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ARTICLE

The Political Roots of Gender Divergence: Democratic Consolidation and Gender Equality in Taiwan and South Korea

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Abstract

Throughout the twentieth century, Taiwan and South Korea underwent rapid economic development and successfully democratized without reversal to authoritarianism. Despite their similar trajectories, the two countries diverge significantly in political and public support for gender equality. Taiwan is widely seen as the most gender-equal country in Asia, while South Korea remains deeply polarized, with uneven progress in women's representation. What accounts for this divergence between two democracies? This article advances a *political institutions thesis*, arguing that differences in democratic institution-building—particularly the actors and modes of democratization—have shaped the contour of gender politics of each country. Contrasting the histories of party-driven democratization in Taiwan and mass-driven democratization in South Korea, this article shows that the process of building democracy has had lasting effects on the institutionalization and sustainability of gender equality.

Keywords: democratization; gender equality; Minjung; Tangwai Movement; women's movement; East Asia; Taiwan; South Korea

Introduction

Throughout the twentieth century, Taiwan and South Korea have made significant inroads in expanding women's socioeconomic participation. Rapid economic development helped advance women's social status, boosting women's education and labor market participation. For example, 50.4 percent of college graduates are women in South Korea, and more female high school students (76.1 percent) enter college than their male counterparts (69.3 percent). Likewise, in Taiwan, women make up 52.7 percent of college graduates, and slightly more female students (97.17 percent) enroll in universities than male students (95.57 percent) (Gender Equality Committee 2022). Female labor market participation also continues to increase in both countries. In South Korea, 53.5 percent of women are active in the labor market,

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and the rate is similar in Taiwan (51.4 percent). Although various gender gaps are still present in the labor market, women in South Korea and Taiwan have made steady progress.

Despite the similarities in women's socioeconomic progress, the two countries show considerable differences regarding the political and public support for gender equality. While Taiwan is considered the most gender-equal country in Asia, South Korea has a mixed record in expanding women's representation. One metric of gender equality called the Gender Gap Index (GGI) reveals the state of gender disparity in the two countries. Published by the World Economic Forum, GGI measures 14 variables of the male/female ratio in four key areas in society (Economic Participation and Opportunity, Educational Attainment, Health and Survival, and Political Empowerment).[1] According to GGI, Taiwan was ranked in twenty-ninth place in 2020, outranking South Korea (109th) and Japan (122nd) by a considerable margin.[2] In 2019, Taiwan became the first country in Asia to legalize same-sex marriage, and female legislative representation reached near parity (42.5 percent). In South Korea, women's political empowerment has stagnated, as the proportion of female legislators in the National Assembly still remains at 20 percent as of 2023. Furthermore, South Korea has been slow to establish protection against discrimination based on sexual orientation, as strong anti-LGBTQ sentiment exists among the public.

This divergence is puzzling given the two countries' similar cultural, economic, and political experiences. Known as East Asian Tigers,[3] South Korea and Taiwan have been referred to as successful cases of economic development, and women played a crucial role in driving national growth (Yap 2012). Politically, both countries transitioned from authoritarian to democratic regimes in the late 1980s and have maintained a robust democratic system with no reversal. As "third-wave" democracies (Huntington 1991), South Korea and Taiwan benefitted from economic development and urbanization on the one hand, and strong US alliance on the other (Hao and Gao 2016). Given the comparable pathways to development, then, why did the two countries show a different scope and extent in promoting gender equality? What factors can explain the divergent outcomes of gender equality?

This article seeks to address these questions by comparing the trajectories of democratic institution-building in Taiwan and South Korea. I argue that different modes of democratization—namely party-based vs. masses-based transition, created a discrete political structure that affected the scope of gender politics in the two countries. As a process to replace the monopoly of power by a single figure, party, or military regime, democratization can be achieved through diverse pathways, and this article pays attention to the different characteristics of representative political institutions. Defined as organizations in politics that establish a set of norms and function as actors (Chappell 2010), political institutions constitute an important precondition to determining the scope and direction of gender equality measures in the democratic system. Specifically, contrasting Taiwan's party-based democracy with the masses-based democracy in South Korea allows us to examine the lingering effect of democratic political structure on shaping the scope of gender politics in each country (Lee 2011; Lee 2006, 2009, and 2014).

This article enriches the study of democratization and gender politics in the following ways. First, I highlight the long-standing impact of democratic institutions on gender equality in new democracies. Although existing studies have compared the patterns of democratization in the two countries (e.g., Buchanan and Nicholls 2003;

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McAllister 2016; Shin 2021), there have been few attempts to illuminate the process from a gender perspective. Even those studies that examine the relationship between democratization and women's empowerment do not delve into the different patterns of democratization, only emphasizing the democratizing experience itself (e.g., Shim 2018). Yet democratization alone is insufficient to explain why women's issues receive broader recognition in some new democracies but not in others, and this article fills the gap by documenting the intertwining relationship between democracy building and gender equality.

Second, findings from this paper situate gender issues within the historical development of newly democratized regimes. Thus far, gender politics in East Asia has focused largely on electoral design (e.g., Tan 2016; Huang 2016; Shim 2021) and legal measures (e.g., Chiao 2008), leaving room for the historical process in which these electoral and legal institutions were embedded. This article complements the existing analyses by looking closely at the role that democratizing forces played in establishing the paths toward gender equality.

The article is organized as follows. I begin by introducing the existing theories of gender inequality and show how political institutions, especially political parties, can help explain the gender divergence in new democracies. Then I elaborate on the cases of gender politics in the two countries, comparing Taiwan's progressive experience with the polarizing patterns in South Korea. The rest of the article is dedicated to comparing the historical unfolding of party- and masses-based democratization and linking this process with different gender dynamics between the two countries.

Theoretical approaches to gender divergence

Modernization thesis

Three dominant approaches to gender equality—the modernization thesis, the economic empowerment model, and social movement theory—lay out the conditions under which gender equality may emerge in society as a significant political issue. First, the modernization thesis emphasizes that the spread of modern ideas contributes to making gender equality one of the central values in a political system (Inglehart and Norris, 2000; Inhetveen, 1999; Inglehart, Norris, and Welzel, 2002). In other words, the process of modernization drives a broad cultural change and promotes both greater participation of women in public life and the development of democratic institutions. Modernization leads to spreading egalitarian gender attitudes, which then facilitates women's participation and representation in politics. It further shows that the relationship between cultural change and gender equality is robust even controlling for regime type, suggesting that gender equality may be achieved in the absence of democratic institutions as long as cultural changes occur (Inglehart, Norris, and Welzel, 2002). The emphasis on ideas and beliefs is an important contribution of the modernization thesis. While cultural change may be more elusive than institutional changes, ideas still matter because they provide rationale for social movements, motivate participants, and ultimately affect the organization of new institutions (Rueschemeyer 2006).

