

Does Democracy Matter for Women? Evaluating Korean women-related policy-making infrastructure

Nicola Jones

University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

The literature concerning the impact of democratic transition on gender equality paints a decidedly mixed picture. While the transition period offered women a window of opportunity to mobilize and pursue both practical and strategic gender interests, democratic consolidation in many “Third Wave” democracies has often seen women marginalized from the political process (Jacquette and Wolchik, 1998; Funk, 1993)¹. Women’s movements have become weaker due to declining resources as well as friction over strategies and/or party politics. Moreover, advances in women’s representation within the formal political arena have been disappointingly limited (Jacquette, 1994; Waylen, 1997, Craske, 1999). Perhaps surprisingly, the Korean case appears to offer a counter example – wherein women have made impressive – albeit far from complete—gains under the new democratic regime. In Korea, women’s groups have generally grown stronger since the transition from authoritarian rule in 1987, while women’s machineries charged with promoting gender equality have become further entrenched within the apparatus of the state (bureaucracy, legislature and political parties) and have seen their resources and influence expand (e.g. Lee, 2000).

Although there is a growing body of literature that traces the development of Korean women’s organizations and NGOs over the past 15 years (e.g. Cho and Chang, 1994; Cho, 1994; Chung, 1997; Gelb, 1994), there have been few attempts to systematically examine the manner in which state organizations have contributed to gender equality (Chun, 1996). The aim of this paper therefore is to examine the evolution and efficacy of these women’s policy machineries. I consider three main independent variables: a) the origins of the machinery; b) organizational structure and capacity; and c) linkages to civil society.

I argue that in the Korean case, the absence of strong ideological cleavages between political parties has elevated the importance of the President as the arbitrator of social change – including alterations in the power relations between men and women. Moreover, because women’s political machineries have largely been established on an ad hoc basis rather than as part of a coherent government policy aimed at advancing gender equality, their impact has been mixed². Earlier governments oversaw the improvement of women’s status in terms of health, education, fertility control etc. but not until the election of the Kim Dae-jung administration was it possible to talk about an elected official with a strong commitment towards improving the balance of power between men and women

In terms of organizational structure and capacity, I argue that women’s political machineries have been hampered by an inability to implement their own policies, a dearth of resources (staff, funding), weak public relations efforts and less than optimal networking and coordination among gender-related agencies and

departments. On a more macro-level, the nature of the bureaucracy itself—i.e. Confucian, hierarchical, non-specialist, male-dominated—further hinders efforts to advance gender equality. Nevertheless, the recent establishment of a fully-fledged Ministry of Gender Equality in January 2001 with increased staff and funding would seem to suggest that given a combination of strong presidential commitment and active support from women’s movement organizations, that such historical weaknesses can be overcome.

The third strand of my argument concerns WPMs’ relationships with civil society. In Korea, earlier machineries had weak connections with progressive civil society groups, rendering it difficult for policy makers to develop policies that addressed women’s concerns. Moreover, without the active support and cooperation of the progressive women’s movement, policy implementation was limited. However, over time, linkages between the state and women’s organizations have grown increasingly more conciliatory and cooperative. As a result of dual pressures from within and outside the state, machineries no longer treat women as mere petitioners of the state but rather as an important negotiating partner in the formation, implementation and monitoring of gender-related policies.

Despite their limitations to date, I maintain that Korea’s current women’s political machineries constitute an important infrastructural mechanism through which to advance gender equality and realize the 1995 Beijing Declaration’s call to mainstream gender issues into national development. Future gains will be predicated on more strategic pressure from women’s organizations and their allies, better cross-institutional coordination, and ongoing efforts to secure greater resources.

My findings are based on field research carried out between May 1998 and 2001 including archival research (e.g. legislative records, political party and government documents) and in-depth interviews with government officials, party staff, women legislators and their support staff, academics and women’s NGOs. Although women’s policy offices also exist at the local government level, this paper will limit its focus to national level machineries.

Because of space constraints and in order to facilitate my discussion of the three explanatory variables under analysis, I have mapped out the main characteristics of Korea’s women’s political machineries between 1983 and 2001 in the table below.

Year	Name of WPM	Organizational Structure	Relationship with civil society	Mandate/ Paradigm
Chun Du Whan 1983	<i>Korean Women’s Development Institute (KWDI)</i>	Govt think-tank initially under Ministry of Health and Social Affairs; transferred to MPA2 in 1989; to PCWA in 1998 and made semi-autonomous and moved to Humanities Council under PM Office in 1999. 165 employees 1983 ; 105 - 2001 Fully govt sponsored until 1998; now 70% only.	Promotion of women’s leadership and networking; attempts to be neutral betw bureaucrats and activists; informal participation in women’s groups in late ‘90s	Developing women’s abilities and societal participation; Making policy recommendations
Chun	<i>Women’s</i>	Under PM’s office;	Relatively weak;	Policy evaluation;

Du Whan 1983	<i>Policy Evaluation Committee (WPEC)</i>	1983, 20 members, increased to 35 in 1934 (Ministers + civilian experts) Annual or biannual meetings Replaced by Council of Commissioners in 1998.	civilian experts often without strong connections to progressive women's movement	report to president annually and from 1994 reports on women's status required of all ministries
Noh Tae Woo 1988	<i>Ministry of Political Affairs No.2 (MPA2)</i>	Mini ministry; 20 staff in 1988 increased to 59 under Kim Young Sam; not full ministerial status – ie could participate in cabinet meetings but only comment on women-related issues; also unable to propose own legislation. Disbanded and replaced by PCWA in late 1997/1998.	Relatively close connection with moderate KNCW but poor relationship with progressive KWAU under Noh. Improved somewhat under Kim Y-S, especially during preparations for Beijing Conference. Encouragement of women's volunteer work but criticized for trying to mobilize voters/ capitalize on women's unpaid labor; some funding provided to women's NGOs who registered with govt ministries-	Operated within WID paradigm; concern with increasing women's societal participation and human resources. Passage of Women's Basic Development Act in 1995 which provides blueprint for future gender policy and establishment of Women's Development Fund. Focus is primarily on collective socio-econ rights cf. individual rights
Kim Young Sam 1994	<i>Special Congressional Committee on Women's Affairs (SCCWA)</i>	Non-permanent, non-standing committee. Fewer members, smaller research staff, unable to veto legislative proposals – can only make recommendations; unable to participate in legislative evaluation of bureaucracy. Little influence over all impt budgetary committee	Not particularly strong; women tend to consult with individual legislators rather than committee as a whole; improving now with appointment of gender expert to head the research committee and former women's leader as head of special committee. Moreover, gender-related legislation often dealt with in more powerful Environmental and Labor standing committee.	Provide legislature with some level of gender expertise; discuss gender-related legislation; file reports on efficacy of women's policy machinery
Kim Dae-jung 1998	<i>Presidential Commission on Women's Affairs (PCWA)</i>	Central hub organization under direct supervision of the President connected to women's focal points in 6 key ministries with gender-related responsibilities. Small staff of 49; allowed to participate in Cabinet meetings but lack of full ministerial status; inability to propose	Much closer relationship with progressive women's movement than any of its predecessors. Entry of activists into the state – both central PCWA and focal points. More regular consultations (both formal and informal) with NGOs and greater	Primary focus on policy coordination; however, passage of Gender Discrimination Prevention and Relief Act in 1999 provided PCWA with jurisdiction to investigate and adjudicate cases of gender discrimination. Strong emphasis on women's human rights.

		legislation. Policy agenda and implementation monitored by Council of Commissioners, 13 member body including 6 vice ministers and 7 civilian experts. Discontinued and replaced by MOGE in Jan 2001.	budget for project funding.	PCWA also served as coordinator of the APEC women's committee in 2000.
--	--	---	-----------------------------	--

Kim Dae-jung 1998	<i>Party Gender Expert</i>	Establishment of gender expert in ruling and main opposition party. 1 gender expert with a staff of 3 researchers. Works closely with party women's bureaus and with party's general policy committee	Close relationship with civil society; serves as liaison point between parties, congress and NGOs	To provide gender expertise to party policy committee to ensure that women's issues are not marginalized but incorporated into mainstream policy-making decision process. Also responsible for liaising with SCCWA and other congressional committees
Kim Dae-jung 2001	<i>Ministry of Gender Equality (MOGE)</i>	Fully-fledged ministry with 102 staff and 32 billion won budget. Divided into four divisions: planning and policy coordination, gender equality promotion, women's rights promotion, and cooperation (with NGOs and international agencies). Adoption of sexual and family violence prevention responsibilities (formally dealt with by MHSW) Retention of 6 women's focal points.	Close relationship with civil society esp given appointment of Han Myung Sook, former political dissident and feminist activist as Minister. Increased recruitment of femocrats. Committee on Gender Equality Promotion (replacing Council of Commissioners) includes greater number of civilian experts.	Aim to promote women's rights and interests through mainstreaming of gender policies in all areas of society. Special focus on prevention of violence against women.

