, I made up my mind sticking it out... (Interview with Liu Guiju, March 30th 2015, kimbak restaurant)

2.3 The Depiction of Chosŏnjok in South Korea's Mass Media

There is no doubt that the media has a significant impact on public perspectives towards a social group (Li 2006: 80). In this regard, the South Korea's mass media's attitudes towards the return Chosŏnjok migrants are not homogenous: some press depicted them as opportunists who have hazarded the Korean ethnic kinship; while there were other press appealed to understanding and tolerance. However, the methods they have taken to fulfill this goal have contradictorily marginalized the Chosŏnjok in South Korea. The following analysis is fundamentally rooted in Park's (1996: 30) research findings and reports from several major newspapers in English language.

Park has been studying Korean and English newspapers to grasp the media's attitudes towards Chosŏnjok. His findings reveal that mass media in South Korea was relatively friendly toward the Chosŏnjok before the 1980s. Apart from residing in China, Chosŏnjok were extolled for having preserved Korean ethnic identity and culture. Perceiving Chosŏnjok as long absent brothers, newspapers were keen on describing the visits of Chosŏnjok to South Korea and what commonalities that Koreans in China and in South Korea are sharing. The title of the reports highlighted as "Stout-hearted Koreans in China," "The life dream: Visiting the motherland" or "Looking for separated family members" (Park 1996: 32). Throughout those newspapers, South Koreans came to know that Chosŏnjok were the best-educated and richest ethnic minority in China due to their ceaseless efforts

and diligence, and this was conceived as a prove of Korean ethnicity's superiority upon other minority groups. "Hard-working and prosperous," "the best educated model minority," "enduring markers of Korean tradition," were always the terminologies that utilized by South Korean reports about the Chosŏnjok.

At that time, the mass media vigorously embraced the Chosŏnjok (Park 1996: 33). However, reports gradually lost its interests towards Chosŏnjok in the 1990s, when Chosŏnjok medicine peddlers crowded into South Korea. In October 1990, a government report said that drugs sold by Chosŏnjok were bogus and poisonous. Due to such kind of reports, Chosŏnjok were thought of opportunists and they were untrustworthy. Also, Chosŏnjok peddlers could no longer sell their bogus medicines to the native Koreans. From then on, Chosŏnjok started to work as foreign migration workers to make money in South Korea. Subsequently, reports regarding Chosŏnjok stated them as unskilled and illegal migration workers. Reports have described Chosŏnjok as anxious job seekers who only perceive South Korea as a place to make money. This hurt ethnic kinships with South Koreans from a South Korean point of view. Some reports therefore condemned Chosŏnjok having lost their ethnic roots (Park 1996: 33).

Moreover, the extensive inflow of Chosŏnjok population did result in severe social conflicts. They took jobs away from the native Koreans and committed crimes that threatened daily lives of South Koreans. As a result, Chosŏnjok were more often depicted as swindlers, illegal workers or opportunists since the 1990s. Likewise, North Korean defectors somehow shared the same experience with Chosŏnjok. At the beginning, North Korean defectors were welcomed, however,

from the middle 1990s, they are increasingly depicted as non-competitive, impolite and selfish. They are further condemned for taking jobs, wasting tax-payers money, being involved in criminal activities or even acting as spies for the North (Li 2006: 81). In a word, both North Koreans and Chosŏnjok are stigmatized as marginalized ethnic groups in South Korea .

However, there are newspaper articles that have called for sympathy and understanding toward Chosŏnjok. For example, “The Lost Tribe of Korea: Chosŏnjok Striving for the Right”(Josslin 2001), “Chosŏnjok: Shunned by Their Own Motherland”(Soh 2002) or “Tears of Our Sisters” (Korea Herald, November 26, 2003) are the headlines for articles about the hard lives that Chosŏnjok are conducting in South Korea. Reporters write sympathetically about Chosŏnjok with a concentration on their history of immigration. They pinpointed that under Japanese colonization, the ancestors of the Chosŏnjok, who were generally Korean patriots that made great sacrifices to win Korea’s independence from Japan, were forced to leave their hometowns to China. In light of this, their descendants should definitely be well welcomed and treated in South Korea (Park 1996: 33).

The initial good intentions ran counter to the desire for appealing to sympathy and tolerance towards Chosŏnjok. In order to call for the understanding of the native Koreans, these stories were basically concentrating on tragedy lives that Chosŏnjok were living in South Korea and therefore give the impression that the Chosŏnjok were poor people who devoted themselves to the most undesirable jobs in South Korea that the local Koreans avoided. These reports to some extent achieved its goal to call for better treatment for Chosŏnjok in South Korea, yet they

meanwhile made the native Koreans to feel superiority to Chosŏnjok. This had given rise to what Kim (1999) calls “internal ethnic discrimination”, which is an inclination for native Koreans to consider Chosŏnjok as inferior class in Korean society.

