

---

## Preface

---

This book began when Rose J. Lee organized the panel “Women and Democratization in East Asia” for the Seventeenth World Congress of the International Political Science Association, held in Seoul, Korea, in August 1997. Because the panel evoked a lively discussion, we decided to recruit more papers with this theme and create a book. As the project evolved, its intellectual scope broadened. Initially, we focused on the question of whether democratization in East Asia had allowed women enough access to political processes (i.e., empowerment) to shape public policies that would improve their status in society (i.e., emancipation). However, as the book took shape and the individual chapters were reworked, we came to the conclusion that the expansion of civil society that accompanies democratization in East Asia (and elsewhere) is extremely important because it allows grassroots activism that goes beyond the conventional definition of politics. What appears central, thus, is that autonomous groups of women are gaining the power to help themselves in both the political and nonpolitical spheres.

We would like to express our appreciation for all the help we received from Dan Eades and Leanne Anderson of Lynne Rienner Publishers. Without their support and confidence, this project might not have reached fruition; without their keen editorial insights, the book would be less coherent and, presumably, less interesting and insightful. Nancy Borland and Phillis Hodge of Auburn University’s Department of Political Science provided invaluable assistance in preparing the manuscript, especially the illustrations. We also want to thank our families for their support while we struggled longer than we had planned with the question of whether democratization in East Asia has made any contribution to the empowerment and emancipation of women there.

— *R.J.L.*  
*C.C.*