1) Origins of Women's Political Machinery

Research from advanced democracies suggests that a key determinant of the efficacy of women's political machineries involves what Stetson and Mazur (1995) have called the "*patterns of politics surrounding the establishment of women's political machinery*" –especially the ideological profile of the ruling party.³ Perhaps not surprisingly, the most influential women's agencies have been created by left-wing social democratic parties, which are generally more sympathetic to the policy suggestions of WPMs. In particular, this literature emphasizes that the creation of strong institutions with a mandate to advance political equality is largely a matter of volition, i.e. less effective institutions were designed *not* to challenge the status quo in any fundamental way. In the Korean case, although political cleavages are largely regional rather than ideological, and political parties have historically tended to offer similar gender-related political platforms (e.g. Kwon, 2000, Kang, 2000), my research suggests that women's political machineries have become more influential and effective under the Kim Dae-jung administration, particularly because his Millennium Democratic Party is relatively more progressive and proactively involved in forging connections with civil society groups (e.g. Chang, 2000, Han, 2000, Chun, 2000).

Considering Korea's short democratic experience, inchoate party system, and historical strength of the presidency, however, I argue that the motivations behind the President's establishment of women's political machineries has generally been more important in determining its mandate and efficacy than has the ideology of the ruling party.⁴ Simply put, the strength of the President's commitment towards improving gender equality, as well as the manner in which the machinery's creation was placed on the political agenda, are broadly determinant of their success over time. In Korea, the political landscape has evolved such that successive administrations have become more committed to reducing gender inequality and have thus been willing to establish more effective women's political machineries (e.g. Kwon, 1995, Lee 2000). Likewise, the transition to democracy, and concomitant increase in the political voice of women's groups, has changed the process through which gender policy enters the political agenda. As a result, political leaders have been held increasingly accountable for the actual implementation of social reforms. "Window dressing" or symbolic changes pay fewer dividends with increasingly sophisticated women's groups and international organizations (Kim, 1998, Kim, 1995, Lee, 1997).

My research suggests that the "*patterns of politics surrounding the establishment of women's political machinery*" involves more than the ideological profile of the ruling party or president. Especially in the context of post-transitional polities, where state-society relations remain in flux, it is necessary to consider broader political/cultural notions of the state. Emerging from a 25-year military dictatorship, wherein regime legitimacy was predicated on economic development and national security, Korean political culture has been slow to expand the responsibilities of the state to include the provision of welfare or the defense of social justice (Shin, 1999). Traditionally, individual welfare has been seen primarily as a family or company responsibility, which has reduced the willingness of the state to devote resources to welfare policies, whether for pensions or childcare facilities (Kwon, 1999). Not surprisingly, given the Korean state's historical propensity towards violence, individuals have tended to seek assistance

from civic or religious organizations rather than public officials. In terms of civil and human rights, citizens are only now beginning to view the state as a source of relief from discrimination and abuse (Mo, 1996, Shin, 1999). Although Korean political culture has changed remarkably over the past fifteen years, especially since the transition to civilian rule in 1992, this historic conceptualization of the state/society relationship partly explains why the political commitment of incumbents was generally weak prior to the election of Kim Dae-jung, while social groups tended to be unwilling to work with the state in developing social policy (Helgeson, 1998).

1.1 Chun Du Whan (1980-87)

Although women's bureaus focusing on marginalized groups (e.g. widows, prostitutes, unmarried mothers) had been in existence in welfare-related ministries since the 1950s, a government body devoted specifically to women's concerns was not established until 1983 (KWDI, 2001). While clearly an important first step in the development of women's policy infrastructure, the establishment of the Korean Women's Development Institute (KWDI) and the Women's Policy Evaluation Committee (WPEC) did not signify a proactive commitment towards improving gender relations. Rather, observers have suggested that Chun embarked on a public relations blitz to improve his political legitimacy and relationship with civil society groups (Kim, 2000, Kim 2000).⁵ Given this domestic environment, coupled with pressure surrounding the 1979 UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW), which called for the creation of national machineries to address discrimination against women, women leaders and legislators had little trouble in convincing the president to support the establishment of the KWDI and WPEC (Kwon, 1995).

Women's groups and legislators had been particularly concerned with the lack of basic data on the status of women in Korea and had pushed for a research institute that could develop policy proposals, which would provide the starting point for government thinking on women-related issues (Kim, 2000). As a government think-tank devoted to women's issues, the KWDI's mandate combined policy-oriented research as well as leadership training, vocational guidance programs and support for civic women's organizations. The WPEC's role was complementary. It was responsible for developing the KWDI's research results into a concrete policy agenda as well as evaluating the impact of government policies on women's status, including monitoring the implementation of women-related policies by relevant ministries⁶ (Kang, 2000).

The KWDI and the WPEC were largely successful in terms of their official mandate – collecting data points as to women's position within the society and polity, as well as demonstrating Chun's "commitment" to social welfare and progressive politics. For a regime desperate to redirect attention away from pervasive human rights abuses and to generate positive political capital both at home and abroad, even limited acts such as setting up a women's research institute constituted a step in the right direction. Nevertheless, both of these organizations were rooted firmly within a "Women in Development" (WID) paradigm, which prioritized the importance of improving women's status as part of a comprehensive economic development effort, without fundamentally altering power relations between men and women (Kim, 2001). In this regard, the mandate of the KWDI was in line with the basic assumption about the state's

responsibilities towards society – i.e. development rather than redistribution or social justice (Kwon, 1999).

1.2 Noh Tae Woo (1987-1992)

Chun's military but democratically elected colleague, President Noh Tae Woo, presided over Korea's formal democratic transition. Accordingly, the pattern of politics surrounding the creation of the Ministry of Political Affairs No. 2 was quite different. At the macro-level, in the wake of the 1987 "People's Uprising" and the military's concession to hold democratic elections, Noh was anxious to distinguish his government from the old authoritarian regime and to present a softer, more democratic image (Kang, 2000). While Noh's search for political legitimacy was in many ways similar to that of his authoritarian predecessor, because civil society had been much stronger politically, Noh was compelled to take a much more proactive stance vis-à-vis gender equality – at least at the formal legislative level. More importantly, a progressive and increasingly vocal women's movement had emerged in the years prior to the transition and was demanding more substantial changes in gender relations – rather than merely commissioning 'study groups' (Nam, 1995, MPA2, 1995). Likewise, international organizations and NGOs, which were becoming increasingly critical towards public patriarchs, called upon governments to address widespread discrimination and violence against women (Chin, 2000). In both regards, the 'standards' by which the administration would be judged has been raised, thus requiring the initiation of more substantive policies if Noh was to improve his legitimacy.

Taking advantage of the relative flexibility of the transition period, civic leaders and women legislators urged the candidates for the first democratic presidential elections (1987) to establish a permanent women's body within the executive. Their proposal sought to address the structural weaknesses and lack of enforcement power of the KWDI and to compensate for the precarious position of women legislators, most of whom were appointed rather than elected by their own constituency (Kim, 2000). In response to these demands, Noh not only retained and upgraded the status of the KWDI and the WPEC, but also agreed to convert the obliquely named *Ministry of Political Affairs No. 2* (MPA2) (which had been set up to deal with the 1988 Seoul Olympics) into a ministerial body to deal with women's issues and appointed a women minister⁷ (Gelb, 1994).

Initially, the MPA2's mandate was to deal with women's, elderly and youth affairs, but in 1990 its focus was narrowed to women's affairs only (Kwon, 1995, Park, 2000). Its responsibilities included representing women's issues in cabinet meetings, coordinating policy development with women-related divisions in other ministries, political parties and local governments as well as working with women's NGOs and volunteer organizations with the aim of increasing women's social participation. Until the mid-1990s, the ministry was primarily concerned with carrying out long-overdue domestic reforms--increasing women's participation in all levels of government, improving women's access to vocational training and educational facilities, and overseeing legislative reforms especially concerning equal employment, childcare and family law revision (MPA2, 1995). However, in large part because the origins of the machinery lay in Noh's search for a democratic mantle, the MPA2's achievements were primarily symbolic. For example, public relations efforts were focused on advertising a

“series of firsts” – i.e. the first ministry dealing with women’s affairs, the opening of educational institutions (e.g. military, tax office) to women (Kim, 2000) etc.