Above all, hierarchic nationhood in South Korea that accentuates primordial sentiment and homogenous culture encounters real and profound challenges in dealing with the return Chosŏnjok migrants (Li 2006: 83). In legal dimension, South Korean government practices the several systems and laws to treat overseas Koreans according to their relationship with capital. In social dimension, Chosŏnjok, along with other foreign migration workers were excessively marginalized and discriminated. In addition, some reports in South Korea have unconsciously cooperated with the government to marginalize Chosŏnjok, while others appeal to accepting them, however, the strategy that they have taken stereotypes Chosŏnjok as an inferior ethnic group in South Korea (Li 2006: 83).

Chapter Five

Chosŏnjok as Migration workers: Ethnic Identity

Negotiation Between National and Ethnicity Identity

Bearing in mind social construction and environment play a critical role in shaping ethnic identity in light of constructivism, in this chapter, I will firstly demonstrate the aforementioned legal and social dimension's influence on the formation process of Chosŏnjok's identity. Secondly, borrowing cross-border ethnicity theory, I will explain the plausibility of coexistence of national and ethnic identities of Chosŏnjok. Finally, I will demonstrate how Chosŏnjok negotiate their national and ethnic identities working as migration workers in South Korea by applying structuralism theory.

Before migration, Chosŏnjok possess dual identity as discussed in the third chapter including the identity as Chinese citizen, and the identity as one of the ethnic minorities—Chosŏnjok in China. Admittedly, the political economic and sociocultural factors have had strong influence toward the formation process of both of the identities in China. As primordialists argues that the ethnic identity derives from biological and ancestral inheritance. Thus it is an indubitable fact that even before Chosŏnjok immigrated to China, they naturally possess an identity, which is as the same Korean ethnicity with local Koreans on Korean peninsula. In addition, instrumentalism argues that ethnicity as a tool for advancing self-interest

and as a rational choice to minimize social costs and maximize socioeconomic benefits. After Chosŏnjok return migrating to South Korea, the South Korean government, mass media and the local Koreans either reject them as the same Korean ethnicity or categorize them into an inferior ethnic group, they consequently embrace Chinese identity with personal dignity and superiority. As a result, their Korean ethnic identity is reinforced as a cultural one, which means that they are Koreans yet belonging to the big family of Chinese Nation (*Zhonghua minzu*). However, in order to survive in South Korea, Chosŏnjok claim their identity as Korean ethnicity connected with the Korean nation state to bargain for better socioeconomic benefits. In conclusion, I argue that the identity of Chosŏnjok is virtually not consistent, but is negotiated depending on the social situations and contexts.

1. Legal Dimension's Influence towards Chosŏnjok's Identity

As Park (1996: 35) mentions, “beneath the surface of this inclusive language in South Korea is, however, not a homogeneous and borderless identity, but rather the footing of a hierarchical community which reflects colonial experiences and postcolonial developments” (Park 1996: 35). In short, overseas Koreans in South Korea are not treated equally. The Law on Overseas Koreans enacted in 1999 is a strong proof of this point. In light of this law, overseas Koreans with foreign citizenship are able to enter South Korea freely and are endorsed to the same rights

as the indigenous South Koreans in the realms of private poverty, employment. They can also apply for national health care and get state compensations. These preferential treatments are created to attract talented and wealthy overseas Koreans especially Korean Americans to Korea, where they can further boost economic development in South Korea. However, since the law defines “Overseas Koreans” as those who left Korea after 1948, Chosŏnjok were generally excluded from the overseas Koreans defined by Korean government. This is partially because the government worried about the potential negative economic and social impacts in terms of the extensive inflow of Chosŏnjok population. It also fears that revising the law to contain Chosŏnjok may jeopardize the friendly relationship between South Korea and China under the circumstance that China has been seriously opposing dual citizenship of Chosŏnjok.

Due to various concerns mentioned above, South Korean government could not accept Chosŏnjok as Overseas Korean. Under such circumstances like most other foreign migrants, Chosŏnjok had no choice but to be compliance with a rigid immigration policy in order to enter South Korea and they are also deprived of the same privilege as the native Korean labors have. As a result, most Chosŏnjok therefore become illegal workers or undocumented workers and are subject to discretionary crackdowns from the government.

Along with other systems like ITTP, EPS, Chosŏnjok are increasingly discriminated and marginalized in Korean society, which to large extent hurt their ethnic feelings as the same Korean ethnicity. The disappointment also came from another aspect. Before they returned to Korea, they usually had a fantastic illusion

towards lives in Korea. They consider that South Korea as their “mother land”, and lives in Korea would be pleasant since they share the same bloodline and speak the same languages. However, their alleged “Korean Dreams” were completely broken down due to the huge disparity between the spectaculars fantasy and arduous reality. The next section will further discuss how everyday tensions and conflicts influence Chosŏnjok’s identities.

