

MULTICULTURAL KOEREA?

MODERN KOREAN SOCIETY

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USES OF MULTICULTURALISM DISCOURSE

- Hae Yeon Chu—control and contain immigrants through selective inclusion of migrants married to Koreans, and exclusion of other migrants
- Timothy Lim—beginnings of a move to address new issues of multiethnic Korea
 - Korea “late industrializing, late recipient of migration, thus emulates measures from more experienced societies and the UN”
- Old view of ethnicity
 - Koreans are all fundamentally the same racial and ethnic group
 - A single (tanilhan) ethnic group (minjok) descended from the same ancestors that speaks a single language and displays homogeneity (tongjilsong) in its customs with a pure bloodline
 - Non-Koreans can only naturalize in exceptional cases
 - Marriages with non-Koreans used to be “international marriages” (kukche kyorhon), and the children of such unions were “mixed blood children” (honhyora) ineligible for military service and excluded from the national imaginary

TODAY—DISCOURSE OF MULTICULTURALISM

- 2007 Act on the Treatment of Foreigners
 - Wanted to regularize treatment of foreigners, and create a society where Koreans and foreigners can live in harmony, and May 20th shall be Together Day
- 2008 Multicultural Family Support Act (ta munhwa kajok)
 - Set up Multicultural Family Support Centers (ta munhwa kajok chiwŏn sent'ŏ)
- 2008 Ward Hines made NFL MVP (Korean mother, African American father)
- 2009 Excluding racially mixed men from the military found unconstitutional (and they have been drafted since 2011—so kept in special detachments)
- Older terms replaced by “multicultural family” and terms like “mixed blood” are considered outmoded and outdated, but government attention mostly on recent migrants rather than on older ethnic minorities or multiracial Koreans from the past

MEANING OF MULTICULTURAL FAMILY

- Korean government
 - Refers to families in which a foreign is married to a Korean citizen
- Popular discourse
 - Refers to all families that are not “pure Korean”
 - Includes families of labor migrants not married to Koreans
 - The term “multicultural children” has replaced “mixed blood)
- Top-down government policy with eye toward Korea’s reputation in the world, and UN standards

EFFECTS OF MULTICULTURALISM

- Main beneficiaries have been (female) marriage migrants
 - Help marriage migrants learn Korean language and culture, and this helps immigrant women fulfill their family responsibilities
 - Government expectation that these marriage migrants will help solve Korea's emerging demographic problems
- Labor migrants and established minority communities (hwagyo) untouched by these programs, and mixed-race children seem to have been left out
- 2018 Third Basic Plan for Immigration Policy wants to improve perceptions on immigrants and enhance the understanding of cultural diversity

MULTICULTURAL CHILDREN

- By 2020 5% of children in Korea were multicultural (though multicultural marriage rates has dropped somewhat since their peak in 2006)
- Is Jasmine Lee (first Filipina National Assembly representative) a model?
- What about Korean women married to Muslim men (mostly Pakistani)