

Northeast Asia as a Transnational Space: Regional Integration via Transnationalism and Multiculturalism

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Asia on the move

- Asia has become one of the most significant and “globalized” regions in the world not only in terms of the cross-border movement of capital and goods, but also in terms of the movement of people.
- It accounts for some 28% of the world's international migrants.

Impacts of migration

- International migration is having significant impacts in the social, demographic and economic development of all Asian nations.
- Over 20 million Asian workers are estimated to be living outside their native countries.

Asia as a transnational space

- Foreign direct investment, international trades, study abroad, tourism, and international marriage increase at an increasing rate in Asia.
- As a result of international migration, Asia has become a transnational space for the economy, culture, family, community, and identity.

Trends and characteristics

- The various subregions of Asia have been characterized by specific migratory movements.
- Traditionally, South Asia is identified as a subregion of origin of migration, East Asia as a subregion of destination and South-East Asia as a subregion of both origin and destination.

New trends of migration in Asia

- In East Asia, migration from China has become important in Japan and South Korea.
- Koreans continue to enter Japan and China.
- South Asia cannot be considered just a subregion of origin, in view of the substantial migration from Bangladesh and Nepal to India.

Issues of international migration in Asia

- Brain drain or brain circulation
- Return migration
- Feminization of migration
- Female trafficking
- Marriage migration
- Remittances
- Transnational households and communities

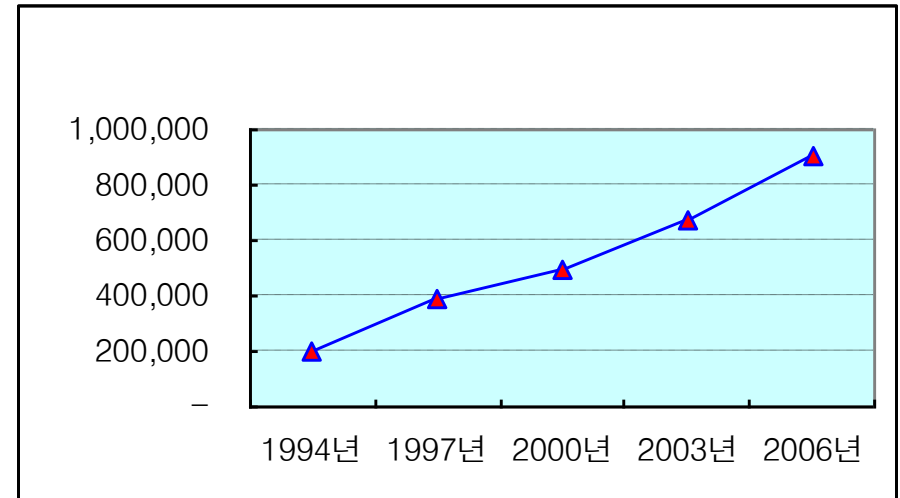
Trends of migration in South Korea

- From an immigrant-sending country to an immigrant-receiving country after the 1988 Seoul Olympic Games

Increase of foreigners in SK

- **64% increase of foreign visitors to South Korea from 1997 to 2006 (7,506,804 in 1997 to 12,312,871 in 2006)**
- **135% increase of foreigners staying in South Korea from 1997 to 2006 (386,972 in 1997 to 910,149 in 2006)**

Size of foreigners in SK



- In August 2007, the number of foreigners reached 1 million, accounting for 2% of the SK population.

Issues of international migration in South Korea

- Foreign migrant workers and foreign labor policy
 1. High-skilled workers
 2. Low-skilled workers
- Overseas Koreans and unequal treatments
- International marriage and social integration of marriage immigrants and children of international marriage