However, scholars pointed out that the modernization theory may not fit well with East Asian cases, as economic development did not necessarily promote gender egalitarianism in the region (Steel and Kabashima 2008). While East Asian countries achieved economic success and modernization, the process was mostly led by the

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state, and Confucian morals such as family values and deference to higher authority (i.e., the state) remained strong for maintaining order during the period of rapid social change. Furthermore, the emphasis on post-material values is centered around Western values, which may not translate into the Asian experience nor explain the dilemma between modernization and traditional gender values (Steel and Kabashima 2008). The Asian cases, therefore, suggest that modern democratic values did not arise endogenously to institutionalize gender equality, and that the state may play an active role in channeling the democratic values into institutional measures.

Economic empowerment thesis

The economic empowerment thesis points out that women's increasing economic opportunities in the labor market elevated the need to institutionalize gender equality policies (Iversen and Rosenbluth 2006; Berhard, Shames, and Teele 2021). As more women enter the labor market, they are likely to face discriminatory treatment and demand gender-equal measures. Women's increased economic power also changes their bargaining position in the household, leading to a greater likelihood for financial independence and autonomy (through divorce, for example) (Iversen and Rosenbluth 2008). Furthermore, women's careers are likely to be interrupted by childbirth and childcare, which encourages women to demand political measures that can shield them from the potential interruption in their career trajectories (Fousekis 2011). In turn, the shifting dynamic in the household generates a set of new policy preferences in such areas as welfare, fertility, and employment, leading to closing the gender gap in the long run.

In the East Asian context, studies paid attention to the type of industries and employment to explain the rising status of women in society. Both in Taiwan and South Korea, women made significant gains in education and employment thanks to the rapid economic development and the spread of egalitarianism (e.g., Yu 2009). Studies further note that despite the common paths, different gender attitudes in the two countries may stem from the distinctive industrial structure in each country. According to this argument, Taiwan's economic development was based on small and medium-sized enterprises that hired more women, which led to their political empowerment and gender equality. In contrast, South Korea relied on heavy industries that required long-term, skilled labor, women were excluded from the labor market early on due to their career break. Because heavy industries favor male workers, Korean women were discouraged from finding full-time positions (Ng and Chen 2018).

While the market-driven approach may explain why Taiwan might have better employment chances for women than South Korea, women in Taiwan do not necessarily enjoy a broader spectrum of public welfare than those in South Korea (Estévez-Abe and Kim 2013). In a way, economic growth in East Asia reinforced the traditional family structure of male breadwinners and female homemakers, in which women were encouraged to work part-time to take care of the family and children. Strong social norms in favor of marriage and family also undermine the possibility of women's higher negotiating positions through divorce and economic independence (Iversen and Rosenbluth 2006). Furthermore, women's economic empowerment cannot account for South Korea's stagnant gender attitudes and low political representation after the financial crisis and subsequent industrial restructuring in the late 1990s. Since the growth spurt in the sixties and seventies, both economies experienced the rise of the service industry where more women were employed. However,

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in the case of South Korea, women's rising economic position did not translate into their political power, nor did it improve the persistent gender bias against female leadership.

Social movement theory

Finally, a large body of literature stresses the role of social movements in promoting gender equality (Taylor 1989; Clemens 1993; Chang 2010; Irvine 2018). This research contends that social movement influences political outcomes because progressive issues rarely garner support from political elites unless they are pressured from both outside and below. Especially in new democracies, whose formal institutions have yet to incorporate diverse, newly emerging interests, social movement plays a crucial role in crystallizing key issues, mobilizing public opinion, and influencing political actors. In Taiwan and South Korea, social movement actors were at the center of political change, leading the democratization movement and introducing progressive political ideas into the new democratic system (Wong, 2003; Liu 2015). Strong labor and student movement activists in South Korea, for example, contributed directly to dismantling the authoritarian regime and establishing the progressive wing of the democratic government. In Taiwan, various movement groups also emerged as strong social forces, advancing new issues such as labor, environment, and anti-nuclear power (Ho 2003, 2010; Liu 2015). In the progressive women's movement, activists in both countries also made significant improvements by raising public awareness, mainstreaming women's issues in politics, and eventually legislating women-friendly policies (Chang 2010; Fan 2000).[4]

While social movement theory may account for the rise of progressive issues in new democracies, social movement alone is insufficient for explaining the variations of gender inequalities observed across East Asian democracies, where some movement groups were more successful in mainstreaming their issues than others who experienced a diminished impact in the political arena. South Korea, for example, has a long and active history of women's movements, ranging from the female workers' labor movement in the 1970s to young women's protests against digital sexual violence in recent decades (Koo 2001; Kim 2021). And yet, institutional protection for gender equality remains weak, begging the question of why there is a disjuncture between women's active social engagement and their political empowerment. In Taiwan, some progressive groups ended up establishing their own "movement parties" (Ho and Huang 2017), while others, including women's movement activists, joined the existing parties to expand their influence in the political arena (Nachman 2023). The success of social movements was therefore mediated by the political environment in which these movements are situated.

Different paths taken by social movement groups suggest that it is imperative to investigate how the goals of social movement were realized beyond civil society, especially in the context of formal politics. This is particularly relevant to the women's movement, whose clients constitute a broader demographic and cover a wider range of issues than the targeted constituencies of other social movements. This means that while women's social status remains marginalized, women are still a significant voting bloc, and the dual status makes mobilizing women an important electoral strategy. The following section elaborates on how political institutions, especially political parties, helped institutionalize gender equality issues and thus empowered women as active agents of political change.

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Building gender equality through democracy: Political institutions thesis

Given the nuanced position of women as a politically marginalized yet electorally significant group, it is important to consider the political dynamics through which women's individual resources translate into their collective political power. While modernization and economic development may alter people's perception of equality and the role of women, it cannot in and of itself establish formal rights in political, social, or economic arenas (Lee and Suh 2017). To rediscover the missing link between individual empowerment and collective interest-making, one needs to examine the role of the state and the political process through which women's voices are crystallized into collective demands, made laws and diffused to the public (Mansbridge 1999). This is a strategic process dependent not just on women themselves but also on other actors such as political elites and the public. By introducing a diverse group of political agents, democratization serves as a critical juncture that opens up the political space for the women's movement, and the institutional change made after democratization becomes important conditions under which institutionalizing gender equality measures unfolded.

