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The image of Korea in Russian media¹

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The article studies the issues of the Korea unification on the basis of the Korean image analysis in Russian printed and electronic media and collective consciousness of the Russian youth. The results of the content analysis conducted in 2013 on the materials of “The Rossiyskaya Gazeta” and its online edition are presented in the paper. In connection with the studying of the Korea and Koreans images the results of the survey conducted with Russian students in 2013 are also discussed in the article. The Korean unification is presented in Russian media parallel to the tense relations between the countries on the Korean peninsula and the attempts to regulate the situation. In Russian media political aspects of the tense relations and the unification attempts prevail in general news stream. In collective consciousness of the youth consumer society and mass culture values are preferred.

Keywords: an image of Korea, Korean unification, Russian media, Rossiyskaya Gazeta, collective consciousness, Russian youth.

Introduction

The topic of Korea unification remains relevant for many decades. One of the latest evidence of the intention of the two countries to collaborate is the participation of the North Korean team in the Winter Olympics in Pyeongchang. On the other hand, in recent years, because of the increased development of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (DPRK) nuclear program and the implementation of U. S. sanctions against North Korea, the prospects of unification are becoming more complex. Nevertheless, the tense situation on the Korean peninsula is key topic in Russian and foreign media and collective consciousness.

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The issues of the Korea unification are also leading in the Russian media publications due to the specific role of the Russian Federation in the process. After the Second World War, the USSR had very close economic, political and cultural contacts with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea; only in 1990, after a long period, the diplomatic relations between Russia and the Republic of Korea (ROK) were renewed. Today the Russian-Korean relations are actively developing.

The ultimate goal of the article is to analyze and correlate the place of the Korea unification in Russian printed media, on the Internet and in the collective consciousness. It should be remarked that in the empirical research we were not going to study only articles covering the unification of the Korean states. Our task was formulated as to study the image of South Korea in Russia. Notwithstanding the problem topicality, the South Korean image has not been deeply examined from the scientific point of view in Russia. The research on Russian and Korean communication and cooperation is relatively new. The only exception is a joint study by All-Russian Center for the Study of Public Opinion (Moscow) and the Institute of Russian Studies of the Hankuk University of Foreign Studies (Seoul) "Russia and Korea: Images of countries for comparative study data" [1]. However, this study does not address data on the confrontation/unification of the two Koreas. The present situation is connected with the greater openness of both Korean and Russian societies, as well as creation of new journalism principles. According to I. P. Jacovlev, journalism has changed the symmetric model to the asymmetric communication model [2, p. 26], that resulted in the possibility to conduct general research on news forming mechanisms and images construction in the media parallel to the estimation of feedback (audience perception).

As the Korean image in Russian media and collective consciousness is inevitably connected with the conflict on the Korean peninsula, the attempts taken to reunite the states divided as a consequence of the war in 1951–1953, and the mediatory role of other countries in this process, in the present article we focused on the particular topic and had an attempt to give a comparative estimation of these issues in printed and electronic media and collective consciousness of Russian young people.

Data Collection Methods and Limitations

Two methods were used to collect empirical data in the present research: a content analysis and a survey of students at Russian universities.

The content analysis was conducted on the basis of articles from the printed edition of "The Rossiyskaya Gazeta — Federal Issue"² for three years (2009–2011), as well as newswire of "The Rossiyskaya Gazeta — online", the heading "South Korea", for the same period [3].

"The Rossiyskaya Gazeta" is a "demonstrative" news source in Russia, as published by the government, and resultantly, it does not raise radical opinions; the paper is popular among a wide target audience. It's possible to say that the country image formed by the paper is comprehensive for a wide audience, and in this sense, it can be called representative.

² The title of newspaper "The Rossiyskaya Gazeta — Federal Issue" can be translated into English as "The Russian Gazette".

The newswire content analysis has certain basis. For instance, electronic media has occupied a particular place in the media environment, though it has not yet fully replaced the printed press. In 2013 the Public Opinion Foundation conducted a sociological survey finding out that printed papers were the most popular reading source for Russian citizens. This opinion was supported by 72 % of the surveyed people [4]³. At the same time, various electronic gadgets and devices have gained popularity, and in the future they can replace printed newspapers. According to the same poll, 10 % of Russians read news on their smart phones, 4 % of Russians prefer tablet computers, 26 % — laptops [4].