2. Social Dimension’s Influence towards Chosŏnjok’s Identity

As a matter of fact, it is fairly difficult to distinct Chosŏnjok from local Koreans in appearance because they after all belong to the same racial line. In addition, majority of Chosŏnjok instantly change their dress and makeup in compliance with the natives after coming to South Korea, which further makes them invisible. This astonished me a lot as I was surprised to find that many Chosŏnjok I met look exactly like “South Korean”.

In further contact with them, nevertheless, I came to know how to identify Chosŏnjok. Accent is the first and foremost thing that I can distinguish because it is hard to change it in a short time. Most Chosŏnjok’s Korean accent is so strong that they can be easily distinguished as soon as they open their mouths. This makes them visible in South Korea. Some of Chosŏnjok have suffered a long time engaging in hiding their different accents in public because accent reveals their Chosŏnjok identification to the police. Some Chosŏnjok just simply avoid speaking

loudly in public space for the fear of being detected. Accent can also contribute to discrimination and prejudice. Their accent is often considered as unpleasant or rude, which indicates that they are inferior to the native Koreans. Li's case suggests that Chosŏnjok's strong accent is a big factor that differentiates them with local Koreans.

...I was born in Yanji, and I went to ethnicity school from primary school to university. It is hard for me to change my accent. But in order to adapt myself into lives in Korean company, I was sedulously engaged in changing my accent. At first, Korean people cannot distinguish that I am not Korean. However, when I became busy at company, the stress and obstacles are so overwhelming that I have no time to think about accents. I started to use Chosŏnjok dialects, which sometimes may scares my colleagues... (Interview with Li Na, March 22th 2015, Li's home)

Chosŏnjok and the natives can conveniently distinguish each other due to the accent; intensive tensions and conflicts are therefore unavoidable in daily interactions with the natives. Tensions firstly come from distinct comprehensions towards national and ethnic identities. South Koreans have the feeling of being betrayed when they realize that Chosŏnjok commit themselves as Chinese. Moreover, due to the government's policies and domestic propaganda toward Chosŏnjok, South Koreans show attitude either to reject Chosŏnjok or at best patronize them, which is rather confusing for Chosŏnjok and therefore encourage Chosŏnjok to resent South Koreans. Li (2006: 85) addresses that Chosŏnjok and

the South Koreans holds different understandings of national and ethnic identities or the concept of their country. Since Korean nationalism is ethnocentric, most native Koreans equate national and ethnic identities. To South Koreans, the term “our country” is “a combination of our and country,” which means “a state composed of people share the same ancestors” (Li 2006: 86).

However, affected by Chinese government centered nationalism, Chosŏnjok have been accustomed to the coexistence of national and ethnic identity. To Chosŏnjok, Chinese and Korean ethnic identities are not contradictory. Such a difference in comprehending the relationship between national and ethnic identities can result in tensions. For example, considering national and ethnic identities as the same, the native Koreans feel being betrayed when Chosŏnjok do not discard their Chinese identity. Hence, they feel a lack of solidarity with Chosŏnjok despite shared bloodlines and ethnic culture. Piao’s experience says that deep inside her heart, she belongs to China; therefore when there were a sport competition between Korea and China, she would stand for China rather than Korea.

...I came here (Korea) in 2008, and I clearly remembered that was the year of our Beijing Olympic Games. It was hard for me and my husband to adapt to lives in Korea at first in that, one the one hand, works here were painstaking, we had to work for more than 10 hours a day in the restaurant; one the other hand, we missed our children, and there was no feeling of home here. I was working in a restaurant one day, when I saw that Chinese team defeated Korean team in Women’s archery competition on TV, the tears spontaneously came out. If I were in

China, I would not have cried. Especially under such circumstances that I suffered feelings of homeless and helpless in Korea, I felt my root and my home still in China... (Interview with Piao Chunying, March 11th 2015, kimbak restaurant)

The rejection of Chosŏnjok as Koreans does not necessarily have to be explicit. For example, sometimes the native Koreans call Chosŏnjok as “Chinese”.

...When we are dining together after work, all of the questions to me or about me are related to China. It somehow gave the feeling that even though we have been working together for 5 years, I am still not one of them. Well...being a Chinese is not a bad thing, but it sometimes gives me a feeling of being isolated. For now, I am trying to live with that kind of feeling... (Interview with Piao Tianyu, March 3, 2015)

This rejection becomes more prominent and striking when it refers to capitalist exploitation. Almost all of the companies in South Korea treat native Koreans and Chosŏnjok differently. Chosŏnjok can be paid less than the native workers because according to Korean employers, “they Chosŏnjok work like Chinese, this means that Chosŏnjok are not efficient in working” or they are already paid more than what they would have earned in China (Li 2006: 90).

