

Introduction: Gender, (In)Securities, and North Korean Migration

Eunyoung Christina Choi

This article serves as an introduction to this special issue, which focuses on the current situation of North Korean (NK) migration and the safety and resilience of NK migrants from a gender perspective. This introduction highlights the importance of this topic by examining debates about the influence of China as a transit space on gendered mobility and security, the geopolitical implications for the daily lives of NK migrants, and the agency of NK women. We anticipate that the provision of up-to-date data and the application of multidisciplinary analysis based on different research methodologies will deepen the understanding of the changing landscape of NK migration and the (in)securities experienced by these migrants, and contribute to the discovery of possible and critical ways to empower them.

Keywords gender, North Korea, migration, security, agency, geopolitics

This article serves as the introduction to the special issue, “Gender, (In)Securities, and North Korean Migration: Survival and Resilience in the Face of Violence.” It outlines the background, themes, and significance of the contributions in this volume. Increased number of individuals from conflict-ridden and economically deprived regions migrate to survive, but the migration process itself often threatens their safety and security and expose them to violence. Studies which examine human security through the lens of gender and intersectionality seek to understand the causes, manifestations, and impacts of multiple forms of vulnerability and violence experienced differently by migrants, and discuss possible and just ways to support them. Guided by these approaches, this special issue focuses on the group of North Korean migrants. It provides an overview of the insecurity and violence that they face throughout their migratory process of departure, transit, deportation, detention, and resettlement. At the same time, rather than portraying North Korean migrants as only powerless victims, this issue also explores their gendered strategies for survival and empowerment.

At the end of World War II, the Korean Peninsula was divided into North

and South Korea, coinciding with its liberation from Imperial Japan. Since the creation of the two Koreas, there have been two periods of mass migration. The first was the movement in both directions between the North and South, from the division of Korea in 1945 to the end of the Korean War in 1953. After the Korean War, the creation of the world's most heavily militarized and controlled border (the Demilitarized Zone [DMZ]) and the geopolitics of the Cold War prevented interaction between people in North and South Korea, and those who remained in South Korea, often referred to as *silhyangmin* (displaced people), were cut off from the North. The second mass migration was caused by the North Korean (NK) famine that began in the mid-1990s. Driven primarily by economic hardship and political instability in North Korea, this migration flow often involved routes from North Korea to South Korea that detoured through China and Southeast Asia. Meanwhile, a small number of NKs settled as refugees in Europe, North America, and Australia. The individuals who left during this period are commonly referred to by various terms, such as asylum-seekers or refugees in international organizations, illegal border-crossers in China, and *Talbukmin* (defectors) or *Saetemin* (resettlers) in South Korea, depending on their location and/or the entities referring to them.

The second wave of NK migration to South Korea has persisted for nearly three decades, although new escapes from North Korea had already declined sharply since the beginning of the Kim Jong Un regime in 2011. While opinions differ as to whether the nearly impossible NK migration across the North Korea-China border after the COVID-19 pandemic is a temporary phenomenon or the end of an era of mass defections, there is consensus that future escapes from North Korea are likely to be more dangerous and fewer in number. In this moment that sees the second wave of mass defections coming to an end, this special issue presents a collection of six articles that scrutinize the current state of NK migration, focusing on—from a gender perspective—NK migrants' security and resilience and the ways they perceive themselves and how they are perceived by the outside world. This introduction underscores the significance of the special issue by examining the debates about the influence of China's transit spaces on gendered mobility and security, the geopolitical implications for the daily lives of NK migrants, and the agency of NK women.

The contributors of this issue speak from a variety of methodological and theoretical perspectives. Furthermore, this issue is multi-disciplinary, including views from economics, geography, anthropology, public administration, and linguistics. The common denominator among all of them is the purpose of this study: to contribute to enhancing the safety and supporting the empowerment of NK migrants by providing up-to-date data and applying multidisciplinary analysis using different research methodologies to deepen our understanding of the migrants' gendered security.

Gender, (In)Securities, and North Korean Migration

Until the mid-1990s, most NK refugees were male and from privileged families (Lankov 2006). Due to the restrictive control of international migration, privileged males had more chances of crossing the border into other countries, which was mainly political defection. However, when political and economic conditions in North Korea began to deteriorate in the 1990s, those experiencing poverty began to flee the country, resulting in a higher proportion of women in the overall NK refugee population.