Grounding our choice of electronic media, we conducted an additional Internet survey to clarify whether Russians regularly read news on the Internet. Men and women, students and people who have completed their education, all living in St. Petersburg, aged from 20 to 26, participated in the research, 210 persons were surveyed. About 60 % of respondents appeared to use Internet news resources on the regular basis [3].

To reveal the feedback, i.e. relevant opinions of young Russians about Korea and Koreans, we conducted a survey titled “Korea and Koreans as viewed by Russian students” [5]. The survey was completed in the end of 2013. 300 students, aged 19 to 25, from different faculties of St. Petersburg State University participated in the research, among them 48,3 % were represented by young women, 51,7 % — by young men. One of the main questions in the questionnaire was connected with enumerating images, characteristics or ideas, occurring when respondents thought about Korea and Koreans. It should be specially noted that the respondents had never visited South Korea. Nevertheless, in this way, we can understand whether the images of the Republic of Korea and its citizens formed by the media, coincide with real perceptions of Russians.

After setting out the data collection methods, let us fix the limitations of this study.

First, in the course of the study, only one printed media (“The Rossiyskaya Gazeta”), and the only electronic source (an internet-version to “The Rossiyskaya Gazeta”) were analyzed. A limited number of journalists work in the selected media. They may carry out their own choice of topics and opportunity to create news agenda. For a more complete analysis later, it would be useful to study other print and electronic media, especially less formal ones.

Secondly, to study the correlation between those images that are formed in the media and the real image of Korea, we conducted the survey of student youth in St. Petersburg. It is worth noting that student youth is distinguished by a higher level of knowledge, including in the field of Korea, compared with the rest of Russian youth and with the other groups of the Russian population. This, for example, is confirmed by the 2001 survey, which we refer to below. At the same time, we believe that the student youth sets the vector of future perception. Therefore, the orientation towards it, in our opinion, is quite appropriate.

The Content Analysis of the Printed Media, the Results

For the quantitative analysis we applied the program WordTabulator, which helped to find the frequency of word forms and words important for the research. In the studied period, newspaper articles devoted to the Republic of Korea occurred 71 times.

In the research we emphasized several units of analysis:

³ [About reading. How much do Russians read. For what purpose do Russians read.]

- microtopics;
- quantitative index of references for the most frequent words and connected themes, topics;
- emotional estimation (positive, negative, neutral) of the presented topics;
- specific weight of each topic in comparison with the general volume of articles about the Republic of Korea.

Several topics are to be found in one article at the same time. Weapons in South Korea may concern the opposition with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, as well as friendly, partnership relations between South Korea and the USA. Relations between Korea and the world may correspond both to partnership and to the 2010 G20 Seoul Summit. In the research we calculated number of references to a topic in all articles in general. The following topics were specified:

- the situation in Korea;
- North and South Korea;
- Korea and Asia;
- Korea and the world;
- Korea and the USA;
- Korea and Russia;
- sports.

The content analysis allowed us to clarify that the main news topic concerning South Korea was the relations between North and South Korea. 21 articles are written on this topic, the topic itself has been mentioned in 64 publications. We distinguished several microtopics within the topic:

- real relations (facts proving Koreas interactions);
- the constructed image: guesses and suggestions (assumptions two Koreas make on each other account, an attempt to build relations);
- informational interrelations;
- weapons, defense, security.

In the majority of cases the relations between two countries are mentioned in the negative context. It is mainly said about the existing tension, a possible threat as a result of nuclear attack by the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, North Korean military training and exercises regularly hold inshore. The topic of the six-party talks aiming at peace-building on the Korean peninsula is also to be found. However, articles with positive connotations on the topic also exist (numbered 6). In such pieces, the issues of tourism, economic and trade partnership between North and South Korea are discussed.

Addressing qualitative estimates, frequency of certain words is relevant for analysis. As a result, the most frequent word form is DPRK (233 times in the articles), the word form "North Korea" in different grammatical cases is used 110 times (at the same time, the main research subject "South Korea" is used 220 times). Summing up, North Korea is mentioned in 54 % of cases, South Korea — in 35 % of cases.

Persons important in connection with Korea are Kim Jong-il and Kim Jong-un, mentioned 79 times. Descriptions of the political figures life or their personal participation in the life of state are significant. The highest frequency of references for the political figures accounts for years 2009 and 2011, especially 2011 ("Kim" occupies the first place in the semantic core). The fact is closely connected with the death of Kim Jong-il in December

2011. The name of Kim Jong-il is mentioned in the news about the confrontation of two countries, threats on the part of DPRK, as well as guesses and assumptions in the news messages in connection with North Korea.