Studies of democratization point out that among various dimensions of democratic consolidation—the process in which to prevent democratic breakdown and to complete the building of a democratic system (Schedler 1998), political institutions, such as parties and courts, play a central role in mobilizing women's issues. In this approach, democratization is not an end goal but the beginning of a long-term process of building and deepening democracy, and political institutions are crucial to establishing gender equality as an essential part of the liberal democratic norms (Mainwaring and Scully 1995, 5). Specifically, existing studies on gender equality commonly acknowledge the significance of political parties in institutionalizing gender equality. For instance, Jones (2016) identified four institutional conditions that are relevant to gender equality: the rule of law, the institutionalized party system, the executive power, and the descriptive composition of the government branches. Similarly, Fallon, Swiss, and Viterna (2012) identified the actions and ideologies of political parties as one of the critical factors for successful women's movements in new democracies. As the main agent of change, political parties can lead and influence the other factors that they emphasize, i.e., the democratic transition itself, previous women's mobilizations, and international influences. Women's interests remain fragmented unless some organizations crystallize their collective demands and politicize them, and parties are important organizations to channel women's collective demands into public policy.

The party-centered structure can contribute to promoting gender equality in the following ways. First, in general, party-centered systems tend to increase women's numerical representation in the legislature to a greater degree than candidate-centered systems (Thames and Williams 2010). Female candidates have a better chance of being elected when parties promote women strategically, and this has a contagion effect across the party system (Kittilson 2006; Matland and Studlar 1996). Once nominated by parties, female candidates can bring in a virtuous cycle of incumbency advantage and increase in political representation beyond their own district. Also, the positive incumbency effect is not limited to the incumbent's own party but can be diffused across the parties, who are incentivized to nominate highly qualified female candidates in districts represented by women. A greater number of female incumbents can therefore improve voter perceptions of female political

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leadership and reduce negative gender bias, thus helping to elect more women in the legislature. This positive influence was found not only in advanced democracies but also in countries like Chile and Indonesia, which have a relatively short experience of democratic governance (Shair-Rosenfield 2012; Shair-Rosenbielf and Hinojosa 2014).

Second, parties' ideological platforms help shape how citizens understand gender equality within the context of democracy, as each political party seeks to incorporate gender norms into their party ideology to mobilize the public (Berman 1998; Rueschemeyer 2006; Erzeel and Celis 2016). While left-wing parties are generally known to align with women's issues, recent studies report that right-wing parties also incorporate women's issues as part of their political agenda (Celis and Erzeel 2015; Ewig and Ferree, 2013). Party ideologies send signals to the public about where they stand on women's issues, who then sort themselves following partisan cues (Gillion, Ladd, and Meredith 2020).

Finally, party competition tends to empower women politicians within the legislature, making a positive feedback effect on female descriptive representation. Although new democracies tend to have fewer female representatives in the beginning, they can work as critical actors—individuals and groups that act upon making women-friendly policy changes (Childs and Krook 2009, 127) to advance gender issues in times of democratic consolidation (Gains and Lowndes 2018; Shim 2024). Without the "critical mass" of women, critical actors can still influence legislative institutions' behaviors in various ways, by increasing the salience of women's issues, changing fellow legislators' perspectives, demonstrating leadership in key functions, and incorporating feminism into party ideology. Women's political leadership in the early period of democratic consolidation also matters for creating a pipeline for further political empowerment and reaching the "critical mass" of women in the legislature (Childs and Krook 2009).

In contrast, masses-based democratization tends to induce political elites to appeal directly to the voters on the street (Lee 2009). Without a resilient party structure, personalistic appeals may matter more than institutional resources to mobilize voters, and multiple small parties serve to vie for political power without clear ideological differences. Pursuing majoritarian support, political parties in masses-based democracy tend to be volatile and sensitive to public opinion, and such volatility can undermine the political mainstreaming of women's issues and their incorporation into party ideology.

This is particularly the case for new, non-Western democracies whose social structure still subscribes to traditional gender roles. In East Asia, Confucian values have long emphasized the role of family in maintaining social order, and public opinion still reflects the traditional values to a greater extent than their Western counterparts (Raymo et al. 2015). Vying for public support, political parties in masses-based democracy are thus likely to follow the majority opinion, favoring policies to sustain traditional gender hierarchy over those that attempt to equalize it. Also, without clear ideological distinctions, parties of both left and right are likely to compete against each other for issues with broad appeal, such as economy and national defense, setting aside women's issues as marginal and relatively unimportant for the national welfare.

Research Design

In order to illustrate the relationship between political institutions and gender equality, I employ Mill's method of difference and provide a comparative historical

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analysis of modern politics in Taiwan and South Korea (Przeworski and Teune 1970; Savolainen 1994; Mahoney 2004; Mahoney and Rueschemeyer 2003). The method of difference is a strategy where cases are selected that are similar in most situations but the phenomenon in question. As elaborated above, the two countries share various socioeconomic similarities. In politics, democratization in 1987 provided a window of opportunity for advancing women's issues as the new government began to institute measures to formally incorporate those who had previously been neglected or suppressed by the authoritarian regime (such as labor unions and women's movement groups). Politically, both countries hold fair and regular elections and protect procedural and substantive civil liberties. They also enjoy vibrant, well-organized civil societies that overhaul the abuse of government power and advocate for various civic interests.

Despite the similarities, the politics of gender equality show considerable divergence in terms of the level of political representation and empowerment of women. While more women were elected into the legislature and ascended to the country's top political positions in Taiwan, female politicians in South Korea remained marginalized and vulnerable to sustain their political career. The scope of gender politics in Taiwan broadened to embrace marriage equality and anti-discrimination against sexual minorities, and yet these issues are still highly contested and met with severe backlash in South Korea. Mill's method helps trace the forces behind such divergence.

In particular, I employ the "typological theory" (George and Bennet 2005; Mahoney 2004) approach to identify the necessary condition, i.e., modes of democratic consolidation, for the divergent progress of gender equality. Essentially, I identify two types of democratic consolidation—party-based and masses-based democracy—to explain how each type is associated with gender divergence. Despite its limitations, typological theory is useful when the researcher has deep knowledge about the cases at hand, and it can be complemented with the process analysis that traces a sequence of cases occurring within cases (Mahoney 2004). To maximize the use of local data, I accessed primary and secondary documents in English, Korean, and Mandarin, and cross-checked historical details offered in various languages. Among the publications, I prioritized English versions when they carry similar arguments both in English and non-English outlets. Tracing the temporal sequence of democratic consolidation, I highlight the historical continuity of the regime change, where the legacies of authoritarian government continued to influence politics in the post-democratization period (Hao and Gao 2016; Lee 2014). In what follows, I show that the emergent political institutions in the early period of democratization cast a lingering effect on the strategies and actions of political elites and women's movement activists in political and social arenas.

