

The background of the cover is a detailed architectural floor plan in a light green color on a dark green background. The plan shows various rooms, corridors, and structural elements, including a large circular area on the right side. The lines are thin and precise, creating a complex geometric pattern.

*Routledge Studies in Modern History*

# TRANSNATIONALISM AND MIGRATION IN GLOBAL KOREA

**HISTORY, POLITICS, AND SOCIOLOGY,  
1910 TO THE PRESENT**

Edited by Joanne Miyang Cho,  
Lee M. Roberts, and Sang Hwan Seong



# Transnationalism and Migration in Global Korea

Contrary to the image of Korea as a largely self-contained country until its economy became global during the 1990s, this book shows that transnationalism has firmly been part of modern Korea's national experience throughout its existence.

The volume portrays Korea's frequent transnational entanglements with other nations in East Asia and the West from the start of its annexation into the Empire of Japan in 1910 to the present day. It explores how modern Korea negotiated its complicated colonial relations with imperial Japan and its political and economic relations with the West in meeting the challenges of the globalized world. Early chapters cover the origins of Korea's democratic republicanism among Korean immigrants in the United States, the Royal Dutch oil industry in Korea, military hygiene and sex workers, and prisons in the Japanese Empire. From the latter half of the twentieth century to the present, the book probes Cold War politics between Korea and Europe, transnational Korean communities in China, Japan, the Russian Far East, and the West, and ethnic Korean returnees from the Russian Far East.

With contributions from leading international scholars, this collection's attention to modern Korean history, economy, gender studies, and migration is ideal for upper-level undergraduates and postgraduates.

**Joanne Miyang Cho** is a professor of History at William Paterson University. She has edited/co-edited *Germany and India*, *Germany and China*, *Germany and Japan*, *Germany and Korea*, *Germany and East Asia*, *Gendered Encounters*, *Musical Entanglements*, and *East Asian-German Cinema*. She is a co-editor for Palgrave Series in Asian German Studies.

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# 1 Transnationalism, Migration, Historiography, and Organization

*Joanne Miyang Cho and Lee M. Roberts*

This volume contributes to the field of modern Korean Studies by emphasizing two main transformative aspects in modern Korean history, transnationalism and migration. Contrary to the common notion that Korea was mostly a self-contained country until its economy began to globalize during the 1990s, it offers a view of how transnationalism and migration were still often intertwined with developments in Korea even before the 1990s. With regard to its scope, this book portrays Korea's extensive transnational entanglements both with other nations in East Asia and also with the United States and various European countries from the start of the colonial period in 1910 to the present day. Moreover, it examines Korean diasporic communities abroad (East Asia, the Russian Far East, the United States, and Europe), as well as groups of recent ethnic Korean returnees to South Korea. On this point, it probes both Korea's influences on these other nations and also their influences on Korea. In short, the volume highlights Korea's evolving relationships with these nations and migrant communities in ways that resulted in meaningful connections and entanglements, despite their differences and occasionally even deep disagreements.

This introductory chapter provides a brief overview of transnationalism and migration in modern Korea, situates the volume within current scholarship, and explains the arguments of the next 12 chapters. The first section examines migration and ensuing transnational experiences in modern Korean history focusing mainly on the outbound migration of various groups of Koreans over the last 150 years as well as on transnational encounters between Koreans and foreigners that since the 1990s have become more frequent and diversified. It also covers inbound migration to South Korea in the twenty-first century, including both the return of ethnic Koreans from some diasporic communities and also the arrival of non-Korean migrants to South Korea, which challenged Korean society to become more multicultural. The second section, "Historiographical Overview," presents recent scholarly works dealing with transnationalism and migration in modern Korea and explains this volume's unique contributions. Finally, the third section, "Organization of the Volume," presents brief descriptions of the chapters to come. They cover non-migratory transnational encounters between

Korea and several other nations as well as the migration of Koreans to other countries and of ethnic Korean and non-Korean migrants to South Korea.

### **Transnationalism and Migration in Modern Korea**

Until the 1990s, Korea witnessed the rather extensive migration of Koreans to other countries, but in the post-Cold War era, South Korea became an attractive destination for people seeking a better life, a circumstance founded largely on Korea's openness to the world and willingness to engage in transnational cooperation. To gain a view of this shift, it is sensible to examine first the outbound migration of various groups of Koreans over the last 150 years and their transnational encounters with foreigners. Against this background, it then will be easier then to discern the newness of the phenomenon of inbound migration to South Korea since the 1990s. As we will see, this influx of people from abroad challenged Korean society to become more multicultural.

#### ***Outbound Migration and Globalization***

Examples of transnational events that counter the notion of Korea's ethnic homogeneity abound throughout modern Korea from the mid-nineteenth to the twenty-first century. In the nineteenth century, we see that Koreans frequently left their homes and moved abroad in search of better living conditions. According to Alyssa Park (2019), in the mid-nineteenth century, Koreans from Hamgyŏng Province migrated to the Russian Maritime and Chinese Jilin Province and later came to be referred to as Koryŏ saram (people from the kingdom of Koryŏ) and Chosŏnjok (Joseon ethnic group), respectively.<sup>1</sup> At the beginning of the twentieth century, Korean peasants whose fields did not provide sufficient food moved into China and Russia to find fertile areas to farm.<sup>2</sup> In Russia, the Korean group grew from approximately 20,000 (1890) to 150,000 (1929) and, in China, from 50,000 (1910) to 280,000 (1919). Others went to Hawaii to work as laborers on sugar plantations until 1906, "when the Japanese government banned Korean emigration to protect the interests of Japanese" doing similar jobs.<sup>3</sup>

During the Japanese colonial period (1910–1945), some Koreans moved either to Japan or Manchuria, and after the Manchurian Incident of 1931, Japan forced many more to migrate there to develop the region.<sup>4</sup> The Provisional Government of the Republic of Korea was established in Shanghai in 1919 and then moved to Chongqing. Thus, China provided a haven for some Koreans.<sup>5</sup> Koreans who moved into Russia (later, the Soviet Union) experienced initial successes but ultimately became the targets of the Soviet authorities by dint of being ethnically Korean. They were not permitted to overtly practice Korean culture and speak the Korean language. By 1937, when the Soviets suspected Koreans of being potential spies for the Empire of Japan, many Korean families in the Russian maritime provinces were deported to countries in Central