1.3 Kim Young Sam (1992-1997)

The 1992 election of former political dissident, Kim Young Sam, as president marked a major turning point in Korean politics and encouraged civil society actors to soften their opposition against the government (Shin, 1999; Cotton, 1995). The foci of his administration were a) institutional democratic reforms and b) leading Korea out of its self-imposed international isolation and embracing “globalization”, symbolized by the country’s ascension to the OECD (Kim, 1997). While not a personal advocate of gender equality, Kim’s keen interest in improving Korea’s international reputation provided a powerful motivation to strengthen the government’s record on women’s rights and showcase new laws and institutions that his administration had introduced to this end (Chang, 2000; Kang, 2000).

The MPA2’s focus during the Noh administration had been on domestic issues, but under President Kim Young Sam there was a marked shift towards the international arena, including the inclusion of women’s policies into the far-ranging set of reform goals drawn up by the special Globalization Committee in 1995. Similarly, strongly influenced by the 1995 UN Beijing Conference on Women, the Kim administration drew up a set of “Ten Policy Priorities” aimed at expanding women’s societal participation⁸ (Lee, 2000).

The government also pledged to enact the Basic Gender Development Act (1995), which would provide a blueprint or “Master Plan” for the future development and implementation of women’s policies. In order to facilitate women’s “development” within the family, society and the public sector, interim affirmative action policies were provided for, and both national and local governments made responsible for creating implementation mechanisms for the gender policies outlined in the law, including an annual execution plan ((National Report on Implementation of Beijing Platform for Action, 1-2, 138)⁹.

Despite these changes, however, women candidates continued to fare poorly in both national and local elections, and the level of influence of women’s machineries remained disappointingly limited (Park, 1999). Accordingly, civic women’s organizations (led by the Korean Women’s Association United (KWAU)) started campaigning for the establishment of a special congressional women’s committee in 1993, which they hoped would push politicians to pay more attention to women’s demands (Kwon, 1995, 54). Women legislators took up the idea in the National Assembly, arguing that to effectively address widespread gender inequalities, it was crucial to develop national assembly representatives with expertise in women’s policies (Park, 2000), and in June 1994, 61 women’s organizations presented a petition to Congress. Shortly after, women members along with 30 men from both the ruling and opposition parties, presented the “Special Congressional Committee on Women’s Affairs Establishment Bill”, which was quickly passed by both parties, with the proviso that the committee would be in existence until “gender equality is reached”[!] (Kwon, 1995, 54)¹⁰.

1.4 Kim Dae-jung (1997-2002)

The election of former dissident and opposition leader, Kim Dae-jung in December 1997 constituted an important shift in the relationship between the government and women's organizations. Initially at least, the progressive women's movement was very optimistic about Kim's presidency because of his party's track record for endorsing gender-related legislative reforms in the late 1980s and 1990s (e.g. Lee, 2000, Yoon, 2000) as well as his personal support for measures to promote gender equality. Due to widespread dissatisfaction with the MPA2's capacity to effectively coordinate women-related policies¹¹, both major women's umbrella organizations had called for the creation of a ministry of women's affairs during the presidential election campaign in 1997, and during his candidacy, Kim Dae-jung had pledged to create such a ministry. However, his election coincided with the country's worst economic crisis in decades. As a result, in the name of "smaller government" and widespread budget cuts, the MPA2 was abolished and replaced with a special presidential commission (Chang, 2000).

Formally, the Presidential Commission for Women's Affairs (PCWA) was weaker than the MPA2 as it lacked ministerial status and thus the Commission head was unable to participate fully in Cabinet meetings. However, while the Commission was established in part for reasons of political expediency, its design as a coordinating body directly under the President with linkages to smaller newly created policy units or "women's focal points" in strategic ministries was based on the rationale that women's concerns are unique and cross-cutting, and that what is needed is an effective coordinating mechanism¹² (Yoon, 2000). It was also strongly influenced by the principle of gender mainstreaming—introducing a gender perspective into all policy areas—which was popularized at the 1995 Beijing UN Conference for Women (Chang, 2000, Park, 2000).

Although the PCWA is generally recognized as having been more influential than the MPA2, from the outset of its establishment, women leaders as well as the Council of Commissioners itself, continued to lobby the government to establish a women's ministry (Chang, 2000). In response to these pressures, and mindful of the mid-term April 2000 congressional elections, Kim Dae-jung announced in his millennium New Year's speech that his administration would create a ministry to promote gender equality. Throughout 2000, public hearings were held to discuss the organizational form the ministry should take. Particularly controversial was whether the ministry should focus solely on gender-related issues or be combined with youth affairs – while the latter would result in considerably more resources it was finally concluded by PCWA staff and progressive women's leaders that a joint ministry would dilute a gendered approach to policy-making (Kang, 2000, Park, 2000).

The early part of the Kim administration also saw several other important changes in Korea's women's policy infrastructure, including the establishment of a women's secretariat in the Blue House, and the creation of a gender expert position in the ruling party. In order to provide the president with expert advice on gender-related issues, and to streamline relations between the Blue House and the governmental women's policy machinery, a women's secretariat under the Secretary for Culture and Education was established in 1998. While the secretariat's influence and autonomy is limited because it can only communicate indirectly with the President through the Secretary for Culture and Education, it plays an important public relations role, communicating with journalists and

women's organizations about current policy concerns. In addition, the secretariat's status has been strengthened by the appointment of five (out of 40) women to high positions within the Blue House, several of whom have women's activist backgrounds (Lee, 2000).

A "gender expert" position was created in 1998 in the ruling party (and soon after by the major opposition party, the GNP) to offer expert advice to the party's policy committee on the gendered implications of issues being discussed in Congress as well as to suggest gender-related reforms that the party ought to undertake. The gender expert is also responsible for liaising with women legislators and the SCCWA, as well as women-related bureaucratic agencies. Given such a broad mandate, however, with only a single expert and a research staff of three, the position's efficacy is understandably limited (Kim, 2000, Park 2000, Kang 2000).

In short, the history of WPMs in Korea has been characterized by hastily created bodies, that have not been subject to extensive public debate, e.g. through a formal commission of inquiry, nor close consultation with societal groups¹³. In the absence of an overarching policy framework, WPMs and measures to advance gender equality exist alongside policies informed by traditional notions of gender roles and a uniform (rather than diverse) family model.

They [the government] have mixed messages – women should go out and work in the labor force because that is you know what the time is demanding - 21st Century and information society but at the same time in terms of individual values or in terms of family relationships we are not yet prepared to meet these challenges....Even though the government has played a major part in these legislation, maybe they didn't fully understand what kind of impact it would have. When you look at this legislation – it has a lot of implications and would have a lot of impact. But they weren't very clear; they didn't do any cost benefit analyses. They were just setting up these basic framework and in a hurry (Park Young Ran, KWDI researcher, 2000).

This piecemeal approach to policy development may also be traced to the non-programmatic, regionalistic party system whereby parties react to demands from women's pressure groups to serve short-term gains rather than longer term substantive change.

2. Organizational structure

A second key variable--organizational structure of the political machinery--includes characteristics of the political machinery as well as the broader institutions of the state in which these machineries are embedded. In terms of the machinery itself, we need to consider 1) its institutional positioning (e.g. as a ministry, commission, etc), 2) resources (i.e. staff and funding), 3) public relations efforts, and 4) intra-bureaucratic linkages (e.g. the relative capacity to influence the agenda of other government bodies). Given that political power is always relative vis-à-vis other organizations and groups – it is also necessary to consider the broader set of political institutions in which the machinery is embedded. This 'balance of power' between government agencies and institutions is crucial, for example, in determining the number and type of "veto points" available to actors who are interested in defending the status quo against moves to

promote more egalitarian gender power relations. The broader institutional context can also help determine the type of political strategies open to civic groups to further their aims, i.e. whether they attempt to affect social change via political parties, connections with well-placed bureaucrats, the judiciary, lobbying legislators or direct social protest.

The discussion below will begin with a brief overview of the institutional positioning and resources of each of the principle women's political machineries. It will then consider three common weaknesses, i.e. WPMs' lack of capacity to implement their own policies, weak public relations efforts and sub-optimal intra-bureaucratic linkages.

2.1 Despite being under the auspices of the relatively low-ranking and poorly funded Ministry of Welfare and Social Affairs between 1983-8, the *KWDI* began with a surprisingly large staff of 164¹⁴, generous office and training facilities and a project-based budget (Kim, 2000). In 1988, it was moved to the Ministry of Political Affairs No. 2, where it could focus on a range of women's issue areas, e.g. women's human resources, prevention of violence against -women, women's political representation etc, rather than just women-related welfare concerns. After the MPA2 was replaced by the PCWA in 1998, it was moved again, but a year later due to pressures for smaller government and cuts in state-sponsored research institutes, spun off into a semi-autonomous, significantly smaller and only partially funded think-tank under the Social Sciences and Humanities Council in the Prime Minister's Office¹⁵ (Park, 2000).