...When I was working for that rich family, I just did some simple cleaning work. As for food preparation and stuff, they asked native Koreans to do. I remembered

there were more than 6 domestic workers in that family, and three of us were Chosŏnjok. I have worked there for one year, after received the salary, I suddenly realized that the daughter-in-law deducted three months' salary of mine. At the thought that I could not be bullied by that impolite woman, I called her and said, "your family is rich and quite famous around the neighborhood, if you do not pay me the full salary, I will write posters and post them on your front doors and cars in order to let others know that what kind of person you are." The daughter-in-law was initially reluctant to admit that she deducted my salary, but she eventually gave it to me and said that was a mistake... (Interview with Jin Zhengyu, March 17th 2015, Jin's home)

Another kind of discrimination, to which most Chosŏnjok are sensitive, is the inferiority imposed on them (Li 2006: 78). In reality, South Koreans do not conceive Chosŏnjok as foreigners completely. They "treat them with a mixture of sympathy, curiosity, misgiving and distrust" (Li 2006: 78). But most important, they see Chosŏnjok as inferior because these migrants are from relatively poor and underdeveloped China and are desperate to do the most undesirable jobs in South Korea that the natives avoid.

As realizing superiority over Chosŏnjok is expressed in everyday contacts between Chosŏnjok and the natives, Chosŏnjok increasingly grows a strong hatred against the South Koreans. For example, many Chosŏnjok said that the native Koreans always asked them preposterous questions like "Can you afford to eat bananas in China?" or "Do you use take a shower every day in China?" "Have you

eaten this kind of bread in China?” To Chosŏnjok, such nonsense questions are not just out of curiosity, but are a way of teasing them and China. In addition, the inferiority is implicit in the terminology *Chosŏnjok* that South Koreans use to call them. Han Xuefeng (one of my interviewees) informed me that “*Chosŏnjok*” in South Korea contains a meaning that the native Koreans think ill of them. The native Koreans call Korean Americans American compatriots and Korean Japanese Japanese compatriots, which indicate that they are Koreans’ compatriots from America or Japan. But Chosŏnjok are always called as *Chosŏnjok*, a terminology in South Korea that suggests that Chosŏnjok is inferior. In a word, the native Koreans express this inferiority of Chosŏnjok in a way that is offensive.

3. The Coexistence of National Identity and Ethnic Identity

In chapter two and three, I have analyzed the China’s ethnic politics, along with current economic and sociocultural situation of Chosŏnjok have had a significant influence on the formation process of dual identities of Chosŏnjok, including the identity as Chinese citizen, and identity as one of ethnic minority in China. In this section, I will mainly use the theory of “cross border ethnicity”, which defines the relationship of cross border minorities to their ethnic country (South Korea in this case) and China.

In China, cross-border ethnicity is demonstrated as a minority group whose traditional concentrated area is separated by modern state borders (Jin 2006: 60). Since the 1990s, academic discussions primitively focused on the nature of

relationship between cross-border ethnic groups with the China and also their ethnic country. Chinese scholars reckon that cross-border ethnicity belongs to cultural and historical realm but not political connotations. In light of such analysis, it does not necessarily contradict national identity as Chinese citizen. For instance, Wang and Du argue that cross border ethnicity is an ethnographic concept, not a political one (Wang and Du, 2000). Zhu (2000) uses the terminology “people across boundaries” in lieu of “cross-border ethnicity” to refer to such minority groups in China. From his point of view, Chosŏnjok and indigenous Koreans do not constitute a nationality or even an ethnic group; they are simply “people” across the state border that for historical reasons, are culturally similar (Zhu, 2000: 22). He further illustrates that cultural similarities with ethnic country cannot be a root of continual political identification with it (Zhu, 2000: 22).

Academic discussions over cross-border ethnicities are prone to regulate the relationship between the national and ethnic identities of those groups. China consequently is the only state that cross-border ethnicities shall anchor their political national identity, while the ethnic identities embodied in cultural and ethnic affinity only belong to cultural realm. Meanwhile, national consciousness based on the political identification with the Chinese state and nation ought to predominant cultural ethnic identity. Some other scholars address that regardless of origin and culture, all ethnic minority groups in China belong to the “Chinese Nation” (*Zhonghua minzu*). They further argue that ethnic identity is a cultural affiliation that does not contradict political identification with the Chinese nation

and state. Those arguments make it possible for the coexistence of their national and ethnic identities for cross-border ethnicities.

The relationship of Chosŏnjok with South Korea and China corresponds this academic consensus. Chosŏnjok intellectuals in China have noted that the Chosŏnjok in China has lost its political identification with the South Korea. Public statements of Chosŏnjok also ascertain this assertion. “Our future and hope lie in our reliance on China, which is developing rapidly. It is because we have driven our roots into this soil and we shall live here indefinitely. As a wise and brilliant minority group, we should support the prosperity of China in every field with mastership of this country”; “The Korea peninsula which we call our motherland, can only give us some comfort. The two Koreas cannot determine our destiny, or our political and practical circumstances. The Korean minority in China cannot be enriched with their help”.³⁰

In conclusion, the cross-border ethnicities theory makes it possible for the coexistence of both national and ethnic identity of these groups of people. Ethnic identity does not contradict political Chinese identity. And ethnic identity is merely a cultural affiliation.

