

MIGRATION AND DIASPORA
EXEGETICAL VOICES FROM
NORTHEAST ASIAN WOMEN

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Edited by
Hisako Kinukawa

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ABBREVIATIONS

<i>BibInt</i>	<i>Biblical Interpretation</i>
<i>BRev</i>	<i>Bible Review</i>
<i>BTB</i>	<i>Biblical Theology Bulletin</i>
<i>CBQ</i>	<i>Catholic Biblical Quarterly</i>
<i>CBR</i>	<i>Currents in Biblical Research</i>
<i>GTJ</i>	<i>Grace Theological Journal</i>
<i>JBL</i>	<i>Journal of Biblical Literature</i>
<i>JBQ</i>	<i>Jewish Bible Quarterly</i>
<i>JJS</i>	<i>Journal of Jewish Studies</i>
<i>JP</i>	<i>Journal for Preachers</i>
<i>JPC</i>	<i>Journal of Psychology and Christianity</i>
<i>JQR</i>	<i>Jewish Quarterly Review</i>
<i>JSOJ</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of Judaism</i>
<i>JSOT</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the Old Testament</i>
<i>JSOTSup</i>	<i>Journal for the Study of the Old Testament Supplement Series</i>
<i>JTS</i>	<i>Journal of Theological Studies</i>
<i>JTSA</i>	<i>Journal of Theology for Southern Africa</i>
<i>List</i>	<i>Listening: Journal of Religion and Culture</i>
<i>NRSV</i>	<i>New Revised Standard Version</i>
<i>PEQ</i>	<i>Palestine Exploration Quarterly</i>
<i>RevExp</i>	<i>Review and Expositor</i>
<i>TDNT</i>	<i>Theological Dictionary of the Old Testament</i>
<i>VT</i>	<i>Vetus Testamentum</i>
<i>WBC</i>	<i>Word Bible Commentary</i>

INTRODUCTION

Hisako Kinukawa

The papers that comprise this volume were presented at the third meeting of Society of Asian Biblical Studies (SABS) held at the Sabah Theological Seminary, Malaysia on June 13–15, 2012 to reflect on the theme of “Migration and Diaspora.”

The five writers are women/feminist scholars from Korea, People’s Republic of China (PRC), and Japan who locate readings of the biblical text within the framework of their cultures. The three countries are known as recipients of three big world religions, namely Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism, in addition to their native beliefs and cults. In comparison to the long histories of these religions, Christianity arrived in these countries fairly recently. The three societies have been strongly patriarchal, even though there are variations in the expressions of patriarchy. Women have been among those marginalized/despised/oppressed. Korea and PRC experienced colonization by Japan, which distinguishes between the mentality of being discriminated/marginalized and that of arrogance. This fact has raised sensitive issues between Japan and the two countries.

Besides being multi-religious, the three countries, influenced by globalization, have become increasingly multicultural. We have seen more and more immigrant workers coming as laborers. We have become more conscious of classism and discrimination against different and other ethnicities. Women workers are at the bottom of this ladder of discrimination.

Women/feminist scholars in biblical hermeneutics in this region have raised questions against traditional, male-centered interpretations, offering distinct perspectives based on their experiences of pain, subjugation, and a forced sacrificial philosophy of life. Through their scholarship and activism, they attempt to conscientize women who are still fully immersed in patriarchy/kyriarchy.

The writers do not explicitly identify the methods used to interpret the biblical text, and yet one can discern traces of literary, historical, and postcolonial criticism in their reading of the texts.

Lee Yoon Kyung studies the phenomenon of multiculturalism as it is played out both in postexilic Judah as well as in current Korea. Beginning with a socio-political analysis of the biblical texts, and in conversation with Korean experience, she highlights the plight of “foreign wives” that were brought or came from outside of Korea to marry Korean men but who are seen as the “Others” in Korean society.

Lin Yan takes note of the internal migration phenomena in the huge land of China and then questions the activities of Amos and Micah from a similar perspective. As her title suggests, her interest is also in the execution of social justice in the context of migration and diaspora.

Korean scholar Yani Yoo reads the book of Esther from the perspective of the narrator and his desire. She suggests that the book narrates the story of a few elite people successful with the powers of the time. She sees the tragic ending of the book as a warning against the empire and human greed. Seeing some parallels between the explosive developments in her country and the story, she draws our attention to those in diaspora who have been looked down upon because of their social location and ethnic difference and regarded as cheap labor.

Chanhee Heo does an intertextual reading of the story of the Samaritan woman (John 4:1–12) alongside the novel entitled *My Sweet Home* by Ji-Young Gong, a fellow Korean. Drawing insights from the John text she analyses the main character in the novel and showcases how the woman in the novel finds autonomy and dignity of life through her migration or diasporic experiences in life.

Hisako Kinukawa meets the Syrophenician woman in Mark as one in diaspora and in parallel to her own Japanese religious migration and sees what transformation the encounter brought Jesus.

Though our social locations are diverse, all of us are committed to finding justice for women in our countries and in our contemporary living through our dialogue with biblical texts. Our struggles for survival in society and our fight for a voice and a space within a patriarchal academy are hard and painfully severe. Despite the resistance, we Asian women/feminist scholars have made efforts to transform the current situation by striving against the discrimination we encounter in our lives as women and as scholars.

We hope we shed some new and distinct light from women/feminist eyes upon the interpretation of the texts on which we have chosen to reflect.

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