The reasons why more NK women than men crossed the border into China have been widely studied, and the experiences of NK women on the migration journey and in resettlement have also received scholarly and policy attention (Choi 2010; Yi 2022; Kim 2023; Shin 2022a; Shin 2023). Tight border regulations enforced by both North Korea and China, alongside patriarchal state policies shaping gender-specific mobility and migrations, compounded by poverty and the growing global demand for brides, reproductive labor, and sex workers, have collectively fostered gendered migration from North Korea (Choi 2010, 165-6). Yi (2022, 420-5) describes the process of NK women crossing the North Korea-China border as a direct exchange of their bodies as collateral, and argues that poor NK women, who occupy the lowest position in the NK system and have never had access to capital, cross the border by sacrificing their very existence. For women risking their lives to cross the North Korea-China border, the private houses they stay in as de facto marriage partners or reproductive workers, and the hidden places of the sex industry in China often serve as invisible spaces where they can hide their bodies from the threat of arrest and forced deportation. However, in these spaces, they frequently encounter patriarchal power dynamics, violence, and capitalist exploitation.

The gender-based violence and insecurities experienced by NK women in China and also in North Korea after repatriation have received enormous attention, and international non-governmental organizations and scholars have called for international action for these women (Human Rights Watch 2002; Amnesty International 2003; Muico 2005). Migration scholars' research on refugees and undocumented migrants challenge the necessity and legitimacy of employing violent migration controls to safeguard national security. They advocate instead for prioritizing human security and social justice for displaced NKs who cross the North Korea-China border in search of survival (Choi 2014; Song 2015, 2021). Related research has been continuously conducted on various aspects concerning NK women in China, as well as those who have resettled in safe third countries. This research encompasses topics such as NK women's survival strategies and agency (Shin 2017, 2018; Shin 2022b), NK women's health risks (Kim et al. 2017; Jeon et al. 2008), their citizenship

issues (Choo 2006; Hough and Bell 2020), NK women's self-representation and representation in the media (Green and Epstein 2013; Cho 2018; Chun 2022), and separated families and long-distance motherhood (Lee 2019; Kim 2020).

Emphasis on women's migration and security, however, has left NK men invisible in the research. Soo-Jung Lee (2020) makes this point, that gender research on NK refugees/defectors has focused on the experiences of female migrants to the exclusion of research on male migrants. She argues that this phenomenon happened for two reasons. One is that women have been the overwhelming majority of NK migrants to South Korea since the early 2000s. The other reason is that the various difficulties that NK migrant women experienced related to the NK human rights discourse in both South Korea and the international community. Rather than focusing on the different migrant experiences of men and women per se, Soo-Jung Lee suggests that migration and gender should be seen as mutually constitutive, with gender itself as both a mechanism for differentiating migrant experiences and something that is reconfigured during the migration process. While Soo-Jung Lee's call for conceptually integrating gender into analyses of migration provides an important avenue for future research, the contributions to this special issue predominantly focus on NK women's experiences, in response to the research needs that arise from the significant gender disparities in NK migration processes and experiences. Some articles in this issue nevertheless incorporate data and analysis of NK men's experiences (see Wee, Lee, and Jung 2024; Choi 2024). These studies emphasize that the safety and resilience of NK women, as well as NK men, need to be addressed and should be a public concern.

This special issue contributes to existing research on gendered NK migration and (in)securities by expanding upon or introducing new perspectives in following three areas. First, this special issue revisits the *transit space* of China. Gerald and Pickering (2014) examine the direct and structural violence that refugee women face during transit. They emphasize how border securitization worsens the violence endured during transit and creates circumstances where mobility becomes more costly. As undocumented migrants and women, NK women in China also experience different levels of oppression and suffering. Because NK women often have lengthy stays in China, however, they are learning Chinese and subsequently moving on to more stable and secure jobs; yet, their restrictions as undocumented migrants still hinder their mobility. Furthermore, through in-depth interviews with resettled NKs in South Korea and the UK, Shin (2022b, 2024) argues that the majority of NK women bring with them not only trauma from China, but also assets that can empower them, such as Chinese language skills and business experience. Unlike most NK men who move to other safer countries by transiting through China in a very short period, many NK women unofficially marry, raise children, and work in China to send remittances back to North Korea. While some women pass through China in a chain migration

over the course of a few days, most of them settle and live there for years or even decades. Thus, in this issue, we seek to understand China not only as a *space of transit* between departing and arriving countries, but also as a *place of settlement*.