Asia, such as Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan.<sup>6</sup> Consequently, at the end of World War II, a rather sizable number of Koreans, “at least 12 percent of the entire Korean population,” lived abroad—1,500,000 in Japan, 1,500,000 in Manchuria, and 170,000 who had been resettled from the Russian Far East to Central Asia.<sup>7</sup>

In the latter half of the twentieth century, Koreans continued to migrate elsewhere. However, what stands out in this period is increasing interaction with the West. The Korean War (1950–1953), which was a civil war with international components,<sup>8</sup> provided grounds for the first major interaction with the United States. During the second wave of Korean immigration to the United States (1950–1964), around 15,000 Koreans formed three groups. First, after the War Brides’ Acts of 1945, as many as 6,423 Korean women who had married American soldiers went to the United States. American society did not exactly welcome them, since the Immigration Act of 1924 barred Asian immigrants and miscegenation laws were in effect until 1967. Also, their fellow South Koreans sometimes had unkind words for them.<sup>9</sup> As Grace M. Cho has explained, some of these women who worked as camptown prostitutes for American soldiers were the daughters of former comfort women.<sup>10</sup> The second group of Koreans who went to the United States was Korean war orphans, and many American families did adopt them. They were able to return and re-establish a life and get Korean citizenship after the Overseas Korean Act of 1999 and the Nationality Law of 2010.<sup>11</sup> The third group of Koreans who went to the United States involved “approximately 6,000 Korean students,” most of whom were professionals (medical doctors, lawyers, and professors). They were “well accepted and integrated into the American society.”<sup>12</sup>

During the early Cold War era, South Korea had frequent interactions with the United States, but in the decades following the Korean War, US-Korean relations have been sometimes tested. Still, their relations maintained the status quo, “despite widespread anti-American sentiments in South Korea,” as Hae-sook Chae argues. “Anti-Americanism and support for the alliance can and do co-exist,” as South Koreans are pragmatic on the question.<sup>13</sup> On their negative relationship, South Koreans often pointed out the US transgressions during the Korean War, such as the civilian massacre at Nogeun-ri (1950), which, according to Cho, “instigate[d] a radical rupturing of the fantasy of the American dream and of friendly U.S.-Korea relations.”<sup>14</sup> Also, they criticized the US support for authoritarian rule under President Park and the use of South Korean prostitutes for the US military. Regarding more positive aspects of their relationship, one can point to the role of the United States as “a source of aid, trade, and investment” for South Koreans.<sup>15</sup> “A broader US-led international effort” gave rise to a variety of educational and cultural programs’ being initiated in South Korea.<sup>16</sup> Moreover, the United States played an important role in “introducing democratic ideas and concepts.”

The 1960s and 1970s marked the beginning of South Korea’s industrialization, and thus, South Koreans’ contact with the outside world became more

diversified. Korea mainly exported laborers whose remittances to Korea benefitted the Korean economy. Around 18,000 miners and nurses went to West Germany as *Gastarbeiter* (guest workers), creating a major Korean diaspora community in Western Europe. During the Vietnam War, South Korea assisted the United States' military by sending about 300,000 troops to Vietnam between 1965 and 1973; in return, South Korea received financial benefits, which accounted for 40% of its "crucial foreign-exchange receipts." Between the mid-1970s and the mid-1980s, several Korean construction companies hired 1.1 million South Koreans to work in the Middle East. In Saudi Arabia alone, approximately 720,000 Korean workers were employed in various projects from 1973 to 1984.<sup>17</sup> Eventually, most returned home or moved on to other countries.

As John Lie has commented, until the 1980s, the terms "global" and "Korea" did not go hand in hand. However, in the 1980s, South Korea became more open to the world. Whereas previously Koreans had not been allowed to travel abroad freely, except for "the purposes of business, study, emigration, visiting relatives, and official and diplomatic travel," they could suddenly do so in 1983, although young people in their twenties had to wait for it until 1989.<sup>18</sup> In 1987, Korea achieved democracy, too, and hosting the 1988 Summer Olympics amounted to a meaningful step toward globalization. By the mid-1990s, Korea became clearly on the course toward globalization. In fact, two aspects of these trends stand out as particularly noteworthy, "the shock of the 1997 IMF crisis" and Kim Dae-jung's *segzehwa* [globalization] policy, for they resulted in an "entrenched the outward-looking, global orientation for South Korea."<sup>19</sup> Simply put, Kim Dae-jung's regime "used the IMF's demand for economic and social reform."<sup>20</sup>

In the 1980s and 1990s, some efforts were made to improve inter-Korean relations. In 1985, for example, the first reunion of separated families took place. In the late 1980s, South Korea's *Nordpolitik* (North Policy) under President Roh Tae-woo sought to bring both countries together for economic cooperation. In 1990, North Korea protested the Soviet Union normalizing of relations with South Korea, but the following year, both countries were admitted to the United Nations as the influence of the Cold War dissipated. By the mid-1990s, reeling from widespread famine, many North Koreans fled to China as refugees.<sup>21</sup> The 1997 Act on Protection of and Resettlement Assistance for North Korean Defectors not only promised limited economic support for defectors, but it also "aimed to rationally define and decide the range and category of North Koreans who deserve assistance."<sup>22</sup> In 1998, South Korean President Kim Dae-jung's Sunshine Policy set the ground for broader economic cooperation between South and North.

Since the 1990s, South Koreans have continued to expand their transnational encounters through emigration, study abroad, and Christian missions. Many Koreans migrated to the United States, China, Japan, Canada, and other countries, which reached 7.49 million in 2019.<sup>23</sup> Most went to the United States, which became easier owing to the 1965 Immigration and Naturalization Act. Indeed,

over the last 30 years, the numbers grew rapidly from 568,000 (1990) to 1.1 million (2010), although the year 2017 saw a decline to 1,063,000.<sup>24</sup> The United States represented for these Korean immigrants “a twin quest for modernity and social mobility.”<sup>25</sup> This particular group of immigrants “tend[ed] to be highly educated and earn high incomes compared to the overall immigrant and U.S.-born populations.”<sup>26</sup> Many in this group frequently visited Korea, too, thus serving as transnational agents between Korea and their adopted country.