4. Negotiation between National and Ethnic Identities in South Korea

Chosŏnjok inherit personal dignity and superiority to Chinese national identity in response to the feeling of being discriminated and marginalized in South Korea. In the following, I will describe what Chinese identity means to Chosŏnjok migrants,

³⁰ Heilongjiang News, April 1 and October 10, 1995

and how Chosŏnjok negotiate their national and ethnic identities throughout the daily interactions with native Koreans.

First, Chosŏnjok link their dignity and superiority to their Chinese national identity in the context of migration. Chosŏnjok are aware the fact that they are second-class citizens in Korea. The Laws on Overseas Koreans released in 1999 further legitimizes and institutionalizes discrimination and prejudice against Chosŏnjok. Fuglerud (1999: 55) argues that the discriminations that migrants have endured are not only because of everyday interactions with the natives, but also result from continuous contacts with officials such as policemen and immigration officers in the migration process (Fuglerud 1999: 55). Excluded from the official recognition of overseas Korean, Chosŏnjok, like other non-Korean low skilled foreign migrants, have to encounter hostile immigration officials in getting the visa to South Korea. Classifies as illegal workers, they are subject to discretionary oppressions from the government. The government arrests illegal Chosŏnjok workers and rigidly deports them out of Korea. All these treatments and messages receiving from Korean state reinforce the feeling among Chosŏnjok that they are not welcomed in South Korea.

...Before I got H-2 visa, I came to Korea several times with 3 months' visiting visa. Apparently I was coming here to work. During that time, I was afraid of being caught by the police. I would then be penalized and repatriated once spotted that I was working illegally in Korea. I did not dare go out and travel or go shopping

during my leisure time... (Interview with Zhao Xiuying, March 10th 2015, kimbak restaurant)

Native Koreans are also inclined to refuse to accept Chosŏnjok as compatriots. Under such circumstances, they conceive their Korean ethnic identity just as cultural one, which means Chosŏnjok still belong to China. In reality, some Chosŏnjok did initially feel some solidarity with South Koreans. But such kind of feeling fades away soon after they discovered that their ethnic country does not embrace them.

...I get along well with Korean colleagues in the company. Externally, we are good friends. However, not until recently did I realize that this is not always the case. You can distinguish some of your colleagues come close to you because they really want to befriend you, while others just simply want to utilize you... I was popular among Chosŏnjok friend, and they usually introduce blind dates to me. However, in my current company, Korean friends do not introduce blind dates to me, while they are likely to introduce their friends to native Korean girls. Then I realized that I am still different from them... (Interview with Li Na, March 22th 2015, Li's home)

Return migration undermines the emotion of some Chosŏnjok migrants for South Korea, which in turn intensifies their identity of Chinese.

...You know, China is composed of 56 nationalities. We Chosŏnjok belong to Chinese Nation (Zhonghua minzu)... Honestly speaking, we talk less about ethnicity in China since people cannot distinguish us with ethnic Han. Since we have been influenced and assimilated by ethnic Han, we are all Chinese...
(Interview with Liu Guiju, March 30th 2015, kimbak restaurant)

Confronting with rejection by South Korea, Chosŏnjok link their personal dignity to their Chinese national identity. Most of my informants understand that these Chosŏnjok who want South Korea citizenship in order to work and earn money in the country, yet, not because of they share the same bloodline with Korean ethnicity.

...For one thing, if they South Koreans and the state do not embrace you, and they do not see you as co-nationals, why do you want to be part of them? For another, our parents and children are living in China, we will go back to China after retirement... (Interview with Jin Changzhi, March 23th 2015, Jin's home)

... If you ask me to choose one place to enjoy my retire life, if possible, I am going to stay in Korea. It does not necessarily mean that I do not like China. China is still developing, and the quality of people is still low when compared to Korea. Living in Korea is comfortable for me, for example, the air, the transportation, the service they provide to customers, etc. ... (Interview with Jin Zhengyu, March 17th 2015, Jin's home)

In addition, Chinese identity to Chosŏnjok means superiority or escaping their relatively inferior social status in South Korea. This seems paradoxical when Chosŏnjok are often despised or discriminated against largely because they come from China. China can mean superiority to Chosŏnjok in the sense that they believe that the native Koreans are poorly informed about China. Many Chosŏnjok think that South Koreans are not aware of China's rapid development after the economic reform and therefore have a vague idea what an authentic contemporary China look like. Chosŏnjok hold the view that there is not a big disparity between the two countries in terms of urban development and modernization. Therefore, when facing discrimination and prejudice rooted in the presumed underdevelopment of China, Chosŏnjok attack back the natives as ignorant and uninformed.