The KWDI's legacy has been mixed. Although it has no power to enforce any of its policy proposals and has historically been viewed with skepticism by mainstream bureaucrats on the one hand, and women's NGOs on the other, the Institute has provided the bulk of the research used to draft the wide range of women-related legislation enacted over the last decade and a half (Byun, 2000, Kim, 2000). Moreover, its staff have also been active participants in various government taskforces and committees. However, the extent to which the KWDI has been able to take a proactive role in advancing gender equality has been limited by several structural factors: a) project-based funding which encourages short-term, one-off studies rather than longitudinal research, b) the need to focus on policy proposals which are politically feasible in the short-term and which will not threaten ongoing relations with informants in the bureaucracy (Park, 2000).

2.2 Located in the Prime Minister's Office, the *WPEC* was officially headed by the Prime Minister and two vice chairpersons (the ministers of economic planning and social welfare) and had a staff of 20 (later increased to 35 under Kim Young Sam) including ministers with women-related responsibilities and 10 civilian experts (KWDI, 2001). Most observers agree that under the Chun administration the Committee had a mere symbolic role, meeting only annually or biannually. In an effort to increase its efficacy, under Noh the Committee began presenting its findings to the President on a yearly basis and in 1994 under Kim Young Sam, annual meetings were held where all government ministries had to report on policies undertaken to improve women's status and participation (Kwon, 1995, 2000). These mechanisms helped to increase public officials' awareness of gender issues (e.g. Lee, 2001), but lacking any clear targets or guidelines, substantive improvements were hard to measure or enforce (Yoon, 2000).

2.3 Although the Noh administration tried to take credit for the establishment of a

women's ministry when it converted the *MPA2* into an agency responsible for women and family issues, the label "ministry" was seriously undermined by the fact that the Minister was only allowed to comment on women-related issues in Cabinet meetings and unable to independently propose legislation. In reality, with a tiny staff (just 20 staff in 1988, increasing to 40 by 1991) and very small budget it was a mini-ministry at best with very limited potential influence. Moreover, staff were primarily recruited from the Prime Minister's Office, and generally lacked any gender-sensitive training or connections with the progressive women's movement¹⁶ (Kim, 2000).

Nevertheless, during the *MPA2*'s nine years of existence an unprecedented high number of gender-related reforms were enacted¹⁷. The extent to which the Ministry should be credited with these achievements is of course debatable. Until 1995, legislative reforms were predominantly proposed by women legislators or civic organizations rather than originating from the bureaucracy (Cho, 2000). Moreover, the Ministry lacked a mandate to implement newly enacted legislation and was instead responsible for coordinating policy development and enforcement among other ministries. Because of its low status and resources, as well as insufficient political will on the part of both the Noh and Kim administrations, its efficacy was limited (although improved somewhat following the introduction of a "women's policy promotion task indicator" under Kwon in 1994) (Yoon, 2000). Lastly, although part of the Ministry's mandate was to improve societal awareness of gender issues, public awareness of e.g. family violence or the need to improve childcare facilities improved thanks to high profile demonstrations and petitions organizations by civic groups rather than through any public relations efforts of the Ministry (Nam, 2000).

2.4 As a special rather than a standing committee, the *SCCWA* is smaller than other Congressional committees¹⁸, has correspondingly fewer research staff and significantly more limited functions¹⁹. It is able to present opinion papers on women-related laws, and monitor and file reports on the extent to which bureaucratic women's policy agencies fulfill their assigned duties, but unable to deliberate on or suggest new bills and cannot participate fully in the National Assembly process (Lee, 2000). Under the Kim administration, the *SCCWA*'s role was rather passive, serving primarily as a discussion forum; however, under Kim Dae-jung, thanks in large part to the appointment of women with gender expertise and strong links to the women's movement to head the *SCCWA*'s research division and the committee itself, the committee now makes more activist recommendations on a wide range of issues with gendered implications, e.g. employment, environment, welfare, education (e.g. Park, 2000, Lee, 2000, Han, 2000).

2.5 The *PCWA*'s positioning under the President significantly limited its institutional positioning vis-à-vis regular ministries. Accordingly, although it was established as a coordinating body with hubs or so-called "women's focal points" in six women-related ministries, it did not have the institutional clout to effectively influence mainstream policy agendas. The Commission's authority was further weakened by a small staff of 51, and just six staff in each of the women's focal points (Shin, 2000, Chung, 2000). Despite a far-reaching mandate, i.e. liaising with the focal points²⁰ on specific policy issues, overseeing the implementation of the Five Year Master Plan on Women's Policies (1998-2002) as well as expanding cooperative ties with domestic women's groups (through

project-based funds) and international women's organizations, a dearth of staff and limited budget created a major gap between its de jure and de facto efficacy (e.g. Chang, 2000, Chong, 2000).

Nevertheless, unlike its predecessors, the passage of the 1999 Gender Discrimination Prevention and Relief Act, empowered the PCWA with the authority to investigate and judge cases of gender discrimination and sexual harassment. Whereas women's political machineries could previously only encourage companies and government agencies to follow anti-discrimination legislation, e.g. the Equal Employment Opportunities Act, the new Act provided for the establishment of a Gender Complaints Office, where victims of gender discrimination could file formal complaints (Yoon, 2000). Complaints were investigated by the office's staff and then discussed and adjudicated by the Council of Commissioners (see below). Although the "ruling" was not legally binding, the PCWA was able to negotiate with the offending party and to publish the results of its investigations in daily newspapers in cases of non-compliance (Chang, 2000).

To replace the WPEC, a 13 member Council of Commissioners comprised of seven civilian experts, the vice ministers of the six relevant ministries and Chairperson and General Secretary of the PCWA was also established. The Council differed from its predecessor in two important aspects: more active participation from civilian experts (who were more closely connected to NGOs than their predecessors) and more frequent meetings (monthly rather than annual or semi-annual). Charged with debating and approving the PCWA's policy initiatives, the Council had the right to revise or veto policy proposals, and provided a channel for greater civilian input into the policy process (Chang, 2000, Chung, 2000).

2.6 In January 2001, the *Ministry of Gender Equality (MOGE)* bill, which provided for a considerably expanded staff (101) and greater budget resources than had been anticipated, was finally passed. The new body has full ministerial status, can initiate legislation, and has also taken over responsibility for violence against women policies and programs that had been formerly dealt with by the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare²¹. Given just six months of operation it is, however, too early to evaluate the Ministry's efficacy to date.

2.7 Common weaknesses

Despite a gradual improvement in policy influence and relations with civil society, several common weaknesses of Korean WMPs can be identified. Until the establishment of the MOGE, Korean WPMs have all lacked the capacity to implement their own policies and have been designated instead as policy coordinators. While in theory such a structure mitigates against the marginalization of women's issues and facilitates a gender mainstreaming approach, because of the low status within the government and very limited resources, their coordinating abilities have been severely hampered. This weakness has been exacerbated by the general tendency of Korean laws to be vague in content and subsequently concretized/specified by the "implementation order" or "*sihaengryok*" which are drawn up by individual ministries. As a result, while WPMs have some say in the development of general legislation, their influence at the implementation stage is much less direct.

WPMs have also been plagued by relatively weak public relations efforts, i.e. citizens' knowledge of the existence and activities of these governmental organizations is very low (PCWA, 2000). Possible contributing factors include a dearth of resources, a lack of ministers and senior officials that have close contacts with civil society and a high public profile, a political culture that prioritizes backroom deals over public debate, as well as a tendency for the bureaucracy to remain aloof from civil society (e.g. Kim, 1998; Hahm and Plein, 1997; Lee and Darcy, 2000).

Third, while there are multiple WPMs in all branches of government—executive, bureaucracy, think tanks, parties, legislature—the coordination and personal networks among these offices, although improving over time, has been far from optimal. In the case of the KWDI, relations with women's agencies in the bureaucracy have been mixed. Although the KWDI provided the bulk of governmental research until 1997, with the growing importance of NGOs and university women's studies programs, it no longer enjoys a monopoly in the field and bureaucrats also consult regularly with academics and civil society leaders (Park, 2000). Similarly, the relationship between party women's bureaus and the KWDI was primarily limited to election season until the recent establishment of the gender expert office (Kim, 2000; Kwon, 2000). Even linkages between bureaucrats in WPMs and women legislators (including the SCCWA since 1994) have been distant and more recently characterized by tensions. In the late 1980s and early 1990s, the MPA played a reactive rather than proactive role, and legislative reforms were primarily initiated by women's civic groups in partnership with sympathetic legislators (Shin, 2000, Cho, 2000). Under the current administration, the PCWA and now MOGE have taken a more activist stance to policy development, but this has also caused some conflict of interests between PCWA senior officials and SCCWA, who viewed the former as overly demanding.