Increase of migrant workers

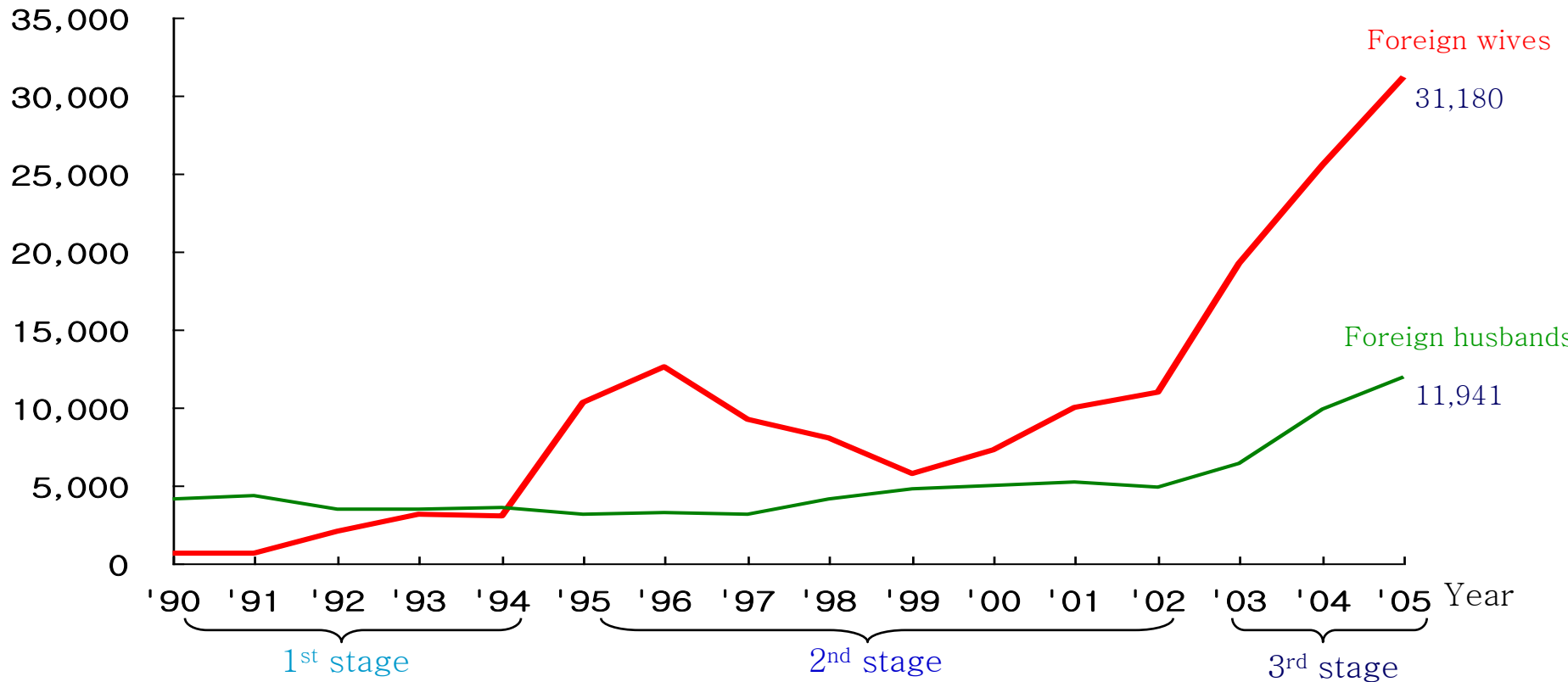
- 142% increase of foreign migrant workers from 1995 to 2005 (140,000 in 1995 to 345,000 in 2005)
- 180,000 unauthorized migrant workers, accounting for half of all migrant workers.

Source countries of migrant workers

- The largest sending country is China
- Half of Chinese immigrants to Korea are ethnic Koreans in China
- Other sending countries include the Philippines, Vietnam, Bangladesh, Indonesia, Thailand, Mongolia, Uzbekistan, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Russia, India, Nepal, Kazakhstan, Myanmar, and Iran.