...I encountered some old Koreans who are at age (62 years old), they constantly talked down to me (use non-honorific) as soon as they found out that I am from China. They asked me why you Chinese people came to Korea and make money, and then sent the money to China. At first, I just ignored them. Later on I realized that if I do not argue back, they would still think ill of me. I then answer to them with the same question, "Why you Korean people are going to China to invest?" I further replenish my argument, "we Korean Chines come to Korea can only make a small amount of money, whereas Korean enterprises investing in China are making substantial amount of money in China." (Interview with Jin Changzhi, March 23th 2015, Jin's home)

China also provides shelter where Chosŏnjok can ultimately escape their relatively inferior social status in South Korea. Many Chosŏnjok plan to start their own business or at least lead a comfortable life in China with the money earned in South Korea. Being Chinese makes them feel superior to the native Korean workers who are struggling in this competitive Korean society. Many Chosŏnjok even think that they are more lucky than the native workers. This foreseeable superiority is further strengthened when they return to China to start their business or purchase apartments or cars.

...When compared to ordinary Koreans, the salary I receive here is limited. But I will become relatively rich class when I go back to China. I can live a prosperous life in middle city, and I will have my own house, car...in this sense I think we are luckier than them... we can avoid such high competition and living standard...((Interview with Zhao Xiuying, March 10th 2015, kimbak restaurant))

Although committing their Chinese identity has acquired new meanings in response to the marginalization and discrimination in South Korea, “China” does not always their umbrella they are positively proud of. This derives from embarrassment made by other Chosŏnjok in South Korea. Chosŏnjok usually feel embarrassed by other Chosŏnjok, especially criminals, in Korean society. They blame Chosŏnjok criminals for destroying public order and social security in some regions of South Korea, and also for ruining national reputation of China and

Chosŏnjok. For example, in 2012, a Chosŏnjok man murdered a Korean girl and dismembered the girl. The incident arouse widespread attention by Korean society, and the native Koreans are obliged to be more careful to protect their property and security due to the increasing influx of Chosŏnjok. Moreover, drinking, fighting and gambling are common phenomenon among Chosŏnjok, which leave a bad impression to native Koreans on Chosŏnjok. Despite the ambivalence feeling towards China and Chinese co-nationals, however, there is no doubt that migration experience strengthens their Chinese national identity.

...I am working for a travel agency. The majority of the customers are all from China. Since I am the only Chinese employee in the company, I am quite proud of myself as a Chinese when I feel that other working colleagues rely on me while they are working... (Interview with An Taiying, March 18th 2015, An's home)

...I am working in Huawei Seoul branch, a Chinese transnational company. There are 70 percent of employees are Korean. I have worked in two Korean companies before I was enrolled in Huawei. The working atmosphere is totally different. Working in Huawei is more comfortable largely because it is a Chinese company. I even have two Korean assistants working with me. While working in Korean companies, the atmosphere was protean. All of the employees have to observe the boss's mood... (Interview with Piao Tianyu, March 18th 2015, Piao's home)

I am working in a consultant companies. Every day, we receive thousands of calls from Korean small- and middle-sized calls demonstrating that they want to seek Chinese buyers. Therefore, our companies' main target is China. There are two Chosŏnjok in our company. Even though the workloads has been intensified, we still feel happy for the sake of being respected and highly valued... (Interview with Li Na, March 22th 2015, Li's home)

However, as shown above, the Chosŏnjok's identity is not coherent or consistent. It is more likely to be negotiated depending on various social contexts. Although they emphasize their Chinese identity in South Korea, they never discard their Korean ethnicity. Moreover, their Korean identity is not only shown as an ethnic cultural one without any political connotation, but also can be a transnational one that is connected with Korean nation state (Li 2006: 90). In some social contexts, Chosŏnjok enact Korean identity mainly on the cultural level. After years of living in South Korea, many Chosŏnjok have adapted to its culture.

...I literally have a "South Korean stomach," I do not think I can digest Chinese food. I make up my hair with wax every morning before I go to the lab. You can barely distinguish me with other Koreans if I do not identify myself as Chosŏnjok... (Interview with Han Xuefeng, 15th March 2015, Han's home)

In some other circumstances, nevertheless, Chosŏnjok enact a Korean ethnic identity that is connected with the Korean nation state. Chosŏnjok declare this

Korean ethnic identity when they bargain with South Korean government for better treatment in South Korea. In order to justify the demands for work right or better treatment in South Korea, Chosŏnjok fall back on Korean ethnic identity that is the same with the natives. By asserting this identity, Chosŏnjok are in a morally righteous position to make these demands. Thus, some scholars' address that Chosŏnjok strategically utilize national and ethnic identities (Li, 2006: 91).

In conclusion, Chosŏnjok identity is contingent. Conflict and fragmentation are inherent in their identity. They negotiate their identity in a way that helps them to go through the painful process of coping with life vicissitude and asking for equitable treatment in South Korea.