The South Korean government facilitated some steps toward globalization in the 1990s.<sup>27</sup> Prior to the 1990s, Koreans at home often saw Koreans abroad as traitors.<sup>28</sup> However, in the 1990s, the Korean-American community pushed the South Korean government to make dual nationality legal.<sup>29</sup> While President Kim Yŏngsam rejected this push, he supported the creation of the Overseas Korean Foundation (OKF) in 1997, which led “toward the institutional recognition of the Korean diaspora.”<sup>30</sup> The F-4 Overseas Korean visa accorded overseas Koreans many rights, but it excluded all ethnic Koreans who left Korea before 1948, thus denying these rights to Koreans in China (Chosŏnjok) and Russia (Koryŏ saram).<sup>31</sup> Since 2010, overseas Koreans aged 65 and older can hold dual citizenship.

Over the last 30 years, many Korean students have studied abroad. The numbers of Korean students pursuing degree programs abroad were 64,943 in 1997, 128,994 in 2011, dipping slightly to 108,608 in 2016.<sup>32</sup> In 2012, the United States had the highest number of Korean students, with 30.7%, followed by China (26.4%), Canada (8.6%), Japan (8.4%), and Australia (7.2%). However, the number of Korean students studying in China at Chinese universities rose “more than three-fold” between 2001 (16,000) and 2012 (63,000). Consequently, in 2016, the number of Korean students in China (29.8%) was higher than the number in the United States (27.5%).<sup>33</sup> Yet, these figures are somewhat deceptive, since 82% of South Korean students in the United States were in degree programs, whereas 65% of those in China stayed only for a short period and for “the purpose of training such as language training.”<sup>34</sup> In 2015, 81,000 Korean students represented 7% of all international students in the United States.<sup>35</sup>

Finally, Korean Protestants have been quite active in worldwide missions. In 2018, there were about 27,436 Korean missionaries in over 170 countries, a huge increase compared to 1974, when there were only 24 missionaries. Currently, Korea has the second highest number of missionaries, being only behind the United States. The most common destinations for Korean missionaries can be seen in the example of Christian missions in 2003 to China, the Philippines, Japan, Russia, Germany, and Thailand.<sup>36</sup>

### ***Diaspora Communities and Inbound Migration***

There have been various new developments in the post-Cold War era, as South Korea re-established transnational connections with China and the Russian Far

East, and it became a destination for several groups. South Koreans grew closer to the Korean diaspora communities in China (2 million) and the Russian Far East (a half million). In part, this shift was based on potential economic benefit.<sup>37</sup> By the mid-1990s, many South Koreans imagined the Korean diaspora as a resource.<sup>38</sup> For example, the South Korean multinational automotive manufacturer Hyundai expressed interest in ethnic Koreans abroad, especially regarding the “many Koreans on Sakhalin and in Siberia, as well as Korean Chinese in Manchuria.” In 1990, Hyundai Group launched the Siberian Forest Development Project and employed 200 Chosŏnjok living in Jilin Province with additional hires in subsequent years.<sup>39</sup>

Another case for potential economic benefit was found in the ethnic Koreans in the Russian Far East. Contact between North and South Koreans increased in 1993 when the Russian government allowed ethnic Koreans who had been deported to Central Asia according to Stalin’s cruel policies to return to their places of origin. Many Koryŏ saram moved back to places like Primorye, Khabarovsk, and Sakhalin.<sup>40</sup> Roughly 20,000 ethnic Koreans lived in Primorskiy Province, and the city of Ussuriisk came to be “considered the unofficial center for preserving Korean culture and traditions.”<sup>41</sup> Korean Russians received support from the South Korean government and continued to work for South Korean companies in Russia. Over time, Russia and North Korea concluded a number of agreements on such things as connecting the Trans-Korean railway with the Trans-Siberian railway, developing the gas pipeline, and establishing flights between Pyongyang and Vladivostok.<sup>42</sup> However, at the end of 2017, the UN Security Council tightened sanctions on the DPRK, which reduced the number of North Koreans crossing the border into Russia to work.<sup>43</sup>

In the post-Cold War era, some ethnic Koreans from China, the Russian Far East, and Sakhalin began returning to South Korea. In part, they were motivated by South Korea’s rise as a leading economy; since 60 years after the Korean War, it transformed from being dependent on US aid to “vibrant two-way trade and investment.”<sup>44</sup> There are over 700,000 Chinese Koreans and a little over 60,000 post-Soviet Koreans living in South Korea.<sup>45</sup> Moreover, in the post-Cold War period, increasingly large numbers of foreign migrants came to Korea from Vietnam, Thailand, the United States, Uzbekistan, and Russia. Like Japan and Singapore, South Korea has solved its own labor shortages “in 3-D (difficult, dangerous, and dirty) industries” with migrant labor. Thus, Koreans have had to think about multicultural questions,<sup>46</sup> as the rapid influx from abroad “created a tension with the idea of ethnic homogeneity that especially the older generation of Koreans still believe in.”<sup>47</sup> Tens of thousands of brides from mostly China and Vietnam have arrived in Korea, and marriage rates with foreign spouses were 10.5% of all marriages in 2010 (34,200) and 9.9% in 2019 (23,600).<sup>48</sup> Consequently, the number of foreign residents has noticeably increased since the 1990s, as well. Between 1980 and 1990, there was a change of only 22% (under 50,000), but between 1990 and 2007, it increased by 2,000% (1 million).<sup>49</sup> The

number increased more than doubled (2.52 million) between 2007 and 2019.<sup>50</sup> Currently, foreigners make up 3.3% (1.73 million) of the population, but that figure is expected increase to 4.5% (2.28 million) by 2040.<sup>51</sup>

In the twentieth-first century, the South Korean government has attempted to improve the status of resident foreigners. President Roh Moo-hyun (2003–2008) opposed teaching ethnic homogeneity and supported “the tenets of multiculturalism.”<sup>52</sup> Since 2004, therefore, some significant immigration policies have been passed.<sup>53</sup> In 2006, the Ministry of Education removed the idea that Korea is a “single-race nation” from social studies textbooks.<sup>54</sup> It passed the Act on the Treatment of Foreigners (2007), but “widespread societal discrimination against foreigner[s]” continues to exist. The Support for Multicultural Families Act was enacted in 2008 and then revised in 2011. Since 2010, enlisted Korean soldiers must no longer swear allegiance to the Korean race. *Damunhwa gajung* (multicultural families) replaced derogatory expressions, such as “mixed-blood” or “mixed-race,” that had previously been used in reference to children of international marriages.<sup>55</sup> With these measures, Korea has made gradual progress in accommodating foreigners. It is timely, because the foreign population is projected to grow further due to South Korea’s very low birthrates.