The prevailing assumption that China is a transit space where migrants live only temporarily before moving to another country can be also challenged. Living conditions in China influence NKs' decisions about whether to stay in China or leave for safe third countries. Over the past decades, the international community's humanitarian assistance to NKs in China has focused on rescuing them and transporting them to South Korea and the West. This effort is based on the assumption that they will have a better life outside of North Korea and China, and that all NKs in China desperately hope to leave for South Korea or the West. However, it has been noted that some choose to stay in China and maintain their precarious status, given the high risks of traveling to South Korea, the hardships their families in the North would face if they defected to liberal countries, and China's economic growth and the increased amount of money they can send to their families. NKs strategically decide whether to stay or go to another country, and these decisions can change depending on family situations and border controls.

In recent years, China's border controls and policies toward undocumented migrants have changed dramatically. In 2018, as China was becoming a growing destination for foreign workers, the government established a new bureaucratic immigration agency to standardize practices across the nation (Plümmer 2022). Guided by Xi Jinping's goal of unity of all ethnic groups, regional differences in border enforcement have been strictly regulated, especially in regions with ethnic ties across borders (ibid.). On the other hand, in response to demographic changes, China has adopted a more proactive inclusive stance for the undocumented migrant women and their children born to Chinese fathers (Seo 2024). Thus, we recognized the need to revisit the gendered aspects of NK migration and migrants' lives in the context of China's economic rise, political power, and demographic changes compared to the early post-Cold War era.

Second, Cold War and post-Cold War geopolitics heavily influence the daily lives of NKs. Scholars have tended to emphasize the transnational activities of NK migrants and their potential for challenging the North-South division of Korea in post-Cold War geopolitics (Lee and Kim 2022; Chung 2019; Chung 2014). These scholars focus on communication networks, such as mobile phones across the North and South, and economic networks, such as remittances and smuggling. Specifically, through using the concept of "penetrant transnational strategy," Chung (2014) shows how NKs challenge not only the political division of two Koreas, but also the international borders beyond South Korea through transnational movements of people, information, and goods, to improve their lives.

However, the dominance of Cold War geopolitics and the governmentality of the North and South division still strongly promote and regulate the mobility

and security of NKs. Due to their shared ethnic identity and aspiration for Korean reunification, South Korea has welcomed NKs, providing citizenship and settlement support upon their arrival. Nonetheless, the South Korean government often categorizes NKs under the neutral term “North Korean resettlers”, but tends to perceive them primarily through a political lens, emphasizing their act of defection. Their migrations are often seen as symbols of the host country’s triumph over the other part of Korea, reflecting Cold War ideology. Furthermore, it continues to implement policies of “assimilationist integration” or “integrative exclusion” that are based on Cold War and nationalist ideologies (Lee 2020, 180-1).

Koreans who migrate from their place of origin to the other part of Korea, regardless of the reasons for migration—be it economic, political, or for family reunification—typically do not return to their place of origin once their arrival is officially documented. Some NKs have claimed that they were trafficked to South Korea because they were unaware that they could not return to North Korea and that the realities of life in South Korea were different from what the brokers had described. Cases have been reported of NK defectors in South Korea returning to North Korea after crossing the heavily militarized DMZ. According to South Korean government statistics, at least thirty-one NK defectors returned to North Korea between 2012 and 2022 due to maladjustment in South Korea and for family reunification in North Korea (*BBC News Korea* 2022). North Korea has actively used these cases by organizing press conferences to highlight unfavorable aspects of South Korean society, mostly the competitive and exploitative capitalist system, and using them as tools to deter further defections to South Korea. Tensions between the North and the South on the issue of NK defectors intensified in recent years, and North Korea has continued to strictly keep the migration door closed. Consequently, the ideological understanding and representation of NK defectors play a significant role in shaping the lives NK defectors. Cold War and post-Cold War geopolitics permeate their individual lives, both enhancing and constraining their mobility and security through interconnections and interactions. This special issue explores these geopolitical influences through the individual lives of NK defectors (see Shin 2024; Choi 2024) and their representation in the media (see Lee and Kang 2024).