Chapter Six

Conclusion

Chosŏnjok refers to a cross-border ethnicity in China who owns Chinese citizenship but meanwhile maintain ethnic ties with Korean peninsula from which their ancestors had emigrated. Starting from the 1980s, particularly after the restoration of the bilateral relationship between South Korean and China in 1992, an increasing influx of Chosŏnjok have migrated to South Korea to earn money as low skilled workers. By February 2015, the number of return Chosŏnjok migrants in South Korea is estimated to 595,810. And this population has been insufficient studied due to substantial number of illegal and undocumented Chosŏnjok return migrants. One the one hand, the increasingly outgoing Chosŏnjok population jeopardizes local economic development in three provinces in northeast part of China and has a devastating influence towards ethnic education; on the other hand, the rapid growing figures of incoming Chosŏnjok return migration workers burdens labor market in South Korea and thus intensifies social conflicts. Under such circumstances, it is high time for scholars to pay attention to Chosŏnjok in the context of migration. Given the critical importance of the study for Chosŏnjok, this research has focused on the identity study of Chosŏnjok. Specifically, this research has answered the question how political, economic and sociocultural factors in both South Korea and China influence the formation process of Chosŏnjok's identity.

The political dimensions in China were rather complicated. The situation of the Korean immigrants before the establishment of PRC in 1949 was acknowledged to be delicate and precarious. Having gone through Qing dynasty, warlord government, Japanese Imperialism and Manchuria period, and *Guomindang* domination, Korean immigrants were generally oppressed and exploited. After the foundation of New China, the CCP entitled Korean immigrants Chosŏnjok (*chaoxianzu*) and has helped to integrate them into Chinese nation state through adopting ethnic minority policies that treat all ethnic minorities in China one equal footings. Chinese multiculturalism is the main characteristic of China's ethnic minority policy, which manifests that China is a unified multi-ethnic state all of the ethnic minorities are equal. CCP enforces China's multiculturalism by implementing Regional Autonomy for Ethnic Minorities, through which minorities have privilege to manage their own ethnic affairs, including ethnic education and economic development etc. Also, Chinese government endorses ethnic minorities diverse preferential policies, for example, subsidy to agricultural and animal husbandry activities, preferential financial and trade policies, population and education policies etc. Such favorable ethnic minority policies and multi-ethnic state discourses, along with CCP strong domination towards ethnic education through educating PRC history and patriotism, Chosŏnjok commit themselves as Chinese citizens. This is the evidence that prove that the political ethnic minority policies have great influence on the formation process of Chosŏnjok identity as Chinese citizen.

However, while examining current economic, political and sociocultural situations of Chosŏnjok, one can easily find out that Chosŏnjok is still distinct from any other ethnic minority group in China. Their traditions, language, life style and cultural values are distinct from those of ethnic Han and other ethnic minority groups in China. Also, ethnic superiority fades away due to some aspects, as a matter of fact, Chosŏnjok feel marginalized in China. First is Cultural Revolution. Starting from 1966, Chosŏnjok ethnic education and language were excessively jeopardized and some Chosŏnjok cadres working in the government were arrested and conceived as ethnic extremist. Those treatments great hurt Chosŏnjok feeling and they feel marginalized in China. Secondly, as economic reform enables east coast urban cities to develop first, once well-developed and prosperous northeast part of China where Chosŏnjok are residing are deteriorating. In the collectivist agricultural society, Chosŏnjok was extolled as one of the model ethnic groups with outstanding characteristics of diligence and hard working. Under the period of industrialization and modernization, their homeland suddenly became hinterland when compared to other parts of China. In light of this, some negative sentiment of Chosŏnjok appears as the result of stagnation to process. Third, even though the CCP articulates that all the ethnic minorities share the same footings, Chosŏnjok still reckon that they are not the mainstream of the society. For example, like other ethnic minorities, Chosŏnjok cannot access high position in central government. They define themselves as “guest” to describe that they are not the real “host” of China, and thus they hold an awareness of marginalized in their collective consciousness. In this sense, they conceive that they are just one of the ethnic

minorities in China. Hence, the economic and sociocultural factors are proved to have great impact on the formation process of Chosŏnjok's identity as one of the ethnic minority in China—Chosŏnjok.

As discussed above, comprehensive factors in China have had great influence on the formation process of Chosŏnjok identity. As a result, before migrating to Korea, Chosŏnjok have already possessed dual identities including the identity as Chinese citizen and the identity as ethnic minority in China. The changing political and economic conditions in South Korea and China motivated Chosŏnjok to migrate to South Korea to work as return migration workers. Before migrating to Korea, Chosŏnjok usually have a fantastic illusion towards lives in Korea. They consider that South Korea as their “motherland”, and lives in Korea would be pleasant since they speak the same languages and share the same cultures and traditions. However, such “Korean dreams” were completely broken down due to the huge disparity between the fantasy and reality in that they are generally discriminated and marginalized by Korean society. The research used ethnic return migrants theory to illustrate how hierarchical nationhood influences the formation process, or helps them negotiate their national and ethnic identities. In legal dimension, South Korean government practiced Industrial Technical Training Programme (ITTP), Employment Permit System (EPS) and enacted Laws on Overseas Koreans in response of increasing influx of Chosŏnjok population. In social dimension, Chosŏnjok, along with other foreign migration workers are excessively marginalized and discriminated by native Koreans. In addition, the mass media in South Korea have unconsciously cooperated with the government to marginalize

Chosŏnjok, while others appeal to accepting them, however, the strategy they have taken stereotypes Chosŏnjok as an inferior ethnic group in South Korea.

