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FEATURES OF MIGRATION FLOWS OF KOREANS TO RUSSIA IN THE 19TH CENTURY: QUANTITATIVE AND QUALITATIVE CHARACTERISTICS

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Abstract: This article examines the characteristics of Korean migration to the Russian Empire in the 19th century. Based on the analysis of historical sources and modern research, the main quantitative and qualitative characteristics of migration flows, reasons for resettlement, and the impact of this process on the socio-economic development of the Russian Far East are identified.

Keywords: Korean Migration, Russian Empire, 19th Century, Far East, Demographic Processes.

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Introduction

The migration of Koreans to Russia in the 19th century represents a unique phenomenon in the history of international migration processes. This phenomenon had a significant impact on the demographic situation and economic development of the Russian Far East. The purpose of this study is to identify and analyze the main quantitative and qualitative characteristics of Korean migration flows to the Russian Empire during the specified period.

Methods

The research is based on the analysis of a wide range of historical sources and modern scientific literature. Statistical data from Russian archives, reports of local administrations, as well as works of contemporary historians and demographers were used. Methods of historical-comparative analysis, statistical analysis, and systematic approach were applied.

Key sources for the study were the works of Pak B.D. [1], Petrov A.I. [2], Kim G.N. [3], as well as foreign researchers such as Chey Youn-Cha [4] and Lee Woo-Sung [5]. Special attention was paid to the analysis of archival materials published in the collection of documents edited by Tkacheva G.A. [6].

Result and Discussion

Analysis of sources shows that Korean migration to Russia began in the 1860s and became massive by the end of the 19th century. According to Pak B.D., by 1900, the number of Koreans in the Russian Empire reached about 28,000 people [1, p. 67]. The main areas of settlement were the Primorsky region and the Amur region.

Qualitative analysis of migration flows revealed the following features:

1. Predominance of agricultural settlers (about 80% of migrants) [2, p. 112].

2. High proportion of family migration (up to 60% of the total number of settlers) [3, p. 89].
3. Significant number of illegal migrants (by some estimates, up to 30% of the total flow) [4, p. 78].

Analysis And Discussion

Korean migration to Russia in the 19th century was caused by a complex of factors. On the one hand, the difficult economic situation in Korea, natural disasters, and political instability created "push" conditions [5, p. 156]. On the other hand, the liberal policy of Russian authorities towards settlers and the availability of free lands in the Far East served as "pull" factors [6, p. 34].

Quantitative characteristics of migration indicate its significant scale. From 1864 to 1900, the number of Korean population in the Russian Far East increased more than 100 times [1, p. 70]. This had a substantial impact on the demographic situation in the region, contributing to rapid population growth and development of new territories.

The dynamics of Korean migration to Russia were closely linked to broader geopolitical events in East Asia. The growing influence of Japan in Korea, culminating in the Japan-Korea Treaty of 1876, led to increased economic pressures and social instability, further motivating emigration [4, p. 82]. Additionally, the Russian Empire's active policy of populating its eastern territories, exemplified by the establishment of the Resettlement Administration in 1896, provided a structured framework for Korean immigration [7, p. 145].

The settlement patterns of Korean migrants in the Russian Far East reveal interesting trends. Initially concentrated in the southern Primorye region, Korean communities gradually expanded northward and westward. This expansion was partly driven by the search for arable land and partly by Russian administrative policies aimed at distributing the immigrant population more evenly across the region [2, p. 118].

The economic impact of Korean migration extended beyond agriculture. While rice cultivation and market gardening were significant contributions, Korean migrants also played crucial roles in fishing, mining, and small-scale manufacturing. Their entrepreneurial activities contributed to the diversification of the local economy and the development of trade networks linking rural areas to urban centers [9, p. 85].

The cultural interactions between Korean immigrants and the local Russian population were complex and multifaceted. While there were instances of tension and discrimination, there were also many cases of cultural exchange and mutual adaptation. Korean linguistic and culinary influences, for example, became noticeable in some areas of the Russian Far East, contributing to the region's unique multicultural character [10, p. 63].

Qualitative characteristics of migration flows indicate their predominantly agrarian nature. Most settlers were peasants, which corresponded to the needs of the Russian Far East in the development of agricultural lands [7, p. 123]. The high proportion of family migration contributed to more successful adaptation of Koreans to new conditions and the formation of stable communities.

The significant number of illegal migrants created certain problems for Russian authorities but simultaneously provided an influx of additional labor force to the region [8, p. 45]. This phenomenon reflected the difficulty of controlling the long and sparsely populated border.

Korean settlers made a significant contribution to the economic development of the Russian Far East. They contributed to the development of rice farming, vegetable growing, and other branches of agriculture [9, p. 78]. In addition, Korean migrants actively participated in infrastructure construction and development of new territories [10, p. 56].

The gender dynamics of Korean migration to Russia also merit attention. While initial waves were predominantly male, family migration became increasingly common, leading to more balanced gender ratios in Korean communities. This shift had profound implications for community formation and cultural preservation. Women played crucial roles in maintaining Korean traditions, language, and customs within the immigrant communities.

The education of Korean children in the Russian Far East presents another interesting aspect of the migration process. Many Korean families placed a high value on education, seeing it as a path to social mobility. This led to the establishment of Korean-language schools in some areas, as well as increased enrollment of Korean children in Russian educational institutions. This emphasis on education would have long-term effects on the socio-economic status of the Korean community in Russia.

Conclusion

Korean migration to Russia in the 19th century was a complex and multifaceted process that had a significant impact on the development of the Far East. Quantitative characteristics of migration flows indicate their scale and dynamic growth. Qualitative analysis shows the predominance of agricultural settlers and a high proportion of family migration.

This migration process contributed to the economic development of the region, the introduction of new agricultural lands, and the formation of a unique multicultural society in the Russian Far East. Further study of this phenomenon can contribute to a better understanding of the historical processes of population formation in the Far East and the role of migration in the development of border territories.

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