Finally, within the bureaucracy itself, the relationship between affiliated councils and ministerial women's focal points has not been as cooperative as formal appearances suggest. The relationship between WPMs central offices and the councils has tended to be more formal than substantive, with the WPMs central offices setting the agenda, and the councils tending to provide rubber-stamp approval (e.g. Shin, 2000, Chong, 2000). In the case of the central office's relationship with women's offices in other ministries, the relationship has been somewhat one-sided. While the PCWA called on individual ministries for policy information when needed, it provides few resources, whether financial or policy information to the women's focal points, who viewed the monthly meetings as chances to share notes and vent frustrations rather than as important substantive exchanges (Nam, 2000, Park, 2000, Cho, 2000, Lee, 2000).

Nevertheless, although in the past women's policy infrastructure could be described as a rather weakly coordinated amalgamation of organizations with frequently divided interests, with the appointment of increasing numbers of gender experts and former activists to these bodies and the greater ideological commitment on the part of the President and current ruling party, there is evidence that closer linkages are being forged. A good example can be seen in the Maternity Leave Law. Championed by the two main political parties, women's bureaucrats, women legislators, and the MOGE, and backed up by research from the KWDI, despite vigorous and well-organized opposition from employers associations and conservative legislators, the bill (albeit a somewhat weaker

version) was successfully enacted in July 2001.

2.8 The nature of the bureaucracy

A second major limitation concerns the nature of the Korean bureaucracy. Despite the transition to democracy, the bureaucracy remains traditional, Confucian and rule-bound, whereby promotions are still based primarily on seniority rather than merit (Oh, 1998). Its highly competitive entrance exam encourages conformity and rote-learning over creativity, and once appointed, bureaucrats are trained as generalists rather than specialists²² (Shin, 1999). Not surprisingly, this status quo-oriented bureaucracy has not provided a conducive environment for enacting radical and far-reaching policy reforms, which would be needed to reshape existing gender power relations. Although outside recruits from academia and civil society organizations have been accepted under Kim Young Sam and increasingly under Kim Dae-jung, for the most part these newcomers have not been well integrated with career bureaucrats and have often found themselves marginalized from the locus of decision-making power.

The bureaucracy is also largely male-dominated and despite a quota system introduced in 1998, women in the civil service's decision-making ranks (grade 1-5) are still very rare (about 5%) (NSO, 2000). Although the majority of staff in WPMs are women, their colleagues in other ministries are predominantly male, have little gender awareness and are seldom challenged to question their agenda-setting and decision-making criteria from a gendered perspective. Gender sensitive training programs have been incorporated into civil service education programs, but are non-examinable, and, moreover, few follow-up mechanisms are in place to see that the contents of these programs are actually put into practice (Lee, 2000).

Finally, while the relationship between the bureaucracy and presidency has become increasingly differentiated in the post-transitional period, the president still enjoys a dominant role compared to more advanced democracies (Hahn and Plein, 1997). Accordingly, whether or not a president prioritizes a particular issue, may have a significant influence on the status of the relevant government body and the resources available to it. While this can definitely enhance WPMs (as has been the case with the MOGE under Kim Dae-jung), it also renders these agencies vulnerable to presidential whims and turnover. For example, many women in the bureaucracy and civil society fear that if the current more conservative opposition party, the Grand National Party, wins the 2002 presidential elections, the MOGE may be dismantled or significantly weakened, particularly as Lee Hoi-Chang lacks Kim Dae-jung's personal interest in advancing gender equality (Yoon, 2001).

3. Relationship with civil society

A third key characteristic of WPMs to consider is whether these bodies provide formal and informal channels through which women's civic groups can influence the policy process, as well as the women's movement stance vis-à-vis the state. Research shows that a key determinant of the efficacy of women's policy machineries--both over time within the Korean case and across countries (e.g. Stetson and Mazur, 1995; Waylen, 2000)--is the degree to which machineries provide women's groups with access to the decision-making process as well as the resources devoted to supporting women's grassroots and NGO activities. The flipside of this involves activists' view of the state,

i.e. whether or not the state is seen as a potential avenue for improving women's status or as an instrument of male power that generally either ignores or co-opts demands for increased gender equality. The ability of women's groups to adopt a dual strategy – in which they place direct pressure on state actors from civil society combined with attempts to penetrate the state apparatus and affect change from within--is a key determinant of the efficacy of women's political machineries to promote social change (e.g. Alvarez, 1990, Waylen, 1997).

Whereas the relationship between the Korean state and women's organizations was openly antagonistic during the authoritarian period, since the transition to democracy the relationship between governmental women's machineries and women's civic groups has become increasingly conciliatory and cooperative²³. The state's definition of women's interests has evolved from an emphasis on protecting "marginalized women" and promoting women's social and economic participation in the name of national development in the 1980s and early 1990s, to a concern with advancing equal power relations between men and women and narrowing the gap between *de jure* and *de facto* gender equality in the late 1990s/ 2000s (Kim, 2001). At the same time, whereas the moderate, vocational-based umbrella women's group, the KNCW, has long been supportive of the government (regardless of the regime type or president), the progressive KWAU's stance vis-à-vis the state has undergone a significant shift from open opposition in the late 1980s to engagement with the state in the mid 1990s (Cho, 2000, Nam, 2000). Most recently, following the election of Kim Dae-jung, the KWAU's view of the state has emerged as a flawed but increasingly important arena for advancing social justice (especially in terms of anti discrimination legislation) and source of funding and resources (e.g. Nam, 2000, Yoon, 2000). Lastly, women's studies academics and cultural feminists have remained more skeptical and distant from the state throughout the 1990s. Nevertheless, their cooperation with the Kim Dae-jung administration has gradually increased, especially through participation in governmental committees (e.g. Chun, 2000, Chang, 2000).

I suggest that a useful way to conceptualize these shifting relations is as: 1) patron-client, 2) engagement with the state and 3) state/civil society partnership.

3.1 Patron-client relations

Under the Park and Chun regimes, the government's relationship with women's organizations was primarily one of patron-client. That is, in return for the KNCW's loyalty and cooperation with government women-related initiatives, e.g. the KNCW received both funding and a sympathetic ear from state actors regarding its demands for legislative reform, e.g. the creation of women's political machineries, revision of the Family Law act (Moon, 1998). Following the transition in 1987, the emergence of a vocal progressive women's movement meant the government had to be more solicitous of an increasingly diverse array of women's demands. To this end, the Noh administration strengthened women's policy machineries and appointed more women to decision-making ranks in the public and educational arenas (Kim, 2000). However, these measures were more symbolic than substantive and until 1995 the MPA2's role as a policy initiator was minimal (Kwon, 2000). Moreover, the government's approach to women-related programs remained top-down, with little effort devoted to consulting with progressive

women's organizations. Indeed, given an emphasis within the ministry on encouraging women's volunteer work (read unpaid community service), many outside observers viewed the early MPA2 as a mobilization mechanism for the politically precarious ruling party (e.g. Chang, 2000). Finally, with the exception of the second minister, former KWDI head Kim Jung Chun, the appointment of women ministers with few contacts with civil society and a general lack of gender awareness among ministry staff exacerbated the women's movement's distrust of the MPA2 (Shin, 2000).

3.2 Engagement with the state

The appointment of civilian president Kim Young Sam, and a shift in the general social movement frame from a *minjung* (people/ the masses) to a *shinmin* (citizens) ideology led to the initiation of closer state-civil society ties (Kim, 1998; Kim, 1997). As part of a broader plan to eliminate vestiges of authoritarian practices and build greater trust between the government and people, Kim's administration established a policy to provide project-based funding for NGOs in 1993. Although many women's groups initially rejected the plan, fearing that obligatory registration with a particular ministry would compromise their autonomy, gradually a recognition developed within the movement of the need to change tactics to suit the new political environment and to "engage with the state"²⁴ (Kim, 1998). In particular, despite fears that this change would lead to a bureaucratization of the movement, groups working with grassroots women emphasized that in order to appeal to ordinary women it was important for women's organizations to lose their radical anti-government image (Yoon, 2001). Moreover, although relatively limited, government funding provided a key organizational resource to enhance the professionalism of the movement, and facilitated the receipt of funds from international foundations and groups.