Planting the seeds of democracy: Parties and the masses in Taiwan and South Korea

In this section, I explain how different trajectories of democratization generated a distinct political environment for women in Taiwan and South Korea. In particular, I juxtapose the primary agents of the democratization movement—political parties in Taiwan and the masses in South Korea, to illuminate the different ways in which women's rights were mobilized as democracy matures. While Taiwan's party-based

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democracy encouraged elite women to undertake leadership roles in major parties, women's movement in South Korea maintained its working-class roots while gradually expanding its presence to middle-class women.

Modes of democratic transition and consolidation: Party-based vs. mass-based democracy

The degree of party institutionalization has significantly diverged between the two countries during the period of democratic consolidation. While the party system in Taiwan remained relatively stable between KMT and DPP, the electoral volatility and party fluidity in South Korea fluctuated even after the end of the military rule (Chung 1996; Hermanns 2009; McAllister 2016). South Korea did not develop strong institutionalized parties but instead led well-organized, successful social movements (Jones 2006, 4). In Taiwan, the consolidation process occurred mainly within formal institutions. For example, the party-based electoral competition allowed for an opportunity to generate a pluralistic political structure, within which female politicians could mobilize gender equality agenda along with other groups (Huang 2019; Fan 2000). Furthermore, the strong presence of the opposition party (DPP) created space for a progressive political movement, which not only included labor and feminist movements but also embraced non-traditional groups such as LGBTQ and environmentalists.

As Lee (2014) argues, the variant authoritarian regime type in Taiwan and South Korea influenced the ways in which citizens articulate and represent their interests after democratization. Characterized as a party state, Taiwan's authoritarian regime was ruled by the KMT party apparatus, which lifted the martial law and introduced democracy by itself. Referring to the process as "democracy through strength," Slater and Wong emphasize this process and show that Taiwan's democracy was voluntarily led by KMT, which boasted high approval ratings and intended to solidify its power through democratization (2022). Strong popular support for KMT led the leaders to believe that introducing the democratic decision-making process would not harm their party but only legitimate it, thus leading to the smooth transition from authoritarian to democratic rule. This party-initiated democratization presents a stark contrast to the movement-based democratization in South Korea, where the need for democratic governance was contentious and expressed directly through protests and demonstrations without channeling parties (Lee 2014). Democratization in South Korea was essentially a bottom-up process led by civilian forces, against authoritarian military leaders who violently oppressed citizens' demands for democratic politics.

The strong party politics in Taiwan, in turn, contributed to establishing a connection between political parties and women's movement activists (Fan 2000). Unlike their labor or environment movement counterparts, women's rights activists, many of whom were highly educated mainlanders, did not initially have strong intentions for political engagement. Instead, they joined the social movement with a single goal of achieving women's rights equal to those of men. While some prominent women actively participated in opposition to KMT, women's groups largely maintained a moderate stance between the two parties because many were aware of the fact that they needed bi-partisan support to legislate gender equality bills (Fan 2000). Thus women's movement activists joined the progressive political alliance later in the

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mid-1990s when the opposition parties rose as competitive forces in electoral politics.[5]

Although party politics in Taiwan was relatively stable after democratization, this does not mean that the two-party system had been established automatically from the beginning. After democratization, multiple parties were established, such as the Labor Party (1989), the Worker's Party (1989), and the Green Party Taiwan (GPT) (1996). In the 1980s and 1990s, these parties remained relatively stagnant compared to the rising influence of DPP across the country, and the process was further consolidated when DPP won the majority in the 2000 presidential election. Furthermore, the electoral changes from a single non-transferable vote (SNTV) to the single-member district system (SMD) in 2005 made it harder for smaller opposition parties to gain seats in the Legislative Yuan. Therefore, DPP's influence over the small parties grew significantly until 2014, when the Sunflower movement contributed to reviving smaller parties such as GPT and the New Power Party (NPP) (Ho and Huang 2017; Fell 2021). Albeit with reduced influence, these parties are still active in Taiwan's democratic politics.

In South Korea, the personalistic authoritarian regime led by Park Chung-Hee and succeeded by military generals Chun Doo-hwan and Roh Taewoo, ultimately collapsed by the bottom-up social movement, and political issues including labor rights, gender equality, and civil liberties began to flourish through organized protests. In this context, political parties played a secondary role in representing and channeling citizen demands. In fact, the multi-party system led to frequent merges and splits among parties, which relied on clientele networks of strong, charismatic leaders rather than organizational resources. The instability of the party system further legitimized popular social movements, within which women's rights organizations also mobilized their constituents (Hao and Gao 2016).

South Korea's volatile political parties prevented politicians from incorporating women's issues into the party platform, whereby clear ideological differences were largely absent at the onset of democratic governance. In most cases, a strong male leader formed a political party based on patronage and regional cleavages, and these single-leader parties often dissolved and merged due to internal conflicts, mutual negotiations or political scandals. Furthermore, political parties in South Korea were not able to develop strong ideological platforms from the beginning due to the anti-communist sentiment after the Korean War. Park's authoritarian leadership stunted party development, which further stifled the parties' ideological commitment. Parties reflecting class interests, such as socialist or labor parties, were especially oppressed because of their communist tendencies (Jaung 2020). In this context, political parties in South Korea aimed at grabbing political power through popular support.

Agents of Democratization: Tangwai vs. Minjung

The resilient party structure, or lack thereof, also created different agents for democratic reform. In Taiwan, the reform movement was led by the opposition movement called Tangwai (meaning outside the party), while South Korea had a popular basis of reform called Minjung (meaning the people) (Lee 2009). These two concepts represent the different styles of democratic consolidation and reflect different strategies adopted by women's groups.

Taiwan's democratic reform movement (Tangwai) was an anti-authoritarian party movement against the dominant KMT. Translated as "outside the party" (i.e., KMT),

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the Tangwai movement was led by intellectuals, hence not "a mass movement but an elitist one" (Chiou 1986). Subsequently, the Democratic Progressive Party (DPP), the opposition party against KMT, emerged with a coalition of moderate and radical activists in the Tangwai movement. Prior to lifting martial law, the Tangwai movement activists had already been actively engaged in electing candidates in local elections and criticizing the national government. Contrary to the cartel party style in Korea where multiple parties emerged, merged, and disbanded, Taiwan's parties after democratization converged into a two-party system and consolidated its electoral process by holding regular elections.