Increase of International marriage

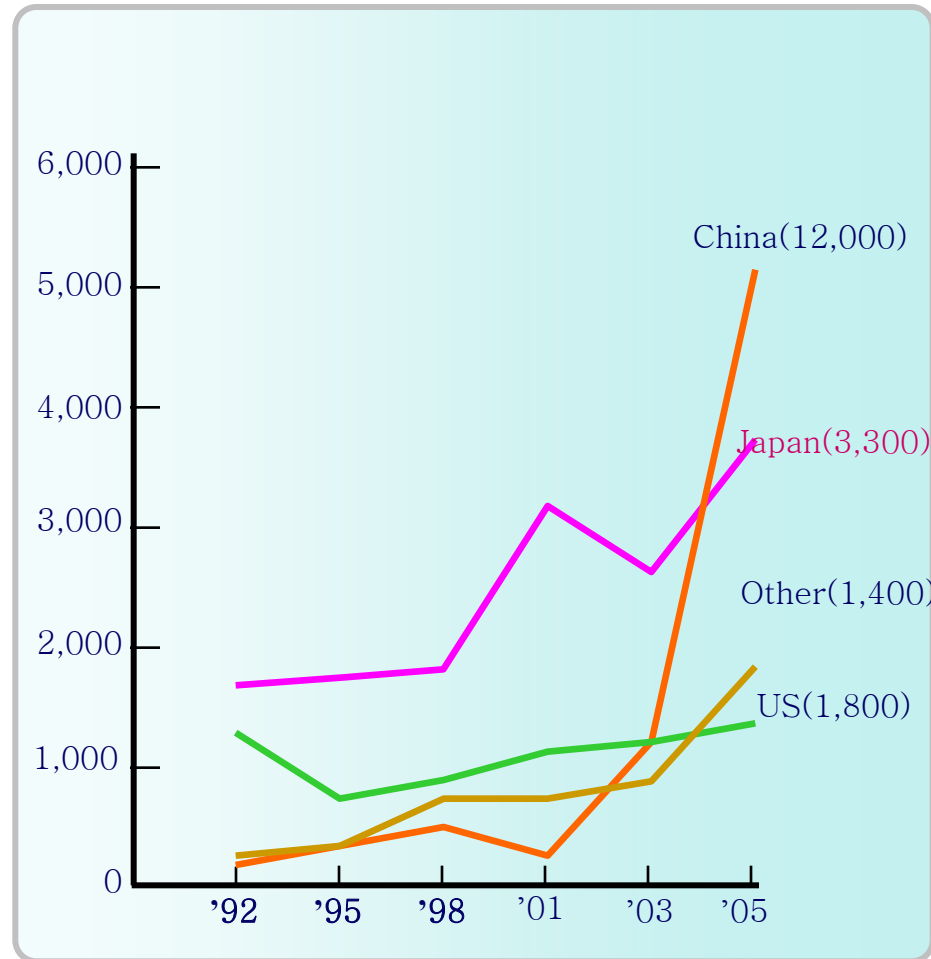
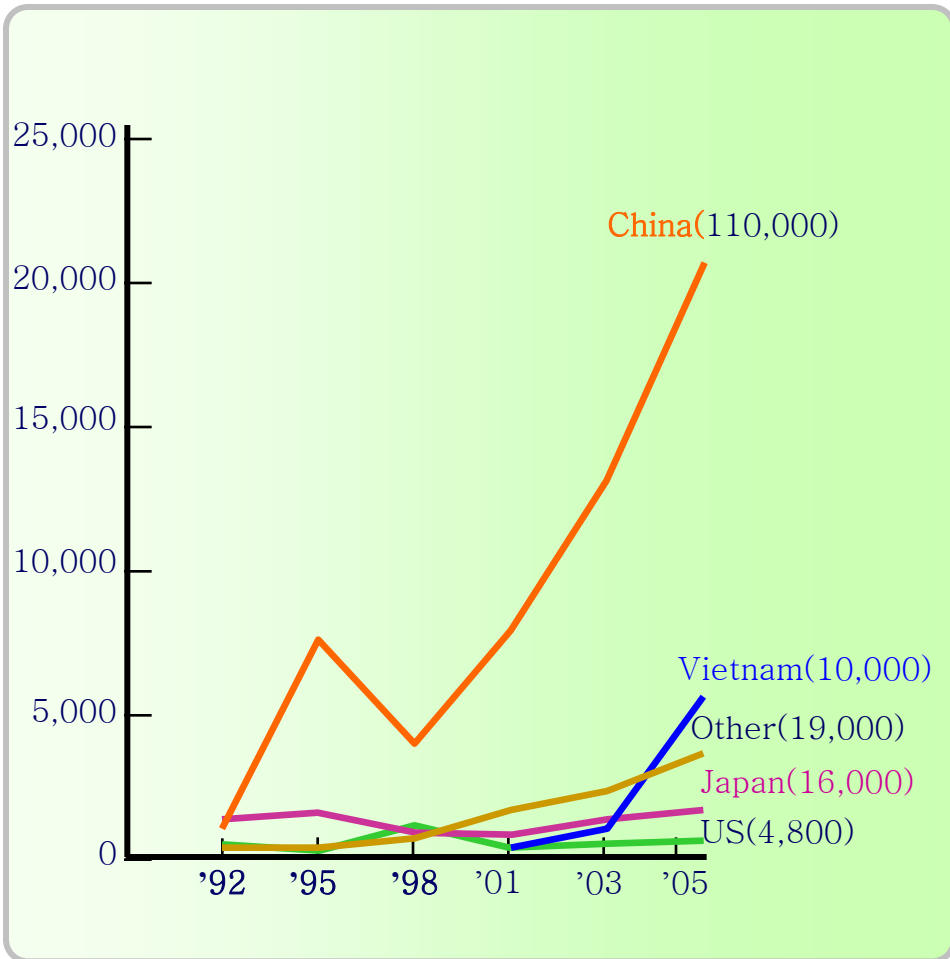
● # of foreign brides marrying Korean men between '90~'05: 160,000