### **Historiographical Overview**

This edited volume fits among those published over the last few decades that have related Korea to a broader range of countries. Owing to regional proximity and thus also more frequent historical cultural contact or to growing interest in Korean diasporic communities, most have focused on the two Koreas’ relationship with the United States, Russia/former Soviet Union, Japan, Germany, and China. In fact, most of the edited volumes focus on the Korean diaspora from around the late nineteenth century on. This overview not only presents the edited volumes published since 2000 but also offers an occasional glimpse of single-author monographs on related topics to communicate the wealth of research on the given topic.

*Transnationalism and Migration in Global Korea* contributes to the list of edited volumes on Koreans around the world. Similar volumes include, for instance, *Korea Confronts Globalization* (2008), edited by Chang Yun-Shik, Hyun-Ho Seok, and Donald L. Baker, which covers how Korea’s efforts to globalize have occurred simultaneously with class division and increasing social inequality.<sup>56</sup> *South Korea’s Education Exodus*, edited by Adrienne Lo, et al., looks at how Koreans who have studied in New Zealand, Singapore, and the United States have both benefitted from and also experienced numerous challenges related to their having gone overseas and then again upon their eventual return to South Korea.<sup>57</sup> *The Spread of the Korean Language* (2018), edited by Clare You and Yangwon Ha, examines the teaching of Korean language in China, Japan, and the United States as a means to keep the language alive and to

teach non-Koreans about Korean culture.<sup>58</sup> In 2019, two edited volumes about Koreans outside of the Korean peninsula appeared, *Korean Diaspora across the World*, edited by Eun-Jeong Han, Min Wha Han, and Jonghwa Lee, and *Diasporic Returns to the Ethnic Homeland*, edited by Takeyuki Tsuda and Changzoo Song.<sup>59</sup> Whereas the former examines the meaning of homeland for Koreans across the globe, the latter focuses on returnees, policies connected to their return, and social hierarchies that developed subsequently. In 2019, *Transnational Mobility and Identity in and out of Korea*, edited by Yonson Ahn, showcased Korean migration to Japan, the Philippines, Germany, the United States, and the United Kingdom.<sup>60</sup> Annika A. Culver and Norman Smith's *Manchukuo Perspectives* (2020) offers among other things a view of Korean, Chinese, and Russian intellectuals' assessment of Japanese-controlled Manchuria between 1932 and 1945.<sup>61</sup> Also appearing in 2020, *Newcomers and Global Migration in Contemporary South Korea*, edited by Sung-Choon Park and Joong-Hwan Oh, tackles race, class, and gender inequalities in South Korea, especially with regard to refugees, low-wage and (sometimes) undocumented workers, and women who migrate for marriage.<sup>62</sup> *Peace Corps Volunteers and the Making of Korean Studies in the United States* (2020), edited by Seung-kyung Kim and Michael Robinson, recounts how various Americans who taught English and work in health care in South Korea between 1966 and 1981 returned to the United States and created the discipline of Korean Studies.<sup>63</sup>

The volumes covered thus far focus on Korea and the world, but there is a related list of volumes that focus on Korea's interactions with one specific country. Since 2000, for instance, many edited volumes covering Korean relations with the United States have appeared. Following *One Hundred Years of Korean-American Relations, 1882–1982* (1986), Yur Bok Lee and Wayne Patterson's second volume *Korean-American Relations, 1866–1997* (1998) focuses on the huge growth of trade between South Korea and the United States, even though troops from the United States remained stationed in the area.<sup>64</sup> Jane Yeonjae Lee and Minjin Kim's *The 1.5 Generation Korean Diaspora* (2020) covers the topic of children who have grown up abroad and changed with their various host cultures, including in such cities as Los Angeles and Boston.<sup>65</sup> Similarly, *Ko-reatowns*, edited by Jinwon Kim, Soo Mee Kim, and Stephen Cho Suh (2020), focuses mostly on Korean communities not only in the United States and around the US-Mexico border but also Beijing and Singapore.<sup>66</sup>

Monographs have also appeared on the relationship between Korea and the United States. Although not exhaustive, a brief list of such publications include Keumjae Park's *Korean Immigrant Women and the Renegotiation of Identity* (2009), a book about how Korean women in the United States redefined themselves in their new host country.<sup>67</sup> *Koreans in Central California (1903–1957)* by Marn J. Cha (2010) takes up a similar theme.<sup>68</sup> Gi-Wook Shin's *One Alliance, Two Lenses* (2010) looks at challenges in relations between Korea and the United States during the American war on terror from the 1990s to the early

twenty-first century.<sup>69</sup> Pyong Gap Min's *Koreans in North America* (2013) focuses on the settlement patterns and lifestyle of Korean immigrants to North America, in general, including Canada.<sup>70</sup> Angie Y. Chung's *Saving Face* (2016) includes a view of Koreans outside of Korea alongside other Asian groups.<sup>71</sup> Dae Young Kim's *Transnational Communities in the Smartphone Age* (2017) discusses how in the digital age Koreans have managed to maintain a strong cultural contact with their home country.<sup>72</sup> *The Evolution of the South Korea-United States Alliance* (2018) by Uk Heo and Terence Roehrig (2018) uses alliance theory to examine the evolving relationship between the United States and a strengthening South Korea.<sup>73</sup> In *South Korea's Origins and Early Relations with the United States* (2022), Hyeonji Cha and Hyun Jin Kim analyze interactions between the Provisional Government of the Republic of Korea and the United States during the World War II and in later preparation for the future of Korea.<sup>74</sup> In *Pachappa Camp* (2022), Edward T. Chang takes us back to 1905 and the beginnings of the Koreatown of Riverside, California.<sup>75</sup>