In the process of democracy building, critical actors contributed to consolidating women's issues into the party structure. The elitist nature of the anti-authoritarian movement shielded women politicians from the culturally conservative social atmosphere and helped them undertake leadership roles within political parties (Chiou 1986). Prominent members of the Tangwai movement included female members such as Lu Hsiu-Lien (Annette Lu) and Chen Chu, who served as critical actors in promoting women's issues in DPP. Lu, a native Taiwanese lawyer educated at the National Taiwan University and later at Harvard, was the most critical figure in Taiwan's feminist movement. Lu served as the head of Taoyuan Country and the vice president of DPP for two terms under President Chen Shui-bian. Chu is currently the president of the Control Yuan and the chairperson of the National Human Rights Commission. Other than Lu and Chu, many women's movement activists later joined the DPP leadership and built women's networks in the legislature. Active in the Tangwai movement, these feminist elites played a key role in establishing DPP and held leadership positions once DPP was in power.

The rise of the Tangwai movement offered a party-based platform based on which women's groups could seek partisan support for legislating gender equality bills and eventually became the agents of political change. Contrary to the populist character of South Korea's Minjung movement, the Tangwai movement was elitist and institutionalist in nature. Instead of making a broad, moralist appeal, women's groups in Taiwan took a strategic approach to mobilize partisan politics in their favor. As scholars observed, "[t]he opening of elections in the early 1990's served to politicize women's issues, dragging women's groups and activists into the world of electoral politics" (Weng and Fell 2006, 148). By the late 1990s, the close relationship between women's groups and political parties began to solidify, paving the way for situating women's issues within partisan politics.

In South Korea, the successful popular resistance helped make majoritarian and participatory democracy become a desirable form of democratic governance. In response, the parties, already with a weak institutional basis, waxed and waned in response to the demands of the electorate and served to mobilize the preexisting social cleavages (such as class and region) to gain electoral victory. In fact, the social movement in South Korea had already contained the majoritarian element—Minjung, translated roughly as the common people or the masses with a working-class basis (Lee 2009).[6] Minjung was the core concept for labor and democratization movements in the 1970s and the 1980s and carried significant moral authority for the intellectuals who created and practiced the concept (Lee 2011). Not only did Minjung entail a masses-based connotation because of its proletariat nature, but it also emphasized understanding the unique Korean situation (as opposed to the Western influence) and incorporated traditional folk culture as part of its core identity. The Minjung movement's nationalist orientation further legitimated the

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masses-based approach to democratization because democracy, after all, meant rule by its people.

The development of the Korean women's movement was closely intertwined with the Minjung movement (Ching Yoon Louie 1995). In fact, it was women garment factory workers who planted the seed for the modern Minjung movement, as they protested against harsh working conditions and helped organize labor unions in textile factories (Koo 2001). Beginning with the working class demonstrations during the authoritarian rule, the Minjung movement continued to affect the feminist movement in Korea after the democratic transition. Ching Yoon Louie's interview with Hyun Back Chung, a women's movement activist who later served as the Minister of Gender Equality and Family (2017–2018), shows that the women's movement in Korea took hints from the Minjung philosophy and aimed at widening its base of support:

> The women's movement is only at its beginning. With changes in the domestic and international situations, the movement [Minjung feminism] has to broaden its mass base beyond its industrial working class base and must reach out to middle-class women too (Ching Yoon Louie 1995, 427).

Despite the efforts by Minjung feminists to gain autonomy from industrial and political oppression, the grassroots orientation of the women's movement in Korea tended to frame women as victims of oppression rather than agents of change. The nationalistic and traditional nature of the Minjung philosophy did not explicitly deny women's agency, and yet the incorporation of the strong nationalistic sentiment did little to help advance the modern feminist ideology that defied the traditional Korean lifestyle. In practice, the militant character of the Minjung movement placed women in a supportive role, while male activists stood in the frontline to confront the authoritarian government (Kang 2000). The popular basis of democratization embraced women's issues as part of the proletariat agenda, and yet it continued to undermine women's political leadership and representation as the political parties began to mature.

While both countries successfully achieved and maintained liberal democracy during a similar period, different modes of democratization carved out distinct political spaces for women in Taiwan and South Korea. Consolidating its democracy through party competition, Taiwan could establish an institutional environment that incorporates women's issues in mainstream politics. In contrast, the women's movement in South Korea could maintain its broad influence in civil society due to the country's strong support for masses-based democracy, and yet focusing on ordinary people did not lead to fostering a stream of female, feminist politicians who could ultimately create a pipeline for political leadership. The following section elaborates on this point in detail.

Consolidating gender politics after democratization

This section documents the divergent trajectories of gender politics in conjunction with each country's democratic development. As elites tried to gain political power through electoral victory, they relied on different mechanisms to organize the party machine and build a constituency. The partisan competition in Taiwan triumphed over traditional gender norms in support of liberal democracy, and each party began to recruit women for electoral gains. In South Korea, appealing to the masses of voters required strong political leadership, and prominent male politicians formed and

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managed their own party to consolidate mass support. Under these circumstances, the success of women's issues depended on the executive will or strong protest from below.

Party institutionalization and the politicization of women's issues

While party institutionalization is important for mainstreaming women's issues, the weak party structure in South Korea made little room for women's groups in the formal political arena and thus stalled female political leadership. The personalistic party system tends to rely on patronage-style candidate recruitment, favoring those with preexisting political networks and resources, which also happens to be male-dominant in South Korea. The constant merger, creation, and dissolution of political parties in South Korea prevented parties from distinguishing themselves in terms of ideology or policies, leading to a fragmented party system with high electoral volatility (Hermanns 2009). For example, the "Three Kims," referring to former presidents Kim Young-Sam and Kim Dae-Jung and the presidential hopeful Kim Jong-Pil, had led their own parties and dominated much of the political scene from the late 1980s until the early 2000s. Accordingly, political parties were likely to distribute candidacy to those who had shown loyalty and commitment to the party leaders. Few ideological differences were highlighted across the parties, and more importantly, the entry of outsiders, including women, was made difficult without established political ties or common experiences.