The capital of North Korea, Pyongyang, is mentioned 67 times in printed publications (the 18th place among the most frequent words). Several times it is used in the headlines about South Korea. Pyongyang in the articles is synonymic to North Korea (at the same time, the capital of South Korea, Seoul (the 19th place according to the frequency index) is used regularly in the same context, as well as in connection with events taking place in the city, for example, the 2010 G20 Seoul Summit). In general, these news pieces have negative emotional connotation. In the list of the 20 most frequent words, the word form “Cheonan” is included. The catastrophe of the ROKS Cheonan is mentioned 46 times. The incident is paid much attention in the printed media.

The relations with North Korea are significant in the image creation of South Korea. Often the topic acts as “the agenda” [26, p. 176–187], that is used and interpreted in related news or following publications. Generally, the relations of two countries on the Korean peninsula are presented as tense, negatively colored, including a war threat or a nuclear attack on the part of DPRK. In other words, readers are kept in constant “suspense” resulting from unpredictable events change, potential threats of a military operation. However, the world community is treated as a peacekeeper willing to establish peace relations between two states.

One more demonstrative topic from the quantitative point is events within Korea. These pieces of news help readers to understand what the Republic of Korea is, how people live there, what happens there. The main microtopics include weapons and security, society, government structures, political élites, political relations, business, industry, economics, media, information. According to our estimates, the general image of the country is set rather negative (negative references numbered 24 times, neutral — 9, positive — 11; the average value in the topic — 0,68).

Let's examine the most significant topics (with the highest rate of references, i. e. the highest index of specific weight). In the topic concerned government structures, political elites, the news includes messages about corruption, offences by state official, unauthorized use of state property. Neutral (political events, cabinet changes and etc.) and positive (political successes, government activity) images are represented in the equal amounts.

The microtopic of weapons in the Republic of Korea is included in several bigger topics: “Events within Korea”, “Relations between two Koreas”, “Korea and the world”, “Korea and the USA”. In general, articles have the neutral, informative character, except for news about the South-North relations. The image is characterized as aggressive, ready to go into attack, unchangeable in decision making. The quantitative analysis of this microtopic contributed to the conclusions.

The word forms «союз», «армия», «может», «будут»⁴ are also in the list of the 20 most frequent words. Taking into account the fact that the word forms “army” and “union” are frequently used describing Korea, the frequent verbs “может” (142) and “будут” (80)⁵ make us think that the Democratic People's Republic of Korea and the Republic of Korea are the countries ready for an action or an act involving army, war. Moreover,

⁴ The mentioned words can be translated into English in the following way: “union”, “army”, “may be”, “will be”.

⁵ The words can be translated as “may be” (142) and “will be” (80), respectively.

they are ready to do it not only by themselves, but in union with someone. To check this hypothesis the frequency of words correlating with this description has been counted: «военный», «боевой», «война», «учения», «нападение», «наступление»⁶. In aggregate, 48 mentions of synonymous words connected with military alertness were found. It definitely has its place in the image of Korea in the printed media.

The topic “the USA and Korea” is covered only in three newspaper articles, although the countries relations are mentioned six times, mainly in the context of military partnership. Nevertheless, the quantitative content analysis made the significance of these relations clear. The USA as an independent word form is used 85 times. It is included in the mentioned above frequency list. To note, the USA and South Korea are set in the news as allied countries opposed to North Korea.

The relations of the Republic of Korea and Russia may be distinguished. This news theme is generally positive, and the specific weight of these messages is rather significant (on the third place among seven distinguished topics). Russia in the word forms “East” and “Moscow” is used 236 times. The significant role plays the image of relations with Russia in the context of the Far East territories and Moscow: the Far East is understood as the territory of Russia, situated close to South Korea, Moscow is understood as an administrative center taking decisions on the relations between Russia and South Korea. It allows us to trace the development of trade and economic relations and the gestures of mutual respect; the news regularly addresses the history of partnership (that also has a positive impact on the impression and perception).