State-civil society relations were also improved through the emergence of new issue areas, preparations for the 1995 Beijing Conference and Kim's appointment of widely respected women leaders to high decision-making positions (KWAU, 1998). In terms of specific policy issues, the sexual and family violence legislative reform process provided an opportunity for greater cooperation between the government and NGOs as bureaucrats frequently sought expertise from women's groups who were directly involved in the field (Lee, 2000, Shin, 2000). Second, as in many other developing world countries, the lead up to the Beijing Conference not only provided a major motivating force for government and civil society groups to meet on a more regular basis to discuss report requirements but also enhanced the government's receptivity to women's demands. For example, as discussed above the Special Congressional Committee for Women's Affairs which women's groups had campaigned for to increase legislators awareness of women's issues was quickly passed in July 1994 and similarly, a specific section of the government's ambitious globalization plan was devoted to women's policy issues. Closer ties with the Kim administration were also facilitated through the appointment as MPA2 minister of several figures who were well respected by the women's movement, i.e. former dissident and KWDI vice head, Kwon Young Ja as Minister of the MPA2 (1993-5) as well as NGO leader Lee Yong Sook (1997) (Yoon, 2000).

Despite these advances, however, many progressive women activists remained skeptical of Kim's genuine commitment to promoting women's rights and believed he

was more concerned with his own public image than achieving substantive gender equality (Chun, 2000, Cho, 2000). One key example cited is the top-down approach adopted to pass the Basic Women's Development Act immediately after the Beijing Conference. Having announced its intention to develop a basic framework law for women's policies in October 1995, the MPA2 hastily drew up a draft and despite many progressive women's organizations initial protests, the ruling party rushed the "Women's Basic Development Act" through Congress by year-end (e.g. Shin, 2000). As a result, the Act's contents were very general and lacked sufficient concrete detail to really serve as an effective tool through which women's groups could hold the government accountable for specific policy outcomes (Yoon, 2000).

3.3 "State/ civil society-partnership"

Reflecting the importance of the president in Korean politics, the election of Kim Dae-jung in December 1997 represented a watershed in terms of state-civil society relations in general (Oh, 1999) and with the women's movement in particular. Voted in with only a 40% plurality and lacking the support of the powerful business community, the Kim administration placed a heavy emphasis on its "partnership with civil society", recruiting many former activists into key positions within the ruling party, the bureaucracy and as presidential advisors (Lee, 2000). Women's groups were encouraged by this new political environment and an unprecedented number of former activists chose to enter governmental women's agencies and to work for change from within the state. Although there was less support for women leaders to enter political parties, which were still perceived as being run by powerful conservative party factions, NGO circles generally viewed the emergence of these "femocrats" quite positively (Na, 2000).

In addition to having more of "their own" within government ranks, NGOs noted a marked change in the degree to which government officers sought their advice on a wide variety of issues, both formally through the Council of Commissioners and informally (Yoon, 2000). Simultaneously, however, whereas Korean women's policy machineries had historically reacted to women's policy demands, given Kim's personal endorsement of gender equality measures, the state became increasingly proactive in terms of legislative reform and policy development. The most significant example is that of the 1999 Gender Discrimination Prevention and Relief Act, which the PCWA head, Yoon Hoo Jong, along with women legislators, campaigned actively to enact. Providing the PCWA with a more concrete mandate—i.e. official jurisdiction to handle and adjudicate cases of gender discrimination—as well as some level of enforcement power, PCWA backers of the law saw it as a mechanism to capitalize on Kim Dae-jung's rhetorical commitment to equalizing gender relations and to compensate in part for the Commission's disappointing organizational status (Yoon, 2000).

Another example of closer civil society-government relations involves the KWDI. Whereas the KWDI was historically viewed as a mere arm of the government by the progressive women's movement, during Kim Dae-jung's tenure, the number of researchers recruited because of their specific expertise in gender issues has increased, as has the rate of KWDI researchers' participation in women's NGO committees (e.g. Kim, 2000).

4. Conclusion

The limited success of Korea's women's policy infrastructure can be seen as reflective of Korea's limited democratic deepening and policy-making in general. First, on account of Korea's non-programmatic regionalistic political party system, parties have not served as conduits to aggregate competing public interests. Instead gender policy has been significantly influenced by the degree and source of presidential commitment, as well as Confucian, capitalist development understandings of the state.

Second, because WPMs have been established in a piecemeal fashion without a coherent policy framework, the ideological underpinnings of these multiple agencies are often contradictory and the linkages between policy officers rather weak. This has proven problematic, given that until the establishment of MOGE, women's bodies lacked implementation powers and were first and foremost policy coordinators. Low staffing and budgetary resources as well as weak public relations efforts further hindered institutional capacity.

Lastly, although there has been a gradual improvement in terms of elites' political will and the institutional structure of women's policy agencies since the 1980s, the most dramatic change can be seen in the relationship between WPMs and women's civil society organizations. A major reason for the increased efficacy of WPMs in the late 1990s lies in the closer ties forged with women's groups and in particular the progressive and relatively cohesive umbrella organization, the KWAU. Not only are women's voices being increasingly articulated within state apparatuses through the appointment of "femocrats", but activist and grassroots organizations are also becoming increasingly confident in the state's capacity to improve women's welfare and address gender inequalities. In this regard, the Korean case provides a telling example of the importance of pursuing a dual state-civil society strategy to improve gender power relations.

List of interviewees in Women's Political Machineries conducted between Sept -Dec 2000

Political Parties: Kang Hyun Hee, Gender Expert, GNP; You Sung Hee, Women's Bureau Director, MDP; Kim Young Ae, Former Women's Bureau, MDP; Kim Young Hee, Gender Expert, MDP; Kwon Hyang Yop, Women's Bureau, MDP; Lee Hwa Young, Women's Bureau Director, United Liberal Democrats;

MPA2: Park Woo Kwon, Director General, Policy Division; Hwang In Ja, Human Resources; Lee Ki Soon, Policy Division; Kwon Jung Ja, Minister/ Deputy Head, MPA2/ KWDI; Kim Young Chun, Minister/Head of KWDI

PCWA: Ha Young Sook, Cooperation and Liaison Division; PCWA/ WPEC, Kang Ki Won, Commission Head/ civilian expert; Chang Song Ja, Gender Discrimination Complaints Bureau Head; Na Young Hee, Policy Division; Chong Kang Ja, Council of Commissioners, civilian expert; Yoon Hoo Jong, Commission Head; Chang Pil Wha, Council of Commissioners, civilian expert;

Women's Focal Points: Mok So Young, Ministry of Health and Social Welfare; Yang In Sook, Ministry of Health and Social Welfare; Soh Myung Sun, Ministry of Health and Social Welfare; Hwang In Ja, Ministry of Government and Home Affairs; Nam Sung Hee, Ministry of Education, Lee Ok, Ministry of Justice; Cho Hae Jin, Ministry of Justice; Park Song Ja, Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry; Park Song Tae, Ministry of Labor;

KWDI: Kim Young Hee, Social/Political Division; Kim Elim, Social/Political Division; Kim KyungHee, Social/Political Division; Park Young Ran, Welfare Division; Byun Wha Sun, Law Division, SCCWA/ MOGE; Han Myung Sook, MDP legislator, Minister; Lee Yon Sook, GNP legislator, SSCWA head;

Blue House: Secretariat of Women's Affairs, Lee Sung Hee, Head of Women's Affairs Secretariat

Local Government: Noh Mi Hye, Seoul, Women's Bureau Head; Lee Jae-Chun, Chonju City, Counsellor; Chung Jung Ai, Chongju Provincial Govt, Women's Bureau Head