Third involves a discussion of agency. Namely, how can we understand the agency of NK defectors? In order to explore this question, postcolonial feminist understandings of agency have been invoked (Mohanty 2003; Mohanty, Russo, and Torres 1991; Mernissi 1994; Mahmood 2005; Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin 2006). Specifically, Mahmood (2005, 112) argues that agency can be thought of “not as a synonym for resistance to relations of domination but as a capacity for action that historically specific relations of subordination enable and create.” By detaching the concept of agency from the trap of resistance, the possibility of restoring deprived women’s agency opens up (*ibid.*, 115). Restoring NK women’s

agency is important in order to regard NKs as active subjects who are struggling for their safety. By restoring agency to NK defectors in academic understandings and in activist agendas, the voices and actions of migrants can be incorporated into strategies aimed at ensuring the security of NKs in China and in South Korea.

In circumstances of severely limited options, individuals may resort to survival strategies that diverge from societal norms or that are deemed morally unacceptable. It is imperative to exercise caution in categorizing these survival mechanisms as inherently immoral through an exaggerated emphasis on individual agency. Furthermore, we try to avoid overlooking the plight of the majority who endure hardship by disproportionately highlighting the successes of a select few. With these objectives in mind, the articles in this special issue that deal with the issue of agency strive to animate the narratives of interviewees in order to provide contextualization and enhance comprehension.

The Contributions to This Issue

The children born to NK women and Chinese fathers are often described, without much evidence to substantiate the narrative, as stateless children who exist outside of public services—specifically education—in China. This image has been circulated and reproduced in human rights activism as well as in research papers. Kang Seo's article in this issue, "Citizenship Redefined: China's *Hukou* System Reform and the Status of North Korean Refugee Women and Their Children in China," argues that China's household registration system, *hukou*, has evolved, and its impact on the social and legal status of NK mothers and their children born to Chinese fathers needs to be reexamined. Based on previous studies and available data, Seo shows that most children born to NK mothers and Chinese fathers have obtained *hukou* and that NK mothers have been provided temporary permits allowing them to access essential social services. Meanwhile, Seo found that the *hukou* reform resulted in a Chinese demographic change that views NK women as biological reproducers whose bodies are monitored and controlled by an expanded surveillance system. In addition, changes in the Chinese population regime expects that intermarriage children will become market participants who will sustain China's economy. Due to the difficulty of data collection in China, a regrettable limitation exists in empirical data. Existing data is nonetheless significant because it shows the recent situation of NK women and their children in the context of China's *hukou* reform. Seo's article also provides important information for human rights activists, who advocate for NK refugee women in China and their children born in China, to re-adjust the goals of their movements.

Joowon Park explores the feminization of NK migration and long-distance

motherhood of NK mothers in his article, “Transnational Mothering and North Korean Women’s Strategies of Survival: Impact of China’s One-Child Policy and *Hukou* on Migration and Kinship.” Park examines both the structural factors that led NK women to leave their children born to Chinese fathers in China when they resettled in South Korea and also their strategies for caring for those children who remain in China. The consequential new forms of kinship and family structure, he argues, represent survival strategies of NK women who made the tough choice to seek security and legal status in South Korea. The article also illustrates the discrimination that such children born in China face, not only in their home country but also in South Korea, and the challenges and possibilities of changing their status in both countries. Park’s detailed ethnographic data enrich the understanding of NK women’s agency as well as their sufferings.

HaeRan Shin’s article, “North Korean Female Entrepreneurs in South Korea: Empowerment through Informality and Resilience in Post-Cold War Geopolitics,” deals with the intersection of agency, mobility, and geopolitics. The study’s fresh perspective redirects attention from the deprived NK women to those who have found success managing businesses in South Korea. It emphasizes the diversity within the NK defector population and recognizes the dual nature of NK women’s experiences in China—both challenging and empowering. Despite not directly confronting the system, these women demonstrate resilience and adaptability in navigating their lives amidst geopolitical shifts by drawing strength from their past hardships. This study broadens our understanding of survivors’ agency and empowerment. While many of the women who experience trafficking continue to struggle, some are able to succeed in South Korea with skills they learned in China. Research about the empowerment process that uses detailed empirical data, like this article does, can greatly assist in helping more women successfully resettle in receiving countries.