Publications on Korean relations with Russia and the Soviet Union are comparable to those about the United States. The journal *Koryō Saram: Koreans in the Former USSR* (2001), edited by German N. Kim and Ross King, offers an overview of the history of Koreans living in the former Soviet Union. The volume *Russia and Its Northeast Asian Neighbors* (2016), edited by Kimitaka Matsuzato, contains a chapter on Russia's past encounters with Korea and the effect on Early Meiji Japan's dealings with Korea.<sup>76</sup> Similarly, *The Northern Region of Korea* (2015), edited by Sun Joo Kim, contains chapters on Koreans living in the northern region from the fifteenth century on, including one chapter on the transnational border and another on Russian sources that have referenced the northern region.<sup>77</sup> Finally, *International Relations and Asia's Northern Tier* (2018), edited by Gilbert Rozman and Sergey Radchenko, has chapters on Russia's and China's relations with North Korea and North Korea's position vis-à-vis both countries.<sup>78</sup>

Among monographs about Korea and Russia, we find publications covering three or four general themes. On Soviet-DPRK relations, for example, Alan J. Levine's *Stalin's Last War* (2005) traces events from the early Cold War to the Korean War.<sup>79</sup> Balázs Szalontai's *Kim Il Sung in the Khrushchev Era* (2006) discusses relations between the former Soviet Union and North Korea.<sup>80</sup> Jon Chang's *Burnt by the Sun* (2016) explores the fate of Koreans living in and around the former Soviet Union and also Korean-Soviet experiences with Japan.<sup>81</sup> Similarly, Hye Ok Park's *Koreans and the Russian Far East and Manchuria, 1895* (2022) details Koreans' involvement with Japan's military related to the Russo-Japanese War (1904–1905).<sup>82</sup> On the concept of varying attitudes toward national borders, Hyun Gwi Park's *The Displacement of Borders among Russian Koreans in Northeast Asia* (2017) covers the social life of Koreans in the Russian Far East. Focusing on the period from the late nineteenth century until the end of the World War II, Vladimir Tikhonov's *Modern Korea and Its*

*Others* (2018) examines, among other things, Russian influence on Korean intellectuals.<sup>83</sup> Alyssa M. Park's *Sovereignty Experiments* (2019) traces the creation of Korean borders from the nineteenth century until the end of the World War II and how Russia, Japan, and China sought to control the Koreans and various national borders.<sup>84</sup> Se Hyun Ahn's *Policing Northeast Asia* (2020), conversely, examines troubled attempts at cooperation between Russia and South Korea since 1991.<sup>85</sup>

With regard to Japan, a number of edited volumes have appeared in recent years. *Koreans in Japan: Critical Voices from the Margin* (2000), edited by Sonia Ryang, contains chapters that present the life of Koreans residing in Japan, including their origin, ethnic schools, and identity construction.<sup>86</sup> In 2008, *The Historical Perceptions of Korea and Japan*, edited by Dae-Song Hyun, appeared with chapters on issues between Korea and Japan from premodern times to Japan's postcolonial era.<sup>87</sup> Also on the history of Koreans in Japan, Sonia Ryang and John Lie's edited volume *Diaspora without Homeland* (2009) covers naturalization and problems revolving around citizenship in Japan, cinematic representations of Koreans in Japan, and the post-zainichi generation.<sup>88</sup> Offering a broad view Korean-Japanese relations, *Spaces of Possibility* (2016), edited by Clark W. Sorensen and Andrea Gevurtz Arai, covers also some pro-Japanese sentiment in Korea and among Koreans living in Japan.<sup>89</sup> Similarly, "*History Wars*" and *Reconciliation in Japan and Korea* (2017), edited by Michael Lewis, contains chapters on nation and belonging in the postcolonial era.<sup>90</sup> *Zainichi Literature* (2018), edited by John Lie, contains translations of works written by Koreans living in Japan.<sup>91</sup> Finally, *Japanese Public Sentiment on South Korea* (2021), edited by Tetsuro Kobayashi and Atsushi Tago, treats anti-Korean sentiment in Japan, trade disputes between the two countries, and varying discourses on comfort women in Korean and Japanese newspapers.<sup>92</sup>

Recent years have also witnessed the appearance of various monographs about Korean-Japanese relations that have covered such issues as Japanese mistreatment of Koreans during and after the end of the Empire of Japan. Sung-Hwa Cheong's *The Politics of Anti-Japanese Sentiment in Korea* (1991) pointed out that during the Cold War, the UNS attempted unsuccessfully to smooth relations between Japan and South Korea.<sup>93</sup> Alexis Dudden's *Japan's Colonization of Korea* (2006) explains problems connected to legal discourse used during the former Empire of Japan's annexation of Korea in 1910, and Jun Uchida's *Brokers of Empire* (2014) focuses on how from the late nineteenth century the desire for profit paved the way for Japan's imperial aspirations.<sup>94</sup> John Lie's *Zainichi (Koreans in Japan)*, (2008) discusses the identity formation of migrants from the Korean peninsula to Japan, and *Zainichi Korean Identity and Ethnicity* by David Chapman (2009) describes the successes and challenges of Koreans living in Japan today.<sup>95</sup> Todd A. Henry's *Assimilating Seoul* (2016) focuses on how interests of the colonial state and local Japanese settlers shaped the creation of Koreans as Japanese subjects in Seoul.<sup>96</sup> With regard to the diaspora in Japan and China,

Jaeun Kim's *Contested Embrace* (2016) discusses what has constituted Koreanness from the colonial period to the post-Cold War era.<sup>97</sup> Svetlana Paichadze's *Identity, Language and Education of Sakhalin Japanese and Koreans* (2022) traces the two nations' interactions from their migration to Sakhalin until some returned to their respective countries.<sup>98</sup>