In contrast, political parties in Taiwan after the end of the KMT rule began to form a bipartisan structure where both parties invested in recruiting female candidates for electoral victory. Of course, this is not to say that elections in Taiwan were entirely based on programmatic and ideological appeals; with intra-party factions, political parties in Taiwan relied on patron–clientele networks to distribute benefits to local districts, and they held candidate-centered elections. Furthermore, even prior to democratization, there existed candidate-based electoral competition at the local level, and the competition intensified later on as the opposition party joined the competition. With that said, the formidable presence of KMT afforded an opportunity for the liberal opposition camp to distinguish itself in terms of ideology and the base of support. The progressive platform of the Pan-Green coalition, led by DPP, emphasized human rights and self-determination (against the Chinese totalitarian rule) that included women's rights, which increased the sheer number of female politicians in the legislative arena. Likewise, KMT was also proactive in placing female candidates in party's leadership roles and on the ballot, which contributed to increasing the number of female politicians in the legislative arena (Shim 2018).

One can identify the diverging patterns of party institutionalization and women's political incorporation by comparing the careers of female legislators between the two countries. Not only were women underrepresented in South Korea's post-democratization legislature, but their party membership profiles reflected the volatile nature of the country's party system. Out of 299 members, only six female candidates (2 percent) were elected in South Korea's 13th session of the National Assembly (1988–1992), the first legislative session held after democratization. Among the six members, five legislators were from the Democratic Justice Party (DJP), which was the ruling party of the authoritarian military leaders and later merged with two other conservative parties to become the Democratic Liberal Party (DLP). In the following session (1992–1996), eight female legislators were elected, and they belonged to five

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different parties that split from DLP. In contrast, women accounted for 10.5 percent of the Legislative Yuan membership in Taiwan's first legislative election after the lifting of martial law (1993–1996), and they were evenly distributed across both KMT and DPP. In KMT, 11 out of 102 were women, and 6 members out of 51 were from DPP. The percentage of female legislators increased to 14 percent in the following session (1996–1999), where KMT and the new right-wing New Party maintained the majority seat and elected seventeen female candidates. DPP elected six.

The consequence of the volatile party system was particularly dire for women politicians in South Korea, who were underrepresented not only in the legislature but also outnumbered by men in their party. Without the party's deliberate effort to nominate and support female candidates in district elections, women typically served a single term via the proportional party election and could not further their legislative careers beyond the single term. In her hand-written note, Yeong-sook Park recollected her experience as a legislator in the 13th session of the National Assembly. As a high-ranking politician in her party, Park noted that it was "nearly impossible" to forge a cross-party alliance with fellow women politicians on gender issues because all of the female legislators were elected through party voting, which made it hard for them to deviate from party leadership mandates (Park, n.d.). This experience stands in contrast with the long political career of Taiwan's female legislators, many of whom ran in district elections and served multiple terms. For example, Chu Fong-chi, a KMT politician, served six terms representing Taoyuan County, and Annette Lu, a DPP member and the former vice president, also began her political career after being elected in Taoyuan in the second session of the Legislative Yuan.

As a result of increasing partisan competition, Taiwan's parties began to recruit women's movement activists to appeal to develop a women-friendly platform (Weng and Fell 2006). The most notable turn began in 1994 by the newly elected Taipei City Mayor Chen Shui-bian, who later became the first president from the DPP. He ran the campaign with a female running mate Annette Lu, a prominent female legislator and Taoyuan City magistrate. He also appointed Chen Chu, a female DPP politician, to the position of the Commissioner of the Department of Social Welfare and other women's movement activists to the advisory role at the Taipei Commission for the Promotion of Women's Rights (TCPWR). Women at TCPWR contributed to formulating women's policies for the City of Taipei, and TCPWR later expanded to the Executive Yuan's Commission on the Promotion of Women's Rights (Weng and Fell 2006, 155).

Second, party competition allowed political entrepreneurs to introduce and legislate progressive policies, especially those that may broaden the demographic base for electoral support (Wong 2003). The combination of ideational and institutional incentives tends to facilitate the institutionalization of women-friendly policies and practices. Wong, for example, argues that democratic deepening goes beyond the consolidation process to "cultivate and legally codify the respect for human rights across all social categories," regardless of their sexual, ethnic, racial, and economic backgrounds (Wong 2003, 236). In Taiwan's case, the electoral competition broadened the political debate beyond welfare and economic development to include social issues (including gender equality), human rights, and the rule of law.

A case in point was the sharp partisan debate over prostitution, whereby KMT and DPP members in the Taipei City Council were divided over banning prostitution. While KMT supporters and young women's rights activists opposed the ban, the DPP administration led by then-mayor Chen Shui-bian ignored the plea and employed

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measures to outlaw prostitution in the city in 1997. At the core of the debate lay a generational tension among women's rights activists. On the one hand, the older generation had fought against child prostitution and pornography, and they supported the progressive party's measure to ban prostitution. On the other hand, however, the young generation advocated for sexual liberation and basic human rights for women, and they held a more positive view on licensed prostitution than the older-generation activists. The cross-cutting divide led to intense public discussion, and political parties aligned with each group to defend their position. In the 1998 mayoral election, the KMT candidate Ma Ying-jeou, who later served as president from 2008 to 2016, promised to give a grace period for prostitutes to run the business and fulfilled this promise after he was elected a mayor of the city (Weng and Fell 2006).

In contrast to the Taiwan case, the banning of prostitution in South Korea illustrates how its resolution occurred outside the realm of partisan disputes. Increasing sexual crimes and prostitution during the 1990s alarmed the public and led to calls to outlaw prostitution and strengthen punishments against sexual transactions. In response to growing popular pressure, the Prime Minister's office under the Roh Moo-Hyun administration first established a Committee for the Prevention of Sex Transaction. The chair of the committee was a former prosecutor, Jiwon Kang, who worked on cracking down on prostitution during his tenure. The committee urged the National Assembly to legislate a bill against prostitution, and the legislature passed the Prostitution Act of 2004. In this process, political parties were the last players to enact the ban, and no disputes emerged along partisan lines that would mainstream women's policies. Although many of women's policies in South Korea were passed during the consolidation period, they did not constitute major partisan issues that would ultimately contribute to the increased political representation of women in the legislative branch.[7]

With the backing of both parties, the prostitution controversy in Taiwan was discussed in the context of partisan politics, incurring a broader discussion of women's self-determination and body autonomy. In contrast, South Korea's approach to the same issue bypassed the partisan discussion, and the crackdown on prostitution was mainly driven by the prosecutors' office rather than political parties. Overall, the executive branch in South Korea played a central role in phasing out patriarchal civil codes, such as the legal reform of the family law in 2002 and the abolition of the male-centered family registry system in 2005. While such measures were effectively phased out in women-friendly administrations, relying on executive decisions proved to be volatile once the presidential office began to distance itself from tackling gender inequality.