The article “Health-Seeking Patterns of Female North Korean Defectors in South Korea for Mental Health: Evidence from Nationwide Health Insurance Data” by HyeSeung Wee, Jongmin Lee, and Seungho Jung presents a quantitative analysis of NK defectors’ use of mental health care services in South Korea. By analyzing mental health indicators (such as depression, anxiety, and reaction to severe stress and adjustment disorders) from South Korea’s National Health Insurance Database, the study shows that NK female defectors utilize mental healthcare services significantly more than NK male defectors. Both groups, however, have higher healthcare utilization rates compared to their matched counterparts among either South Korean natives or other immigrants. The study, which was based on data from the entire population of NK defectors in South Korea has implications not only for researchers but also for policymakers. Although the article does not explain the causes of the high rates and continued use of mental health services among NK defectors, the strong research findings presented through rigorous statistical analysis will stimulate the development of

research in related fields, such as refugee studies and healthcare studies.

The article “Framing Identity and Gender in Public Discourse: A Corpus Analysis of Representation of North Korean Female Defectors” by Sun-Hee Lee and Beomil Kang employs a corpus-based methodology to examine media representation of NK defector women in major South Korean newspapers. Lee and Kang argue that the differences in portrayals of NK women among media outlets reflect the media’s complex and contradictory perspectives on North Korea, which are rooted in Cold War ideology, and often involve stereotyping NK women as victims of violence. Given that the media has a significant impact on South Korean society’s perceptions of NK refugees and that these views are so closely tied to the resettlement and well-being of NK refugees, critical research on how the media portrays NK women should continue.

In the last article, “The End of Feminized North Korean Migration?: Gendering Violent Borders and Geographies of North Korean Migration from the Arduous March to the COVID-19 Era,” Eunyong Christina Choi traces the changes of gendered NK migration over the last three decades. She shows how the North Korea-China border became violent and produced gendered and classed mobility. Beyond attributing the feminization of migration solely to North Korea’s economic hardships and China’s reproductive labor shortage, this research goes further to show how gendered border enforcement in China and international attention to vulnerable women have created spatially gendered patterns of migration. The research sheds light on the migration experiences of NK men, which have been the subject of little research. Furthermore, this study lays the groundwork for research into the changes brought about by the Kim Jong Un regime and the COVID-19 era, which have been largely overlooked in studies of NK refugees and defectors.

Acknowledgements

Earlier versions of the papers in this Special Issue were presented at the International Conference on “Gendered (In)Securities of North Korean Migrants: Survival and Resilience in the Face of Violence,” organized by the Institute for Peace and Unification Studies (IPUS) at Seoul National University on August 18, 2023. We are grateful to the conference panelists and the external reviewers for their insightful comments. We also extend our thanks to IPUS for providing the funding and organizational support that made the conference and this Special Issue possible.