Edited volumes covering relations between Korea and China treat many similar topics. For instance, *China and North Korea* (2015), edited by Carla P. Freeman, explains some top Chinese experts' views of North Korea on matters related to security, nuclear weapons, Korea's independence from Japan, regime change in both countries, food aid from China to North Korea, economic decisions, and cooperation.<sup>99</sup> *The Borderlands of China and Korea* (2020), edited by Yong-Ku Cha, presents relations between China and Korea from the distant past and includes a view of how various peoples have connected around the Korean peninsula.<sup>100</sup>

Monographs that focus on Korean-Chinese affairs touch on such familiar topics as ethnic identity, historical relations, and the associated pair migration and return. For instance, Hyejin Kim's *International Ethnic Networks and Intra-Ethnic Conflict* (2010) details problems between newer Korean migrants to China and the longtime resident Korean population.<sup>101</sup> During the Joseon period (1392–1910), relations with China were deftly handled, Robert Kong Chan explains in *Korea-China Relations in History and Contemporary Implications* (2018).<sup>102</sup> Similarly, Odd Arne Westad's *Empire and Righteous Nation* (2021) offers an overview of Sino-Korean relations from times when China was a model for and protector of Korea to more recent developments when concepts of the nation state reshaped the two people's understanding of themselves and their neighbors.<sup>103</sup> In *Making and Faking Kinship* (2017), Caren Freeman explains how in the 1990s ethnic Koreans in China (Chosônjok) came to South Korea as brides or laborers and experienced discrimination and exploitation that shattered the myth of reuniting with the former homeland.<sup>104</sup> Similarly, both Ji-Yeon O. Jo's *Homing* (2017) and Helene K. Lee's *Between Foreign and Family* (2018) both treat the topic of the imagined homeland of returnees coming from China, the Commonwealth of Independent States, and the United States.<sup>105</sup>

Korean interactions with Europe broaden the range of countries considered here, and *The Routledge Handbook of Europe-Korean Relations* (2022), edited by Nicola Casarini et al., offered a broad overview.<sup>106</sup> More specifically, Germany has received fair scholarly attention, such as in Eun-Jeung Lee and Hannes B. Mosler's edited volume *Civil Society on the Move* (2015), which covers the concepts of democracy and civil society in Germany and South Korea as two countries that developed democratic societies comparatively late.<sup>107</sup> *Transnational Encounters between Germany and Korea*, edited by Joanne Miyang Cho and Lee M. Roberts (2018), also offers a broad view of Korean-German relations from the late nineteenth century to the twenty-first.<sup>108</sup>

Among monographs about Korea and Europe, we find Witgar Dondorfer's *Our Destiny in Korea* (2009), which presents the history of a group of German

clergy in North Korea who for years interacted with Japanese, Russians, and North Koreans.<sup>109</sup> Daniel Schwekendiek's *Korean Migration to the Wealthy West* (2011) offers a view of the many overseas Koreans at the end of the twentieth century but narrows the focus to especially the United States and Germany.<sup>110</sup> *Language of Migration* (2012), by Suin Roberts, examines the experiences of Korean guest workers in Germany through the lens of newspaper reports about their activities in their host country.<sup>111</sup> Frank Hoffmann's *Koreans and Central Europeans* (2015) concentrates on German views of Koreans in Berlin from the Wilhelmine era until after the fall of the Nazi regime.<sup>112</sup>

This brief overview cannot capture all of the publications that connect topically to this edited volume. However, it does communicate the richness of the theme. The next section offers a breakdown of all of the chapters to follow.

### **Organization of the Book**

This volume presents 12 chapters that challenge the image of Korea as a largely self-contained country until its economy became global in the late 1980s. Covering the period from 1910 to the present, the volume explores aspects of the entangled relationships between modern Korea and East Asian/Western nations. Prior to 1945, the collected chapters cover the origins of Korea's democratic republicanism among Korean immigrants in the United States, the Royal-Dutch oil industry in Korea, and prisons in the Japanese empire. In the period after 1945, we gain a view of Cold War politics between Korea and Europe (Bulgaria and the Soviet Union), transnational Korean communities in China, Japan, the Russian Far East, the West (the United States, Germany, and Spain), and ethnic Korean returnees from the Russian Far East. The volume is also divided into three parts: Korea's transnational encounters with East Asia and the West; Korean communities in Japan, China, and the Russian Far East since 1945; and Korean communities in the West since the 1960s.

**Part I**, Korea's transnational encounters with East Asia and the West has five chapters that examine matters related to politics, economy, and humanitarian aid. Starting with **Chapter 2** ("The Origins of Democratic Republicanism in Korea"), Edward Chang traces the historical origins of the democratic republicanism of the Republic of Korea and the Korean Provisional Government of Shanghai by combining sociological imagination and historical records. Korean historians agree that the "Daedong Declaration of Solidarity" of 1917 was the catalyst for establishing the Shanghai Provisional Government in 1919, but this chapter argues that from 1909, the Korean National Association (KNA) led by Ahn Chang Ho had advocated for the idea of establishing a provisional government that represented all Koreans abroad and directly influenced the Daedong Declaration of Solidarity. The KNA of North America convention in December 1911 passed 21 articles of governance, and delegates at the convention established the KNA Central Council, which declared itself the "intangible government" of Korea.

A new genealogy of the origin of democratic republicanism in the Korean Provisional Government of Shanghai should, therefore, be traced to the KNA of North America convention of 1911, held in Riverside, California.

In [Chapter 3](#) (“Globalization under Colonialism”), Myung Ho Hyun examines how changes in the global oil industry affected the colonial Korean oil market in the 1920s. Existing studies attribute interwar Korean industrialization to Japanese imperial and colonial states’ expansionism. In contrast, this chapter emphasizes the global market origins of colonial industrial transformations through a case study of Royal Dutch Shell’s Korean oil installation and the colonial Korean workers’ 1928 labor strike against this Western oil enterprise. Examining Royal Dutch Shell’s annual *Petroleum Handbook*, the annual trade reports of British consuls in both Korea and Japan, and the reports of Japanese central, municipal, and colonial governments on the business of the Western company, this chapter offers a historical study of the 1920s colonial Korean oil market as an early example of the transformative effect of economic globalization on the Korean economy.

