

Forging Women's Political Space in Democracy Movements: A Case Study of the Korean Catholic Rural Women's Organization

Jaok KWON

By focusing on the trajectory of an autonomous women peasants' movement under militant authoritarian rule (1961–87), this article attempts to explore how a political space for rural women in democracy movements had been created in Korea. In this article, firstly, I maintain that the attempts to challenge the sexual division of labor in rural society and to interconnect the local movement with political movement contributed to boosting women's participation in the democracy movement. Secondly, this article argues that the attempt to challenge the patriarchy system within social movements provided an impetus to broaden women's political space. Thirdly, this paper reveals that middle-class feminists' struggle played a vital role in propagating women's liberation to rural women by challenging the gap based on class and women's interests.