The Content Analysis of the Internet Media, the Results

We also analyzed the newswire of “The Rossiyskaya Gazeta — online” (the RG-online), the heading “South Korea”. The amount of news pieces on the website of “The Rossiyskaya Gazeta” exceeds the amount of pieces in printed issues. During the period of 2009–2011, 572 news articles on the Republic of Korea were published on the website. The website RG-online is divided into headings and subheadings. Under the subheading “South Korea” a reader can turn to news fully devoted to this country. In a daily newswire all these pieces of news are to be found with other news.

The newswire includes headings “Tourist diary”, “Learn more about your planet”, “How are they doing it?”, in which correspondents write about different places, sightseeing, particular features, culture, various spheres of life. The existence of these headings makes the main difference with a published issue of “The Rossiyskaya Gazeta”. From quantitative point, news about events within the country (the topic titled “Within Korea”, the number of texts in the topic is 257) is largely presented. The general image got a positive estimate — 0,16 (to compare with the average news estimate on the same topic in the printed media — 0,68). The division of the present topic into nine microtopics allows us to distinguish the most significant among them and construct the exact image of the country:

- weapons and security;
- society;
- relations among society institutions;

⁶ The words can be translated as “military”, “fighting”, “a war”, “military exercises”, “aggression”, “an attack”.

- geography, ecology;
- science, education;
- government structures, political elites, political relations;
- business, industry, economics;
- media, information;
- tourism.

The first place is taken by “Weapons and security” counting the references to news about Korea. The same microtopics are included in the big topics “Relations between two Koreas” and “Relations between the USA and South Korea”. In the topic “Weapons within the country” there are messages not mentioning the USA and the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea. The topic is discussed in 92 publications, 33 out of which create a negative image. Messages about crashes of military aircrafts, ships, malfunctioning of military structures, mistakes and “lost chances” made by military authorities contribute much to the negative image. The positive pieces of news include the references to different aspects of military training and military weapons upgrades. Nevertheless the specific weight is not big in the category (0,16), the military topic (including the relations with the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea and the USA) is mentioned rather often. The image of South Korea as a strong military state may be formed for readers.

The second place is occupied by the topic “Society”. The average value on the topic is 0,36. However, the number of positive and negative images in the topic is almost equal. In negative cases, events within the Korean society (25 times) include incidents, accidents (road traffic accidents, air crashes, critical situations in governmental organizations). For example, after the accident on the Nuclear Power Plant in Japan, the life of Koreans has changed: residents started to demonstrate concern on the background radiation changes, building new nuclear power plants in Korea; the problems with stationing of the arrived Japanese people appeared; anonymous calls about explosions on nuclear power plants in South Korea were received. The positive news (numbered 31) include messages about successful society improvements (for example, at schools), about building projects. Incheon International Airport (ICN) has become an important discussion object in the Internet media. In the 2009 news it was included in the 20 most repeated elements (mentioned 38 times). The airport of the Republic of Korea not once has been recognized as one of the best airports in the world, and it is worth attention as a positive element contributing to the South Korean image. To this microtopic we also added messages under subheading “How are they doing it?” that contain information about different aspects of countries social life. Despite the news variety about life and people in the Republic of Korea it numbers not many elements (72 times mentioned). News is not presented “by waves”, in the sample for the marked period we were not able to distinguish the semantic core of the topic, excluding the case of the airport (in 2009). This topic occupies not the first place for the Korean image construction.

The topic of science and education in South Korea is found in the newswire and creates the general positive image (36 times mentioned). Often it’s said about innovations, technologies, their implementation and functioning in the society, new laws and rules in the sphere of education (usually, at schools). The interesting observation is that in the news Korea is seen not only as a creator and provider of hi-tech technologies, but as their user. The topic devoted to space in the newswire is presented “by waves” (i. e. one topic has developed for a period of time). In 2009 from March to August 8 news pieces describ-

ing launching a satellite were published. The quantitative analyses allows us to determine the elements connected with space (“satellite”, “space”, “rockets”), they are mentioned 199 times. Taking into account that the same topic has been discussed in the news regularly, for certain periods of time, the number of references is rather significant; we consider it to be important for the image construction.

The topic titled “Geography, ecology” is characterized both positively (16 times) and negatively (19 times). A negative image is formed by articles describing weather disasters (heavy showers, snowfalls, typhoons) and their outcomes, as well as information about natural mining and exploitation having negative impact on ecology. The positive image is formed by descriptions of different territories in South Korea. We refer the same articles to the microtopic “Tourism”.