In [Chapter 4](#) (“A Comparative History of Prisons in Korea and Taiwan under Japanese Colonial Rule”), Cheng-Yu Lin asks how the Japanese Empire established the modern prison system in Korea and Taiwan? Moreover, how did people in these colonies view the modern prison system? Indeed, what were the similarities and differences between the prison systems of Taiwan and Korea? Finally, what factors influenced the establishment and development of the prison systems in these two colonies? Using the methodology of legal social history, which focuses on institutions, discourses, and practices, this chapter seeks answers to these questions along the analytical axes of education, prison labor, and prison officers. In addition, the history of empire sheds light on the relationship between the colonizers’ home countries and the colonies, and such factors as financial budgets and pre-colonial prisons help to explain similarities and differences between the systems. There is evidence, for instance, that national integration through prison education failed in both Taiwan and Korea as a result of manpower shortages and due to language barriers between ethnic Japanese prison officers and native-speaking prisoners.

In [Chapter 5](#) (“Bulgaria’s ‘Humanitarian’ Aid to North Korea”), Margarita Kichukova addresses the impact of the aid provided by the People’s Republic of Bulgaria to the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea in the 1950s and 1960s to show that this “humanitarian” gesture was also the key factor in the strengthening of their post-war bilateral relations. Divided into four sections, the chapter begins with the historical context of Bulgarian aid to North Korea and explains the concept of proletarian internationalism that the USSR and its Eastern European allies embraced at the time. The second section then focuses on the economic aid provided by the Bulgarian government and Bulgarian citizens during the Korean War. The third section discusses Bulgaria’s medical aid to North Korea by examining the work of two Bulgarian medical brigades from

1952 to 1956, and the last section examines the admission of refugees and students from North Korea and subsequent consequences.

In [Chapter 6](#) (“Cold War Politics of the Korean Peninsula in the 1960s”), Sang Hwan Seong analyzes diplomatic documents related to the Korean Peninsula from the German Federal and Political Archives and former East Germany to shed light on sensitive diplomatic and political agendas of inter-Korean relations, North Korean strategies toward the United States and the Socialist Bloc-countries, and North Korea’s economic and military cooperation with the former Soviet Union in the mid-1960s. To explain the interwoven international context of the Korean peninsula, the chapter first examines the inter-Korean conflicts of the late 1960s when Kim Il-sung launched military attacks on the Korean-US alliance system in connection with the Vietnam War. Then, the chapter considers Kim Il-sung’s interest in recruiting South Korean intellectuals in the 1960s amid the inter-Korean military conflicts and the inter-Korean system competition, and lastly the North Korean tactical approach toward the Soviet Union to procure economic and military assistance during the time of uncomfortable relations with People’s Republic of China (PRC).

[Part II](#) consists of four chapters that examine Korean communities in Japan, China, and the Russian Far East since 1945. In [Chapter 7](#) (“Post-War Korean Diasporas in Sakhalin and Japan”), for instance, Hyewon Song compares the cultures of Sakhalin Koreans and Zainichi Koreans from 1945 to the 1950s through the lens of Cold War-era decolonization to highlight the various similarities and differences between the post-war trajectories of their communities and to stress North Korea’s influence on both diaspora communities. Post-war Sakhalin and Japan were both multilingual, hybrid societies, which makes it difficult to understand their issues using a unilateral historical approach. Karafuto, on the southern half of Sakhalin Island, remained a Japanese territory until August 25, 1945, at which point it was home to an estimated 24,000 Koreans. They shared a history as migrants with Japan’s 650,000 Koreans. For decades after the World War II, Koreans in Sakhalin and Japan, under the influence of the socialist Soviet Union and capitalist Japan, respectively, were restricted in their ability to travel. Thus, within their closed national spaces, these two communities developed their own diaspora cultures.

In [Chapter 8](#) (“Japanese and Korean Return Migrants in Sapporo [Japan] and Ansan [South Korea]”), Svetlana Paichadze considers Russian-speaking ethnic Japanese and Koreans who returned to their historical homelands in Russia, especially Sakhalin. Although long part of the Japanese or Korean diaspora, after returning to their historical homelands, many became part of the Russian community abroad that taught their children in Russian and preferred Russian-language services. These communities of ethnic return migrants are multi-layered in composition and thus often exhibit multiple layers of self-identification. In Japan, they are both Russian-Japanese and also Korean-Japanese families. In South Korea, they are identified within two branches of

the Korean diaspora, Koreans from Sakhalin and *Koryŏ saram* from mainland Russia or the former Soviet Union. Both societies assume that these people are returning to their homeland, and so less attention has been paid to their cultural and linguistic differences. As this chapter shows, many issues related to culture and language have occurred during their attempts to adapt to life in the host societies of Japan or South Korea.

In [Chapter 9](#) (“Recreated Homeland and Space Imagination”), Jingyi Li shows that since the late 1980s, the Korean minority community in Northeast China has experienced an unprecedented “Korean wind.” Through transnational migration from China to South Korea, many ethnic Koreans in China made efforts to accumulate wealth and to raise their social status. In the past four decades, two generations of Korean Chinese migrants born between the 1940s and the 1980s have worked in South Korea as laborers in so-called 3D jobs—difficult, dirty, and dangerous work in a country in which they experienced both a sense of familiarity and also estrangement. Based on eight months of anthropological fieldwork among left-behind members of a Korean community in Northeast China, this chapter explains how elderly people in rural China have faced the crises of loneliness, health problems, and even the possibility of death. The chapter reveals the deep roots of the Korean Chinese community’s social disintegration and cultural dilemma and presents a view of elderly people who constantly struggle to keep their ethnic and national identities and thus create a sense of belonging through space imagination.

In [Chapter 10](#) (“Exhibiting Korean-ness”), Zachary M. Adamz examines the spatial and temporal bounding of the *Koryŏ saram* historical landscape in the Russian Far East by overlapping the South Korean national narrative and the *Koryŏ saram* past. At the Russian Korean History Museum, exhibits reproduce *Koryŏ saram* identity and history according to South Korean perceptions. Meanwhile, tourism is the primary process by which South Korea incorporates *Koryŏ saram* history into the national narrative. Considering museums as social technologies of representation and legitimacy, where objects and images used to represent histories, convolute distinctions between cultural representation and reclamation. Adamz analyzes displays of collective identity from exhibits to elucidate the integration of *Koryŏ saram* history into South Korean collective consciousness as part of ethnic reconciliation through historical legitimacy. However, coupled with convoluted citizenship policies, South Korea’s efforts to incorporate the *Koryŏ saram* simultaneously “other” the diaspora.