References

- Amnesty International. 2003. "North Korea: Human Rights Concerns." ASA 24/002/2003, April 11. <https://www.amnesty.org/es/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/asa240022003en.pdf> (accessed March 31, 2024).
- Ashcroft, Bill, Gareth Griffiths, and Helen Tiffin, eds. 2006. *The Post-colonial Studies Reader*. London: Taylor & Francis.
- BBC News Korea. 2022. "Jinan 10nyeongan jaeipbukan talbukmin 31myeong... Geudeureun wae dasi bukeuro gasseulkka?" [31 North Korean Defectors Have Returned to North Korea in the Past 10 Years... Why did they go back?]. September 28. <https://www.bbc.com/korean/news-63059685> (accessed March 31, 2024).
- Cho, Eun Ah. 2018. "'Becoming' North Koreans: Negotiating Gender and Class in Representations of North Korean Migrants on South Korean Television." *Cross-Currents: East Asian History and Culture Review* 7 (2): 266-93.
- Choi, Eunyong Christina. 2024. "The End of Feminized Migration? Engendering Violent Borders and Geographies of North Korean Migration from the Arduous March to the COVID-19 Era." *Asian Journal of Peacebuilding* 12 (1): 129-53.
- Choi, Eunyong. 2014. "North Korean Women's Narratives of Migration: Challenging Hegemonic Discourses of Trafficking and Geopolitics." *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 104 (2): 271-9.
- Choi, Eunyong. 2010. "Gender, Justice and Geopolitics of Undocumented North Korean Migration." PhD diss., Syracuse University.
- Choo, Hae Yeon. 2006. "Gendered Modernity and Ethnicized Citizenship: North Korean Settlers in Contemporary South Korea." *Gender & Society* 20 (5): 576-604.
- Chun, Kyung Hyo. 2022. "North Korean Defectors as Cultural Other in South Korea: Perception and Construction of Cultural Differences." *Asian Journal of Peacebuilding* 10 (1): 185-213.
- Chung, Ka Young. 2019. "Media as Soft Power: The Role of the South Korean Media in North Korea." *The Journal of International Communication* 25 (1): 137-57.
- Chung, Byung-Ho. 2014. "North Korean Refugees as Penetrant Transnational Migrants." *Urban Anthropology and Studies of Cultural Systems and World Economic Development* 43 (4): 329-61.
- Gerard, Alison, and Sharon Pickering. 2014. "Gender, Securitization and Transit: Refugee Women and the Journey to the EU." *Journal of Refugee Studies* 27 (3): 338-59.
- Green, Christopher K., and Stephen Epstein. 2013. "Now on My Way to Meet Who? South Korean Television, North Korean Refugees, and the Dilemmas of Representation." *Asia-Pacific Journal* 11 (2): 1-9.
- Hough, Jennifer, and Markus Bell. 2020. "North Koreans' Public Narratives and Conditional Inclusion in South Korea." *Critical Asian Studies* 52 (2): 161-81.
- Human Rights Watch. 2002. "The Invisible Exodus: North Koreans in the People's Republic of China." Report 14 (8), November. <https://www.hrw.org/reports/2002/northkorea/norkor1102.pdf> (accessed March 31, 2024).
- Jeon, Woo-Teak, Shi-Eun Yu, Young-A Cho, and Jin-Sup Eom. 2008. "Traumatic Experiences and Mental Health of North Korean Refugees in South Korea." *Psychiatry Investigation* 5 (4): 213-20.

- Kim, Jae Yop, Hee Jin Kim, Kwonho Choi, and Boyoung Nam. 2017. "Mental Health Conditions among North Korean Female Refugee Victims of Sexual Violence." *International Migration* 55 (2): 68-79.
- Kim, Sung Kyung. 2020. "Mobile North Korean Women and Long-Distance Motherhood." *Korean Studies* 44: 97-122.
- Kim, Sung Kyung. 2023. *Salanam-eun Yeojadeul-eun Segyeleul Mandeunda – Bundan-ui Nalasaeseo Yeoseong-eulo Sandaneun geos* [Surviving Women Make the World – Living as a Woman in a Divided Country]. Pajoo: Changbi.
- Lankov, Andrei. 2006. "Bitter Taste of Paradise: North Korean Refugees in South Korea." *Journal of East Asian Studies* 6 (1): 105-37.
- Lee, Hyunuk, and Seok-hyang Kim. 2022. "Transnational Ties of North Korean Defectors Living in Japan." *Journal of Peace and Unification* 12 (1): 131-64.
- Lee, Ji Yeon. 2019. "Talbukmin-ui Bukhan Gajok Songgeum-ui Suhaengseong-gwa Bundan Tongchiseong" [Performativity of North Korean Migrants' Family Remittances and Governmentality in the South-North Korean Division]. *Economy and Society*: 221-54.
- Lee, Soo-Jung. 2020. "Talbukja'eseo'saheojuk gajang'euro'jendeohwa doen chogukjeog iju'ui gwanjeomeseo salpyeo bon yeongguk geoju bukhan iju namseongdeul-ui iju gyeongheomgwa sahoe hwal-dong-ui uimi" [From "North Korea Defectors" to "Social Patriarchs": The Meanings of Migration Experience and Social Activities of North Korean Migrant Men in the United Kingdom]. *Contemporary Society and Multiculturalism* 10 (2): 177-213.
- Lee, Sun-Hee, and Beomil Kang. 2024. "Framing Identity and Gender in Public Discourse: A Corpus Analysis of Representation of North Korean Female Defectors." *Asian Journal of Peacebuilding* 12 (1): 99-128.
- Mahmood, Saba. 2005. *Politics of Piety: The Islamic Revival and the Feminist Subject*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Mernissi, Fatima. 1994. *Dreams of Trespass: Tales of a Harem Girlhood*. Boston: Addison-Wesley Publishing.
- Mohanty, Chandra Talpade. 2003. "Under Western Eyes' Revisited: Feminist Solidarity through Anticapitalist Struggles." *Signs: Journal of Women in Culture and Society* 28 (2): 499-535.
- Mohanty, Chandra Talpade, Ann Russo, and Lourdes Torres, eds. 1991. *Third World Women and the Politics of Feminism*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
- Muico, Norma Kang. 2005. "An Absence of Choice: The Sexual Exploitation of North Korean Women in China." London: Anti-Slavery International. https://www.antislavery.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/full_korea_report_2005.pdf (Accessed on March 31, 2024).
- Park, Joowon. 2024. "Transnational Mothering and North Korean Women's Strategies of Survival: Impact of China's One-Child Policy and Hukou on Migration and Kinship." *Asian Journal of Peacebuilding* 12 (1): 35-51.
- Plümmer, Franziska. 2022. *Rethinking Authority in China's Border Regime*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.
- Seo, Kang. 2024. "Citizenship Redefined: China's Hukou System Reform and the Status of North Korean Refugee Women and Their Children in China." *Asian Journal of Peacebuilding* 12 (1): 13-33.
- Shin, HaeRan. 2024. "North Korean Female Entrepreneurs in South Korea: Empowerment