The special attention is drawn to the topic “Government structures, political élites, political relations”. In these articles we can get factual information (appointment of officials, changes in government functioning, news on presidential activities, etc.). The positive image is created by successes of political officials, competent changes in state employees’ activities, innovations implementation. Though, positively colored references are 16 in the topic, negative ones — 27. These articles contain information about corruption, criminal cases participating officials, dismissals of political figures resulting from offenses, “abuse of official position”. The articles are negatively colored.

The image of the Republic of Korea as a tourist center is characterized highly positive due to interesting and positive articles under headings “Tourist diary”, “Learn more about your planet”. The tourist attractions of South Korea are described here in detail: numerous islands, mountains, mountains parks. Owing to these headings the studied country becomes attractive for tourists, many facts can be found. Nevertheless, the number of articles with such descriptions is not big — 19.

The second large topic distinguished as a result of the content analysis is “Relations of two Koreas”. We marked 147 articles in the topic. The average value for the topic “Relations of two Koreas” is 0,72 (the lowest one among all topics); negatively colored publications outnumber positive ones. In online news, the elements referring to the Korean relations form the semantic core in the general sample, and in the sample taken each year. This means that the topic is leading among all concerned the Korean image. The abbreviation “DPRK” is used more frequently than word combination “North Korea” — 22 % and 8 % respectively. The qualitative analysis allows us to determine that the abbreviation DPRK is used in articles with negative, aggressive character, especially in cases a conflict initiator is North Korea, as well as the cases where the emphasis is made on the political structure of the country.

Inside the topic on the relations between countries we also distinguished the microtopic “Suppositions and assumptions”. In quantitative respect it is characterized by such elements as «МОЖЕТ», «БУДУТ», «МОГУТ», «ВОЗМОЖНО»⁷. The verbs in future tenses are often used. The topic of relations between the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea and the Republic of Korea is characterized by various assumptions and forecasts (rather negative than positive). In relation to a fact different plans and intentions from the part of governments, development perspectives, journalist and expert opinions can be expressed. After setting any hypotheses or assumptions in further news pieces they are either verified

⁷ The words can be translated as “may be”, “will be”, “they can”, “it’s possible”.

or denied. As a result, one news topic can be presented in different formats, from different viewpoints, in different contexts. If we address headings, they are rather emotionally colored; the following words and expressions are used: «напряженность», «угроза», «грозит», «вторгнуться», «требует», «опасаются вторжения», «обстановка накаляется», «война» and others⁸.

The USA regularly appears in the context of the South and North Korean relations. Note that we distinguished the relations between the USA and South Korea in a separate topic (32 articles, 38 times mentioned with a positive estimate — 0,28). In this topic the news directly concerned the relations of mentioned above countries are presented. We chose the news referring to relations in the sphere of arms, purchases of weapons, possibilities for ABM system deployment on the territory of Korea, perspectives of ballistic missile launches. Combined maritime exercises are regularly mentioned. As in the printed media, the USA is presented as a reliable and active partner, a defender of the Republic of Korea. Besides, the USA is an active participant of the six-party talks aiming at establishing friendly relations between the divided states. Despite the regular news pieces describing conflict character of the South and North Korean relations, there is a tendency to “smooth” relations. Both the six-party talks and initiatives on the South Korean part contribute to it.

The topic “Korea and the world” (including Asia, excepting the USA and Russia) is presented not in a big number of publications (62). The general image of neutral relations is created and proved by factual data. The special attention is paid to the 2010 G20 Seoul Summit (13 publications). Articles are neutral and informative; their number may underline the significance of the event.

The special attention is to be paid to news on relations of Russia and Korea. This topic is covered in 63 news articles (that is twice as much as it is written on relations of Korea and the USA) with 80 references. Out of all studied topics this theme has got the highest average value of 0.62 (the second place is 0,28, the relations of Korea and the USA). The majority of the news pieces and references is concerned culture, education, history. There were messages about South Korean events connected with Russian culture (literature), learning the Russian language at schools. Several articles were written about passing of the artifacts from the Russian cruise Varyag, which Russian sailors chose to blow up rather than be defeated by Japanese in 1904. This friend gesture is symbolical and demonstrates respect to the history of the Russian-Korean relations that were broken off and renewed only 20 years ago. Almost every article refers us to historical events of that period. Almost all of them demonstrate positive intentions for the Russian-Korean relations (even in cases concerned incidents or tragedies). Russia is an active participant of relations settlement between North and South Korea; it is an initiator for various events contributing to peace building on the Korean peninsula.