**Part III** includes three chapters that analyze Korean communities in the West since the 1960s. In [Chapter 11](#) (“Memories of Home Mediated through Food”), Suin Roberts shows that when Korean guest workers arrived in Germany in the 1960s and 1970s, their suitcases were mainly filled with Korean food staples (e.g., chili pepper powder and sesame seeds), as if they had had a premonition that preparing Korean food in Germany would pose a challenge. Coming from a country with a cuisine that is distinctly flavorful to one where the food

is comparatively bland (i.e., salt and pepper being the primary German spices), many Korean guest workers struggled to adapt to German food. However, by cooking and sharing familiar spicy dishes, first-generation Korean migrants also shared their need for belonging and homesickness and their sense of Korean-ness in a world that seemed very foreign to them. For the second generation, eating Korean food was not needed to cure homesickness, but it created a sense of home with the knowledge that their Korean recipes had been passed on for generations. This chapter analyzes autobiographical Korean-German migrant narratives by the first and second generations that provide detailed insight into how food preferences were shaped by culture shock and acculturation and how the act of preparing native foods functioned as integral processes of community building and identity shaping.

In [Chapter 12](#) (“The Korean Presence in Spain”), Arturo Cosano-Ramos and Antonio J. Domenech offer a view of Korean communities in Spain. This chapter expands on knowledge about these little-known communities through a description of their main features, including a historical overview, a theoretical framework for understanding their communities based on structuralism and associationism, and a chronological bibliography of the constitution of Korean communities in Spain. In fact, Korean communities in Spain exhibit low levels of associationism, even though group cohesion is strong, since the community is based on participation in common activities. Nonetheless, local associations and churches have helped in the maintenance and transmission of cultural identity between different generations. In particular, religious groups have played a key role in community cohesion. Over the last seventy years (i.e., since the inauguration of diplomatic relations between South Korea and Spain), Korean communities in Spain have gone through many changes, and this chapter seeks to offer a broader view of this part of the Korean diaspora.

In [Chapter 13](#) (“Two Generations of Korean Women’s Perspectives on the American Dream”), Keumjae Park compares how first- and second-generation Korean immigrant women define the “American Dream,” and how it shapes their perspectives on professional goals and family life. The chapter reviews the historical construction of this ideology, and how it has been interpreted differently by different racial groups. Existing scholarship suggests that first-generation Korean Americans are mobilized by the aspiration for upward class mobility and economic stability, despite personal sacrifices. This study explores the ways in which the “sacrifice narratives” within the immigrant family affect second-generation women’s interpretation of the American Dream, success, and happiness. Based on interviews with seven women living in northern New Jersey, this study finds that second-generation Korean-American women demonstrate a deep understanding of the historical and social contexts of their parents’ American Dream. At the same time, second-generation women in this study claimed that their version of the American Dream goes beyond the reductionist notion of material success that was common among first-generation Korean

immigrants. Both groups acknowledged that second-generation Korean women who grew up in relative economic stability and received an American education would be able to imagine diverse paths for an enriching life in US society.

In conclusion, this introductory chapter proposes that, contrary to the myth of Korean ethnic nationalism, modern Korea has also been shaped by the experiences of transnationalism and migration. In the twentieth- and twentieth-first centuries, Korea has been in active contact not only with other East Asian nations and the Russian Far East but also with the Western world, especially the United States and Europe. During this period, many Koreans have continuously migrated to these diverse locations and manifested several forms of hyphenated Korean identity. In recent years, some Koreans have begun to return to South Korea and created again new types of hyphenated Korean identity. Such cross-cultural interactions have taken place variously, on the political, legal, economic, social, cultural, culinary, and gendered level. By highlighting transnationalism and migration in modern Korean history, this edited volume makes a valuable contribution to current scholarship on modern Korea. Indeed, the chapters gathered here express not only disciplinary diversity (history, political science, sociology, legal studies, literature, linguistics, ethnic studies, Korean studies, Asian studies, Asian German studies) but also the diversity of backgrounds from which the contributors hail (Korean, Chinese, Taiwanese, American, Russian, Bulgarian, German, Spanish), thus conveying sense of the wealth of scholarly fields that interact with Korean Studies today.

## Notes

- 1 Alissa M. Park, *Sovereignty Experiments: Korean Migrants and the Building of Borders in Northeast Asia, 1860–1945* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2019), 16.
- 2 Shawn Shen, “Historical and Contemporary Korean Emigration: A Comparative Analysis of Ten Waves of Korean Migration,” *Journal of International Migration & Integration* 20, no. 1 (February 2019): 33.
- 3 In-Jin Yoon, “Migration and the Korean Diaspora: A Comparative Description in Five Cases,” *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 38, no. 3 (March 2012): 414.
- 4 Yoon, “Migration,” 414.
- 5 Shen, “Historical and Contemporary Korean Emigration,” 33.
- 6 Ji-Yeon O. Jo, “Introduction: Legacy Migration, Transborder Belongings, and Korean Peoplehood,” in *Homing: An Affective Topography of Ethnic Return Migration* (Honolulu: University of Hawai’i Press, 2018), 1; Shen, “Historical and Contemporary Emigration,” 33, 39.
- 7 Park, *Sovereignty Experiments*, 13.
- 8 Wada Haruki argues that, such foreign powers as the United States, China, and the Soviet Union were involved, it was not only a civil war but also a continuation of the Chinese Civil War. Wada Haruki, *The Korean War: An International History*, trans. Frank Baldwin (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2014).
- 9 There were numerous epithets for them, such as, “*Yangongju*. Yankee whore. Western princess. GI brides. *Yanggalbo*. *Yangsaeakshi*. GI’s plaything. UN lady, Bar girl. Entertainment hostess. *Wianbu*. Fallen Woman. Formerly a comfort woman.” Grace