The moment Chosŏnjok come to Korea, they instantly pick up the lost connection and kinship with native Koreans. However, such ethnic identity is proved to belong to historical and cultural realm without any political connotations. That is to say, China is the only state that Chosŏnjok shall anchor their political national identity, while the Korean ethnic identity embodied in cultural and ethnic affinity only belongs to cultural realm. And national consciousness based on political identification with the Chinese state and nation should dominant cultural ethnic identity. In light of such analysis, the Chosŏnjok's national and ethnic identities prove to be coexisting and intertwining. Then how does Chosŏnjok negotiate their national and ethnic identities? First of all, Chosŏnjok link their dignity and superiority to their Chinese national identity in the context of migration, especially when they have the feeling of being discriminated or marginalized by native Koreans. Second of all, Chosŏnjok's identity is not coherent or consistent. It is more likely to be negotiated depending on various social contexts. Chosŏnjok emphasize their Chinese identity in South Korea, but they never discard their Korean ethnicity. They are prone to declare their Korean ethnic identity when they bargain with South Korean government for better treatment in South Korea.

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Appendix

면접대상자 인적사항

성함	나이	성별	교육	직업	수입/월	가족사항	입국년도
김창식	62세	남	중졸	모텔	130만원	4	2008년
이인구	68세	남	중졸	모텔	240만원	4	2007년
김정옥	62세	여	전문대	모텔	240만원	4	2007년
박춘영	40세	여	중졸	식당	150만원	4	2002년
조수영	48세	여	중졸	식당	150만원	3	2005년
노귀국	45세	여	중졸	식당	150만원	4	2003년
안태영	31세	남	대졸	회사원	200만원	4	2006년
엄금철	30세	남	석사	현대차	400만원	4	2008년
한학봉	30세	남	박사	연구원	200만원	4	2009년
박천우	30세	남	석사	화위	400만원	3	2009년
이나	30세	여	대졸	회사원	300만원	4	2007년

국문초록

재한 조선족 이주 노동자 정체성 형성 과정에 관한 연구

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본 연구는 재한 조선족 이주 노동자의 종족정체성 형성과정에 관한 연구이다. 재한 조선족 정체성 형성의 요인으로는 한국과 중국 두 나라의 정치, 경제 및 사회문화 요인이 포함된다. 1949 년년 신중국 설립이후, 중화인민공화국의 종족정책은 중국의 조선족으로 하여금 중국국민으로서의 종족정책성을 형성하게 하였다. 그러나 개혁개방이후 조선족의 정치, 경제 및 사회문화 상황은 낙관적이지 않다. 개혁개방 이후, 경제적인 측면에서 본다면, 조선족 공동체 집거지역인 동북지역의 경제상황은 타 지역보다 뒤떨어졌으며, 이러한 상황은 조선족의 민족적 자긍심과 우월감을 약화

시켰다. 특히 조선족 인구의 급속한 감소는 조선족의 민족교육과 문화를 위태로운 상황으로 이끌어 가고 있다. 이러한 상황은 조선족으로 하여금 중국 소수민족 중 하나로서의 민족 정체성을 강화시키는 결과를 보인다.

변화하는 중국과 한국의 정치 및 경제상황은 조선족이 한국으로 이주하는 것을 촉진하였다. 한국인과 동일한 민족정체성을 지닌 조선족은 한국에 도착하는 순간, 그동안 한국인과 소실되었던 연계와 친족관계를 되찾게 되었다. 그러나 한국정부의 노동정책은 조선족을 사회에서 배척하였으며, 조선족 이주 노동자를 차별하는 광범위한 사회적 분위기를 조성하였다. 또한 한국에서의 거주기간동안 한국인들은 조선족 이주 노동자를 배척하였다. 따라서 한국에서 차별과 배척을 경험하였을 때, 조선족은 중국국가정체성을 활용하여 한국인으로부터 받은 차별대우와 배척을 피하곤 했다. 동시에 종족정체성은 일관되어 있지 않다. 조선족 이주 노동자들은 한국정부와 대우 개선에 관한 협상을 진행함에 있어서 한민족 종족정체성을 활용 하고 있다.

주요어: 조선족, 종족 정체성, 중국 소수민족 정책, 한국 외국인 이주 노동자 정책

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