- through Informality and Resilience in Post-Cold War Geopolitics.” *Asian Journal of Peacebuilding* 12 (1): 53-75.
- Shin, HaeRan, ed. 2022a. *North Korean Defectors in Diaspora: Identities, Mobilities, and Resettlements*. London: Lexington Books.
- Shin, HaeRan. 2022b. “Precarity to Empowerment: The Consequences of Female North Korean Defectors’ Coping Skills and Social Navigation.” *Gender, Place & Culture* 29 (11): 1572-93.
- Shin, Hyo Sook. 2023. *Bundan Sidae Talgyeongui Donghak – Talbukmin-ui Ijuwa Jeongchak* [The Movement Beyond Boundaries in the Era of Division – Emigration and Settlement of North Korean Defectors]. Seoul: Myungilmoonhwasa.
- Shin, Nanhee. 2018. “Talbukijuyeoseong-ui Diaspora wa Haengwiseng-e Gwanhan Seongchal” [A Study on Diaspora and Agency of Female North Korean Migrants]. *Korean Studies* 65: 175-205.
- Shin, Nanhee. 2017. “Talbukiju Yeoseong-ui Danche Hwaldong-gwa Galdeung-e Gwanhan Munhwa-jeog Ihae” [Cultural Understanding of Collective Activities and Conflicts among North Korean Defector Women]. *Korean Studies* 61: 215-50.
- Song, Jay. 2021. “The ‘Savage-Victim-Savior’ Story Grammar of the North Korean Human Rights Industry.” *Asian Studies Review* 45 (1): 48-66.
- Song, Jiyoung. 2015. “Twenty Years’ Evolution of North Korean Migration, 1994-2014: A Human Security Perspective.” *Asia & the Pacific Policy Studies* 2 (2): 399-415.
- Wee, HyeSeung, Jongmin Lee, and Seungho Jung. 2024. “Health-Seeking Patterns of Female North Korean Defectors in South Korea for Mental Health: Evidence from Nationwide Health Insurance Data.” *Asian Journal of Peacebuilding* 12 (1): 77-97.
- Yi, Hee Young. 2022. *Kyunggyereul Hoengdanhaneun Yeoseongdeul – Bundan-gwa Ijuui Saeng-aesa Yeongu* [Women Crossing Boundaries: Life History Research on Division and Migration]. Seoul: Purenkil.

Eunyong Christina Choi is a Senior Fellow at the Institute for Peace and Unification Studies (IPUS) at Seoul National University. She focuses on feminist geography, border studies, and migration studies. Choi’s publications include “North Korean Women’s Narratives of Migration: Challenging Hegemonic Discourses of Trafficking and Geopolitics” (*Annals of the Association of American Geographers*, 2014) and *The Routledge Research Companion to Border Studies* (Routledge, 2016). Email: tinachoi@snu.ac.kr

Submitted: May 01, 2024; Revised: May 20, 2024; Accepted: May 21, 2024