Bibliography

- Alvarez, S. E. (1990). *Engendering Democracy in Brazil: Women's Movements in Transition Politics*. Princeton, New Jersey, Princeton University Press.
- Asian Center for Women's Studies (1997). *Korean Culture Through Women's Eyes*. Ewha Women's University, Seoul.
- Basu, A. (1997). "The Many Faces of Asian Feminism" *Asian Woman* 5 (Fall).
- Bedeski, R. E. (1994). *The Transformation of South Korea: Reform and Reconstitution in the Sixth Republic under Roh Tae Woo, 1987-1992*. London and New York. Routledge.
- Callahan, W. (1998). "Comparing the Discourse of Popular Politics in Korea and China: from Civil Society to Social Movements" *Korea Journal* (Spring).
- Chang, K. -S. (1993). "The Confucian Family Instead of the Welfare State? Reform and Peasant Welfare in Post-Mao China." *Asian Perspective* 17(3, Spring).
- Chang, K. -S. (1997). "Has the role structure really changed between husband and wife in Korea?" *Korea Journal of Population and Development* 26(1, July).
- Chang, K. -S. (1997). "The neo-Confucian right and family politics in South Korea: the nuclear family as an ideological construct." *Economy and Society* 26 (1/ February).
- Chang, K. -S. (1997). "Modernity through the Family: Familial Foundations of Korean Society." *International Review of Sociology* 7(1).
- Cho, H. (1997). "The Historical Origin of Civil Society." *Korea Journal* (Summer).
- Cho, H. and Pil-wha Chang (eds). (1994). *Gender Division of Labor (in) Korea*. Seoul, Korea Women's Institute Series, Ewha Women's University Press.
- Cho, H. (1994). "The 'Woman Question' in the Minok-Minju Movement." *Gender Division of Labor (in) Korea*. Cho. H. and Chang Pil-wha. Seoul, Korea Women's University Press.
- Cho, S. -K. (1994). *The Limits and Possibilities of the Women's Movement in Korea*. *Gender Division of Labor (in) Korea*. Cho H. and Chang Pil-wha. Seoul, Korea Women's University Press.
- Cho, U. (1996). "Female Labor in Korea: Economically Active but not Empowered." *Asian Women* 2 (Spring).
- Cho, U. (1999). *Towards Gender Equality? Rethinking Women, the Family and the State in Korean Industrialization. The World Community in Post-Industrial Society*. Seoul, Christian Academy and Wooseok Publishing Co. 1.
- Choi, S. (1997). "The Economic and Political Representation of Women in Advanced Countries and Korea." *Asian Women (Research Center for Asian Women, The Sookmyung Women's University Press.)* 5(Fall 1997).
- Chu, Y. (1999). "Democracy and Authority in Korea: The Cultural Dimension in Korean Politics by Geir Helgesen." *Journal of Contemporary Asia* 29(4).
- Chun, K. O. (1996). "Women's Political Empowerment in Korea: Legitimacy and Prospects." *Asian Women* 2(Spring).

- Chung, C. (1997). "Social Movement Organizations and the June Uprising." *Korea Journal*(Spring).
- Chung, H. -b. (1997). "Together and Separately: "The New Women's Movement" after the 1980s in South Korea." *Asian Women* (Research Center for Asian Women, The Sookmyung Women's University Press.) 5(Fall).
- Committee for Globalization Policy, Office of the P. M., Republic of Korea (1998). *Segyehwa: The Globalization Policy of Korea*. Seoul.
- Cotton, J., 1993. *Politics and Policy in the New Korean State: From Roh Tae-Woo to Kim Young Sam*. New York, St. Martin's Press.
- Craske, N. (1999). *Women and Politics in Latin America*. New Brunswick, New Jersey. Rutgers University Press.
- Diamond, L. and Marc E Plattner (eds) (1998). *Democracy in East Asia*. The John Hopkins University Press, Maryland.
- Eckert, C. J., Ki-baik Lee, Young Ick Lew, Michael Robinson, and Edward W. Wagner (1990). *Korea Old and New: A History*. Harvard, Ilchotak, Publishers for Korea Institute. Harvard University.
- Gelb, J. ed. (1994). *Women of Korea and Japan: Continuity and Change*. Philadelphia, Temple University Press.
- Government of Republic of Korea (1997). *An Overview of Legislation in the Republic of Korea*. Volume 17
- Haggard, S. and D. K. (1997). *Kim Young Sam Presidency in Comparative Perspective. Democratization and Globalization in Korea: Assessments and Prospects*, Seoul.
- Hahm, C. (1997). *Democratic Reforms in Korea: Theory and Practice*.
- Hahm, S. D. and Larry C Plein (1997). *After Development: the Transformation of the Korean Presidency and Bureaucracy*. Washington DC, Georgetown University Press.
- Han, S. J. (1997). "The Public Sphere and Democracy in Korea: A Debate on Civil Society." *Korea Journal* (Winter).
- Hegelsen, G. (1998). *Democracy and Authority in Korea: The Cultural Dimension in Korean Politics*. Surrey, Curzon Press.
- Helgeson, G. and S. R. T. (1995). *Measuring Political Attitudes in East Asia: The Case of South Korean Democratization*, Nordic Institute of Asian Studies.
- Hoon, T. P.(1992). *The Decline of Mass Democracy in South Korea: Personalized Politics, State Nationalism, Political Regionalism and Mass Democracy*.
- Hwang, K. K. (1996). "South Korea's Bureaucracy and the Informal Politics of Economic Development." *Asian Survey* XXXVI (3, March).
- Jee, J. (1997). "Class Structure and Class Consciousness in South Korea" *Journal of Contemporary Asia* 27(2).
- Jones, C. (1993). *The Pacific Challenge: Confucian Welfare States. New Perspectives on the welfare state in Europe*. C. Jones. London and New York, Routledge.
- KIHSA(1992). *Impact of Fertility Decline on Population Policies and Programme Strategies*, Korea Institute for Health and Social Affairs.
- Kim, E. (1998). *Dangerous Women: Gender and Korean Nationalism*. New York and London, Routledge.
- Kim, H. M. (1995). *Labor, Politics, and the Women Subject in Contemporary Korea*. Department of Anthropology, University of Washington.
- Kim, H. M. (1999), *Rational Actors, Institutional Choices and Democracy in Korea*. Glasgow, Center for the Study of Public Policy, University of Strathclyde.
- Kim, H. M. (1999?), *Feminist Reflections on Women's Labor rights in Contemporary Korea*. Seoul, Asian Center for Women's Studies, Ewha Woman's University.

- Kim, K. (1998). *Gender Politics in South Korea: The Contemporary Women's Movement and Gender Policies, 1980-1996*, Department of Sociology. Madison, University of Wisconsin-Madison.
- Kim, K. W. (1997). *Democratization and Institutional Reforms Under Kim Young Sam. Democratization and Globalization in Korea: Assessments and Prospects*, Seoul, Korea.
- Kim, O. Y. (1995). "Korean Women Today and Toward 2000." *Asian Women* (Research Center for Asian Women, The Sookmyung Women's University Press).
- Kim, S. (1997). "State and Civil Society in South Korea's Democratic Consolidation: Is the Battle Really Over?" *Asian Survey* XXXVII (12, December).
- Kim, S. (1998). "Civil Society and Democratization in South Korea." *Korea Journal* (Summer) Korean Women's Association United (1998). Korean Shadow Report. Seoul, KWAU, Korea.
- Korean Women's Development Institute (1992). *Statute Book on Korean Women*, Seoul, KWDI.
- Kwon, H. -J.(1999). *The Welfare State in Korea: The Politics of Legitimation*. Oxford, St. Anthony's College.
- Kwon, S. -W. (1997). *Economic Justice and Social Welfare: New Principles of Economic Policy. Democratization and Globalization in Korea: Assessments and Prospects*, Seoul, Korea.
- Lee, A. -R. (1996). "Consistency of change in women's politicization in South Korea." *Policy Studies Journal* 24 (2, Summer).
- Lee, H. K. (1994). *Gender Division of Labor and the Authoritarian Developmental State: Korean Experience. Gender Division of Labor in Korea*. C. H. a. C. Pil-Wha. Seoul, Ewha Womans University Press.
- Lee, H.J (1997). "Women's Movements in Korea" *Asian Women* (Research Center for Asian Women, The Sookmyung Women's University Press) 5(Fall, 1997).
- Mainwaring, S. (1990). "Party Systems in the Third Wave." *Journal of Democracy* 9(3, July). Ministry of Health and Social Affairs, ROK. *Historical Development of Social Welfare Policy*. Seoul.
- Mo. J. (1996). "Political learning and Democratic Consolidation." *Comparative Political Studies* 29 (3, June).
- Moon, S. (1998). *Begetting the Nation: The Androcentric Discourse of National History and Tradition in South Korea. Dangerous Women: Gender and Korean Nationalism*. E. H. K. a. C. Choi. New York and London, Routledge.
- Nam, J. -L. (1995). "Reforming Economic allocations in the Family: The women's Movement and the Role of the State in South Korea." *Women's Studies International Forum* 18(2).
- National Statistical Office, R. o. K.(1998). *Social Indicators in Korea, 1998*. Seoul, Korea, National Statistical Office, Republic of Korea.
- Oh, H. -R. (1997). "Activities of Women's Organizations in Korea: focusing on the Activities of the Korean National Council of Women since the 1980s." *Asian Women* 5(Fall).
- Oh, J. K. (1999). *Korean Politics: The Quest for Democratization and Economic Development*. Ithaca and London, Cornell University Press.
- Park, I. H (1995). "Confucianism and the Korean Family" *Journal of Comparative Family Studies* 26(1).
- Park, K. -A.(1999). "Political Representation and South Korean Women." *The Journal of Asian Studies* 58(2, May).
- Park, S. -C., Sang-hee Park, Sung-guen Choi, Yang-suk Cheon (1992). *A Survey on the Korean People's Attitude Towards Law: How can the principles of rule of law be defined in*

Korean society? Seoul, PCWA The 1st Basic Plan on Women's Policy. 2000

Randall, V. and Waylen, G. (eds) (1998). *Gender politics and the state*. London and New York, Routledge.