Thus, the Russian-Korean relations are observed in numerous articles; “good” (i. e. full, detailed reports) news about Russia and Korea is influential; the relations image is presented as highly positive, with certain perspectives for development in the future. Although none of the elements characterizing the Russian-Korean relations make a semantic core (in relation to the USA the situation differs: there are fewer articles, but the number of words characterizing the USA and Korean relations is bigger). The additional quantitative

⁸ The words can be translated as “tension”, “a threat”, “threaten”, “invade/intrude”, “be required”, “be afraid of invasion”, “generate tension”, “a war”.

analysis revealed that “Russia” (including “RF” and different lexical forms of “Russian”) are presented in the sample less than 200 times. Nevertheless the “high quality” of the articles, the topic of the Russian-Korean relations is addressed not so often as the rest of the topics (the relations between Koreans, the relations between the USA and South Korea).

The Survey of Students, the Results

The results of the survey conducted with students from St. Petersburg State University gave extensive data on the images of Korea and Koreans reflecting the real perceptions. The results demonstrated that students in St. Petersburg were rather good informed about Korea and Koreans. Such a conclusion is supported, for instance, by the correlation of our data and the results of the survey conducted by the Public Opinion Foundation in 2001; 1500 Russians were surveyed. The results of that survey demonstrated that Russians had not enough knowledge about South Korea. 41 % of respondents could say nothing about the geographical location of the country (on the contrary, in the course of discussion, the students demonstrated strong knowledge about the Korea location). The capital of South Korea, Seoul, was mentioned by 28 % of Russians (more than a half of the surveyed students knew the fact) [7].

Let's present the results of the data analysis we received in 2013 among students.

If we group the most frequent answers on this question, the following perceptions will prevail:

- cuisine (“Korean style carrot salad” — 60 %, “dogs, they eat dogs” — 12,6 %, “Korean cuisine” — 12 %, “spicy food” — 7 %, “exotic cuisine” — 3,3 %);
- ideology, the outcomes of “the Cold War” (“the division into South and North” — 12 %, “communism” — 9 %, “nuclear weapons” — 5 %, “Kim Jong-il” — 4,3 %, “nuclear conflict” — 2,6 %);
- appearance characteristics of Koreans (“narrow slit of the eyes” — 14,3 %, “not tall” — 8,7 %, “typical Asian appearance” — 8,7 %, “dark hair” — 3,7 %);
- technological achievements (“devices and gadgets” — 7 %, “car industry” — 6,7 %, “technological achievements, progress, development, equipment” — 3 %, “high level of technical development” — 2,3 %);
- Korean mentality characteristics (“hardworking” — 5 %, “Orient mentality” — 4,7 %, “kind, friendly, smiling nation” — 4 %, “traditions” — 3,7 %) [5].

There are also not grouped images of Korea: “beautiful nature” — 6,7 %, “martial arts, taekwondo” — 4,7 %, “a small country” — 3 %. 2,3 % of the surveyed students associate Korea with football (“a football player Park Ji-Sung, a national team coach Guus Hiddink who worked with Russia and South Korea”, “the 2002 World Cup”). The survey revealed absolutely opposite perceptions: 2 % of students associate Korea with “poverty”, 1,7 % — with “a good level of development” [5].

As seen from the results, the image of Korea and Koreans is not strictly associated with South Korea, as it was mentioned, the diplomatic relations renewed 27 years ago, the number of South Koreans living in St. Petersburg is not large (according to the information of Consulate General of the Republic of Korea in St. Petersburg — about 1000 people). Previously, for decades the USSR had close, multilateral relations with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, resultantly the older generation of Russians still perceive Korea as an ideological partner of previous years.

Answering the question “When did the Korean War take place?”, only 11 % of the surveyed students replied correctly. It’s worth noting that in the mentioned above survey by the Public Opinion Foundation only respondents belonging to older generation remembered about the conflict of the Korean peninsula in 1950–1953 [5].

**Distribution of answers given by students to the question:
When did the Korean War take place?**

Variants of answers on the Korean war	Times mentioned	Percentage
the XX century	57	19,00
do not have an answer, do not know	49	16,33
1950–1953 (the correct answer)	33	11,00
the XIX century	25	8,33
the middle of the XX century	20	6,67

The issues concerned the Korean history of the XX century and the unification of two Koreas unfortunately did not meet the response in answers given by Russian students. Only some of them mentioned the role of Russia in settlement of the tense relations on the Korean peninsula.