Expanding or contracting the scope of gender equality

Before democratization, the KMT oppressed the feminist movement and tried to maintain the patriarchal social order in an attempt to counter the radical changes in mainland China. Women's reproductive and household duties were encouraged and praised as serving the national interest and promoting "harmony" in society, which has been praised in East Asia as part of Confucian values. In 1949, the KMT imposed martial law in Taiwan, which lasted for almost 40 years until it was lifted in 1987. During this period, anti-government political activities including the women's liberation movement were banned and oppressed. Instead, Taiwan chapters of women's

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groups such as the YWCA and Zonta were attached to the KMT government and promoted women's traditional roles as mothers and wives (Chen 2013).

However, as a result of economic development and political transformation in the 1970s, a new wave of feminist movement began to emerge, as female elites at Taiwan's top universities began to organize themselves to enlighten the public about feminist issues and join the democratization movement. A notable figure in the birth of the feminist movement was Annette Lu. In the 1970s, Lu and other feminist activists set up organizations for women and published writings about women's rights. The publication of "Awakening" in 1982 made a watershed moment for Taiwan's feminist movement. Members of the Awakening petitioned for the Legislative Yuan for Eugenics and Health Protection Law (abortion) and a serious of family laws, and these social changes were also tied to the greater acceptance of women's political representation. For instance, the DPP incorporated women's rights as part of their platform, ensuring pay equity, daycare, and equal employment (Ku 1989).

The rising tide of progressive politics contributed to improving the perceptive and practical measures of gender equality, as it was pursued within the broad human rights regime (Wong 2003). The continued effort for gender equality led to the mainstreaming of gender issues when the DPP gained power in 2000. Since then, gender mainstreaming has not only concerned women's issues but also embraced gay and lesbian rights, which culminated in the constitutional decision in 2017 that declared the then Civil Code against same-sex marriage unconstitutional. It was the feminist politician Yu Mei-nu who strongly supported and promised to drive the judicial reform for same-sex marriage. Although this decision was refuted by the popular referendum in 2018, the Constitutional Court ruled that same-sex marriage was to be recognized by special law, and the law was passed in 2019.

The coalition between the LGBTQ and women's movements does not mean that the feminist movements in Taiwan were more inclusive and radical than, say, those in South Korea. Rather, it was the liberal feminist tradition that may have allowed the broad inclusion of sexual identities in Taiwan's gender equality movement. From the 1920s until after World War II, the women's movement in Taiwan was significantly influenced by Western liberal feminism. Emphasizing women's equal rights in a liberal democracy, activists in Taiwan emphasized gender equality in every aspect of life—in the economy, politics, and society, and sought to expand women's entry into those realms (Chang 2010). The early influence of liberal feminism continued to affect the feminist movement in Taiwan in the post-Martial Law period, whereby gender equality issues were actively debated and settled in the legislative and judicial branches.[8] Liberal feminists' belief in institutional reform legitimated female activists' pursuit of legislative careers and political leadership.

Like Taiwan, the women's movement in South Korea remained weak and tended to support traditional values during the authoritarian regime. In politics, the women's bureau within Park Chung-hee's Democratic Republican Party developed into a national organization to disseminate authoritarian propaganda and promote the regime's rural development project called the New Village Movement. Women consisted of about 20 percent of the party membership, and yet their activities were mainly supplementary to help with the authoritarian leader's reelection and cultivate party loyalty (Korea Women's Development Institute 2001). Women were often framed as victims of violence and thus viewed as subjects of protection rather than agents for equal rights. The legal discourse in the Korean court reflected this tendency, as the constitutional interpretation often viewed women as a member of

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the family whose rights were intertwined with male family members such as husbands and sons. The conservative rulings continued to uphold social stability and respect for tradition rather than appeal to the constitutional idea of equal rights for citizens.

Although female factory workers had contributed significantly to shaping working-class consciousness in Korea's labor movement (e.g., Koo 2001), women's movement in South Korea remained largely outside the realm of legislative politics. Among progressive political forces in South Korea, labor politics dominated the political discourse (Lee 2006). Beginning with the fierce labor strike from July to September in 1987, over 3,000 strikes occurred for only three months with the participation of more than one million workers. The intensity of labor movements in the early phase of democratic consolidation led to the fast incorporation of labor issues into mainstream politics, although the labor union leaders continued to lead militant, confrontational movements outside the institutionalized political settings. In this context, the male-dominant labor market structure based on heavy manufacturing industries not only marginalized the female labor force in the private sector, but its mobilizing forces—labor unions, parties, and NGOs—framed labor and economic inequality as the primary issue in Korean progressive politics and civil society (Kim 2000). In contrast, the women's movement did not attract an equal level of salience and audience in civil society, and the weak party system and the growth of the civil society made the women's rights movement remain active outside the legislative political arena.

Under these circumstances, women's movement activists in Korea constructed a gendered frame in the 1970s in which gender violence and women's victimhood constituted the central issue of the women's movement. Within the gender violence framework, civil society organizations employed an innovative tactic that combines "institutional politics" with "movement politics," to implement gender equality policies and laws (Suh 2011). Discussing the activities of the Korean Women's Hot Line (KWHL), Suh and Park (2014) found that KWHL created the human rights frame by "visualizing domestic violence as violence against women" (Suh and Park 2014, 328) in the 1970s, amplified the frame in the 1980s, and extended it to the global human rights frame in the 1990s. Later, an umbrella organization called the Korean Women's Association United (KWAU) was established in 1987 and served as a key non-governmental organization and women activists who later served as top-level bureaucrats and politicians (Suh and Park 2014).

Despite the growth of women's movements in civil society, feminist activists rarely engaged in party politics, and it took a while for these activists to become active in the formal political arena. Instead, it was the presidential mandate of the Kim Dae-jung administration that appointed women activists in key cabinet positions and initiated a series of gender-related reforms. For example, in 1998, the government launched the Presidential Commission on Women's Affairs, which was later elevated to the Ministry of Gender Equality in 2001. Unlike their Taiwanese counterparts, South Korean activists hesitated to join the political leadership. In 2000, KWAU had decided that the representatives of KWAU and its affiliates should not enter politics during their term, but they considered revising this rule. During the period of party consolidation in the early 2000s, women's groups engaged in a heated controversy over whether women's movement leaders should run for the 17th legislative election in 2004. Those who preferred the grassroots foundation opposed "intervening" in male-dominated politics, arguing that the women's movement should not be

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co-opted to the patriarchal political structure. Without solid party organizations, women's movement groups in South Korea were concerned about being marginalized and serving male interests. Although many of them eventually joined the legislative and administrative offices, this controversy shows the distance between partisan politics and women's activism during the consolidation period (Kang 2004).