Source countries of International marriage

Korean men + foreign women

Korean women + foreign men



Percent of int'l marriage

- International marriages accounted for 11% of total marriages in South Korea in 2006.
- Percent of international marriages reached above 33% in rural areas in 2006.
- 7,000 children of multicultural families in 2006

Consequences of migration

- Creation of ethnic communities (e.g., the Borderless Village in Ansan, Kyonggi Province)
- Transnational family and social and economic linkages between South Korea and neighboring Asian countries
- Impetus for change of Koreans' concept of national identity

Becoming multicultural

- South Korean society is entering the first phase of multiethnic and multicultural society.
- The current trend is a challenge for South Korean society known for strong homogeneity and nationalism.
- South Koreans need to develop new values and systems for social integration in multicultural environments.

From migrant worker problem to social integration problem

- Initially migrant worker problems involved labor supply and human rights issues.
- Now other issues related with social integration are important: marriage, family, naturalization, citizenship, education, health and medical service, welfare, community, assimilation, and identity.

Definition of multiculturalism

- a belief or a doctrine that all citizens in a society can proudly maintain their own cultural identities and simultaneously have a sense of belonging to the society
- government policy initiatives to implement such ideals and values

Troper's definition of multiculturalism

1. the demographic plurality of ethnocultural traditions and racial origins
2. a social ideal or value that accepts cultural pluralism as a positive and distinctive feature of society
3. government policy initiatives designed to recognize, support, and some might argue-manage cultural and racial pluralism

SK government's response

- Reform of foreign labor policy
- Establishment of immigration policy and laws
- Establishment of organizations responsible for immigration and integration of foreigners
- Support NGOs to take care of migrant workers and international marriage women
- Multicultural education for the general population

Reasons for rapid government's response

- Popular support for policy for international marriage women and children of multicultural family
- Partnership between the government and civil society during the progressive administrations
- Personal interest in human rights of minorities and leadership of President Roh Moo Hyun in immigration policy

Nature of SK government's policy

- It does not orient toward multiculturalism in Canada and other advanced western countries.
- It is more like multiculture-oriented policy and very assimilationist in essence.
- It is similar to Japanese policy of multicultural coexistence.

State-led vs. Citizen-led multiculturalism

	State-led multiculturalism	Citizen-led multiculturalism
Main actor	Government (Central and local governments)	Immigrants and NGOs and citizens
Direction	Multiculturalism from above	Multiculturalism from below
Goals	Social integration and national integration	Protection of human and cultural rights of minorities
Problems	Suppression of minorities by the majority group	Radical and difficult to obtain social consensus

Governance system

- The governance system where the central government, local governments, NGOs, and foreigners govern collectively.
- Division of labor and partnership among major actors of a multicultural society

Enduring bases of the East Asian Community

Community	East Asian Community
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Geographical proximity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Greater proximity due to transportation and communication
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Interpersonal relationships and social networks	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Migration and transnational family
<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Common identity and solidarity	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● East Asian identity?

Regional integration via transnationalism and multiculturalism

- Transnationalism and multiculturalism provide enduring bases for the East Asian Community.

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