The ideology has played a remarkable role in the Russian-Korean relations during the USSR period. The liability of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea to the communist ideas was seen as a uniform platform minimizing the cultural differences. At the recent period the leading ideology in Russia is the direction to market relations, that makes two countries close. As the survey of students demonstrated, the most vivid reactions were concerned Korean companies. Almost a half of the respondents could name such Korean companies as “Hyundai”, “Samsung”, “KIA”, and “LG”. The fact, in our opinion, proves the youth universal perception of different cultures based on the values of the modern consumer society. On this basis, minimizing the cultural differences is rather possible: if people use goods produced by one trademark, they may find common points in their direct contacts.

Conclusions and Further Research

Summing up the issues of the Korea unification on the basis of the Korean image in Russian media and the youth collective consciousness, we have made several conclusions.

First of all, in Russian media and the youth collective consciousness the image of North and South Korea is seen as something unified, not always separable. The issues of coexistence of two divided states are presented through the coverage of constant tension in the relations, a threat of a military conflict, and even a nuclear attack, in general forming not really positive image of the Korean peninsula. In the printed edition of “The Rossiyskaya Gazeta” for the period 2009–2011 the information about the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea prevails (54% of references) in comparison with the information about the Republic of Korea (35% of references). It is possible that this gap is evidence of “rocking the boat” on the part of the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea. The attention should be paid to repeating waves in covering the Korea unification issues, provoked by events

on the Korean peninsula. In the years 2009–2011, as well as in the following years, there were bilateral efforts aimed both to unification and collapse of the initiatives; it proved the necessity of setting up the heading “Assumptions and suggestions”.

Online version of “The Rossiyskaya Gazeta” publishes more articles on the Korean issues than found in printed newspapers. These articles cover not only politics, but social life as a whole, life of institutions. In printed media the topic of relations between the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea and the Republic of Korea occupies the top, in electronic media it’s faded into insignificance. North Korea is mentioned less than South Korea. Three different forms of the word “Seoul” are included in the twenty most frequent words; they are used in 2,16 % of cases in the articles.

In many publications the noticeable accent is made on positive sides of Korean social life. Thus, numerous articles cover education and its reforms, scientific and technological development of the country, tourism, traditions and customs, beautiful nature and etc. The significant percentage of articles is connected with positive relations between South Korea and Russia, their perspectives. Nevertheless, in electronic media considerable attention is paid to weapons and security, efforts taken to reunification, as well as a role of mediatory countries in the process.

As regards collective consciousness of Russians, age difference influences estimation of events on the Korean peninsula. People belonging to the senior generation are much more concerned political situation in divided countries and tend to sympathize with North Korean partners; students are politically indifferent and support the tendency to consolidation based on modern consumer standards and mass culture favorable in South Korea.

This work contains a large empirical material, obtained on the basis of content analysis of Russian printed and electronic media, as well as the results of surveys of Russian students. We are aware that the collected data in the future should receive qualitative interpretations and correlations with other studies and findings of specialists in the fields of Korean studies, sociology, political science and anthropology. Further interpretations may be related both to the study of Korea image in Russia and to the questions of Korean unification. In this sense, the article can be regarded as an empirical reserve for the future large-scale study of the image of Korea in Russian media and mass consciousness.

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Образ Кореи в российских СМИ

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Статья посвящена изучению образа Кореи и проблем объединения Юга и Севера Корейского полуострова в российских СМИ на основе анализа российских печатных и электронных медиа, а также восприятия Кореи и корейцев российской молодежью. В работе представлены результаты контент-анализа «Российской газеты» и ее электронной версии, который был проведен в 2013 году. Также в статье содержатся результаты анкетного опроса по изучению образа Кореи и корейцев, осуществленного среди российских студентов в 2013 году. Проблема объединения Кореи рассматривается в статье наряду с напряженными отношениями на Корейском полуострове, а также попытками урегулировать ситуацию между Югом и Севером. В ходе исследования было выявлено, что в российских СМИ политические аспекты напряженной ситуации и попытки объединения преобладают в новостной повестке, в то время как в восприятии молодежи преобладают образы общества потребления и массовой культуры.

Ключевые слова: образ Кореи, объединение Кореи, российские СМИ, Российская газета, коллективное сознание, российская молодежь.

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