The reliance on movement politics continues to affect the new, young feminist movements in South Korea, which have become radicalized and marginalized from mainstream politics (Kim 2021). Acknowledging that there is little space for progressive feminism within the major political parties, women decided to choose alternative venues to express their voices, especially in anonymous online communities (Kim 2021), and even those who were recruited by major parties lacked political capital and failed to climb up the ladder. In March 2022, Park Ji-Hyun, an activist who reported on a sex trafficking scandal in her twenties, was appointed by surprise as an interim leader of the Democratic Party of Korea but stepped down only after three months, when the Democratic Party lost by a landslide in the nationwide gubernatorial and mayoral elections in June of the same year (Jung 2022). Park's hasty appointment and short tenure is a glaring example of the progressive party's lack of vision to nurture long-term female political leadership within the party. Despite the progress in the 2000s, contemporary gender politics in South Korea remains highly divided and controversial, and major political parties are careful to incorporate gender equality as their central agenda.

To summarize, the unfolding of women's issues in Taiwan and South Korea reflects the different degrees to which democratic institutions, such as parties and legislature, incorporated women's issues into their main political agenda. The early involvement of political parties, or lack thereof, generated divergent career paths for female politicians, whereby women politicians in Taiwan tend to enjoy longer tenure and occupy higher positions than their Korean counterparts. Emphasizing the significance of grassroots democracy, women's movement activists in South Korea were critical of male dominance in the formal political arena and remained outside of formal politics. In contrast, embracing Western liberal feminist ideas that stress individual self-determination and the role of government institutions, women activists in Taiwan played a critical role in party politics by making women's issues politically salient. Based on the idea of self-determination, they also expanded the scope of gender equality to support the LGBTQ community.

Conclusion

This paper shows that identifying the patterns of democratic consolidation, especially in its nascent period, provides valuable insights into how gender issues unfold in politics and society in new democracies. While Taiwan pursued centralized party building to deepen its democracy, South Korea did not initially develop a stable party structure but instead incorporated state–civil society interactions as a significant part of democratic nation-building. As such, the women's movement in Taiwan concentrated its efforts on expanding its presence in the formal arena of politics, while women's rights activists in South Korea amassed their power primarily in civil society. The party-centered electoral competition in Taiwan incentivized politicians to focus on middle-class women voters and to form a coalition with progressive groups, which subsequently ascended the position of the women's movement in the legislature. In contrast, women in South Korea were seldom represented in party

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leadership until the gender quota was enforced in the early 2000s. Within the paternalistic network, there were few opportunities for women to develop their political careers within parties, and the paucity of female political leaders in South Korea led to continued conservatism among the public and growing radicalization among young female activists who could not find their place in mainstream politics.

By tracing divergent paths toward gender equality in the two countries, this article sheds light on how different characteristics of democratic consolidation may shape the political and economic welfare of women in the long run. Especially, the initial framing and development of democratic consolidation may be crucial in determining what is central among competing democratic values. The comparison does not mean that South Korean politics is less democratic than Taiwan; rather I suggest that the liberal democracy in Korea developed in specific ways that emphasize particular aspects of progressivism, mainly in terms of economic redistribution and regulation on big businesses that can appeal to the broad set of constituents.

In a way, the different trajectories highlight democracy's fundamental tension between majoritarian rule and the protection of minority rights. In South Korea, democratization led to greater participation of the citizenry in public affairs via extra-institutional channels, and the political elites paid attention to what citizens wanted and mobilized those demands. Gender issues, while morally acceptable, did not take center stage because other issues had broader political appeal to the culturally conservative constituents. Moreover, the consequences of a weak political structure became more apparent in contemporary Korea, when the demands from young feminists were expressed in the streets and online rather than on the legislative floor. Lacking political representation, young feminists were more likely to express their anger and frustration in social outlets and clashed with anti-feminist groups, engendering heightened gender conflicts (Kim 2021). The polarization seemed to intensify when party elites began to politicize gender equality in recent elections.

In contrast, the top-down style of democratization in Taiwan helped form the institutional channels such as political parties, the Legislative and Judicial Yuans, where progressive groups, although small in number, could make their claims by increasing their share of representation in the political institutions. Inclusion and expansion of social rights, therefore, may not necessarily follow from democratization *per se* but tend to be acquired through mobilizing and coalescing with various social groups within a new democratic system. The divergent experiences of Taiwan and South Korea suggest that achieving gender equality is not so much about breaking cultural barriers as about effectively maneuvering political biases.

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Notes

1. According to the UN Gender Equality Index, Taiwan is ranked ninth globally and first in Asia in terms of gender equality. South Korea also ranked high, occupying the eleventh place (Chang 2020).
2. The original report does not publish Taiwan's ranking, and the department of gender equality at the Executive Yuan calculated the score using the GGI's formula.
3. The Asian Tigers include Taiwan, South Korea, Singapore, and Hong Kong.

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4. Although I acknowledge that women's movements can have both progressive and conservative associations (e.g., Ho 2020), women's movement in this article mainly refers to the activities by women's groups defined as progressive owing to their commitment to the liberal democratic idea of gender equality. In contrast, conservative women's groups are concerned with upholding traditional norms and thus can be categorized as countermovement against democratizing forces.
5. The duration and scope of social movements in Taiwan are less intense than those in Korea, and yet protests in the later period such as the 2008 Wild Strawberries movement or the 2014 Sunflower movement transformed party dynamics. As a result of the Sunflower movement, for instance, the New Power Party was established and gained power as the third party.
6. This article discusses Minjung in its modern usage, and yet the term has been used throughout Korean history. For a detailed analysis, see Kang 2023.
7. Yonhap News. 2004. "Comprehensive Plan to Ban Prostitution Reviewed." [In Korean]. February 26. https://n.news.naver.com/mnews/article/001/0000576884?sid=100.
8. It is also true that the liberal feminist agenda coexisted with the traditional values of family and Confucianism. Instead of erasing gender-specific qualities altogether, feminists in Taiwan placed equal emphasis on fulfilling women's roles within the family as mothers and wives, which was akin to relational feminism in the West (Chang 2010, 8).

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