Rose, R., Doh C. Shin and Neil Munro (1988). *Tension between the Democratic Ideal and Reality: The Korean Example*. Glasgow, Center for the Study of Public Policy. University of Strathclyde.

Shin, D. C. (1998). *The Evolution of Korean Support for Democracy During the Kim Young Sam Government*. Glasgow, Center for the Study of Public Policy, University of Strathclyde.

Shin, D. C. (1997). "The Democratization of Legislative Politics in Korea." *Korea Journal*(Winter).

Shin, D. H. (1999). *Mass Politics and Culture in Democratizing Korea*.

Soh, C. S. (1993). "Compartmentalized Gender Schema: A Model of Changing Male-Female Relations in Korean Society." *Korea Journal*(Winter).

Soh, C. S. (1994). *Women in Korean Politics*. Boulder, Westview Press.

Sohn, B. -S.(1995). *Women's Political Engagement and Participation in the Republic of Korea*. *Women and Politics Worldwide*. B. J. N. and N. Chowdhury.

Sohn, S. (1996). "Fifty Years of Development in Korean Women's Status." *Asian Women* 3 (Winter).

Steinberg, D. L.(1997). "Civil Society and Human Rights in Korea: On Contemporary and Classical Orthodoxy and Ideology." *Korea Journal* (Autumn).

Stetson and Mazur (1995). *Comparative State Feminism*. Sage Publications.

The Presidential Commission on Women's Affairs, ROK (1998). *Prevention of Domestic Violence and Victim Protection Act*. Seoul.

UNDP (1997). *Human Development Report 1997*. New York, Oxford, Oxford University Press for the United Nations Development Programme.

Wade, L.L.a. J. W. S. (1996). "Women, Education and Political Volitions in the South Korean Mass Public." *Comparative Political Studies* 29(1, February).

Waylen, G. (1998). *Gender and Democratic Consolidation: A Comparison of Argentina, Chile and Peru*. Sheffield, Dept of Politics, University of Sheffield.

Waylen, G. (1994). "Women and Democratization: Conceptualizing Gender Relations in Transition Politics." *World Politics* 46(3, April).

Waylen, G. (1996). *Gender in Third World Politics*. Boulder, Lynne Rienner Publishers.

WEDO (1999). *Risks, Rights and Reforms: A 50-country survey assessing government actions five years after the International conference on Population and Development* Women's Environment Development Organization.

Woo-Cumings, M. (1995). *The Korean Bureaucratic State: Historical Legacies and comparative Perspectives*.

Yoon, D. -K. (1990). *Law and Political Authority in South Korea*. Seoul, Boulder, Kyungnam University Press; Westview Press.

Yoon, H. -J. (1988). Statement by Dr. Yoon, Hoo-Jung, Chairperson of the Presidential Commission on Women's Affairs of the Republic of Korea at the 19th Session of the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women, Republic of Korea, Permanent Mission to the United Nations.

Yoon, S. (1996). "South Korea's Kim Young Sam Government." *Asian Survey* XXXVI (5, May).

¹ The "Third Wave" is a term first used by Samuel Huntington to describe the trend towards democracy in developing countries that began with Southern Europe in the 1970s.

² Even after the restructuring, however, some within the KWDI maintain that because of its excellent national information publication dissemination system which reaches both central and local government public officers, Korean national machinery for women—including the KWDI, PCWA and the six women’s focal points-- is much better coordinated than its Asian counterparts. Senior Researcher, Byun Wha Son, who conducted a comparative study on the WPMs of Japan and Korea believes that the combination of a research institute, policy development agency and diverse policy implementation agencies in Korea have helped to ensure that Korean officials are more aware of gender equality concepts and the need for policy reforms than their Japanese counterparts. Lacking an equivalent research institute, those involved in women and family-related government agencies in Japan are often unaware of basic women’s concerns as well as the availability of relevant data (2000).

³ Although Stetson and Mazur are primarily comparing women’s political machinery across countries, this paper is concerned with changes across both administrations and regime types within the same country.

⁴ A president’s decision to endorse the establishment of a governmental body devoted to women’s issues may fall into one or a combination of four broad categories, including advancing a leader’s political legitimacy, domestic pressure (especially from lobbying groups), international pressure (e.g. from the UN or ILO) and commitment to improving women’s status and gender equality.

⁵ The Korean government’s legitimacy reached its nadir in the 1979-81 period with the combined assassination of Park, the Kwangju massacre and economic crisis, which had alienated the regime’s traditional backers (e.g. large business conglomerates known as ‘chaebol’).

⁶ The WPEC’s initial purpose was to prepare Korea for entry into CEDAW, but subsequently took on a more permanent policy monitoring role.

⁷ Noh’s administration placed considerable emphasis on symbolic changes, especially women “firsts” in previously male exclusive arenas of the public sector. For example, in response to women’s circles’ demands, the government made a commitment to appoint women as Minister of the MPA2. However, these appointments have been of mixed efficacy; while some appointees came from Women’s Studies in the academy or from the KWDI, other ministers selected had few ties with women movement circles or professional experience in women-related policy areas (Kim, 2000; Kwon, 2000).

⁸ Focusing primarily on collective social and economic rights (rather than individual human or political rights), the policy goals included the provision of better childcare and maternal services, improving women’s employment status in the public and private sectors, and expanding societal awareness of gender issues through various mass media and information networks.

⁹ Although activists initially paid little attention to this Act, increasingly over time, it is serving as an important tool to push for policy changes, especially in the area of gender mainstreaming (Yoon, 2001).

¹⁰ The timing of the establishment of the SCCWA did not go unnoticed by critics of the government; given that the Beijing Women’s Conference was to be held the following year, the Committee was seen as another opportunity for the government to showcase its efforts to advance gender equality without a major commitment of resources (Cho, 2000).

¹¹ It should be noted here that the two major women’s umbrella groups, the KWAU and the KNCW were not united in this regard. That is, the KWAU was very critical of the MPA2 as were progressive academics e.g. Chang Pilwha. However, former members of the MPA2 and the KNCW who had close ties to the ruling party were adamant that the older organization was better than its replacement, the PCWA, e.g. Lee, 2000, Kwon, 2000). In particular, supporters of the MPA2 called for a strengthening of the existing machinery rather than the creation of a completely new structure.

¹² At the end of 1997 when the ruling party was debating whether to establish a women’s ministry or special presidential commission, it was suggested that Korea follow the decentralized Philippines WPM model reputed to be among the most effective in Asia (Na Yong Hee, 2000). Aspects of the Canadian and German models where women’s policy units are located at each local government level were also borrowed (Byun Wha Son, 2000).

¹³ For example, Stetson and Mazur (1995) emphasize the importance of commissions of inquiry in Canada in the establishment process of women's machineries and the raising of public awareness. In the New Zealand case, Du Plessis et al. (1992) stress the importance of the consultation process with civilian experts in contrast to the Korean case where the decision-making process regarding WPMs' organizational configurations have been largely carried out behind closed doors.

¹⁴ Moreover, while the ruling party and Ministry of Home Affairs initially tried to use the institute as a "dumping ground for surplus personnel", the first head of the KWDI and former founder of the Ewha Womans University Women's Studies program, Kim Young Chun, lobbied hard to ensure that the Institute would be able to recruit well-educated researchers and give preferential treatment to women.

¹⁵ This restructuring of the KWDI to focus primarily on research activities was partially in response to demands from NGO circles to have more direct involvement with government projects as implementing agencies. There were also significant staff cutbacks (to 91) and a reduction in government funding to just 70% of its total budget. Moreover, under the 1999 "Act on the Establishment, Management and Promotion of Government Sponsored Research Institutes", the KWDI was transferred to the Korea Council of Humanities and Social Research under the Office of the Prime Minister. While this gave the organization greater autonomy, it also means that it is faced with increasing competition (both in terms of prestige and funding) from other government bodies and women's NGOs, which want to have their own voice and research to support their action agenda (e.g. KWDI, 2001).

¹⁶ While the minister was a woman, the other senior decision-making staff were predominantly male and conservative (Lee, 2001).

¹⁷ According to a KWDI review of all gender related legislation and amendments, 100 out of a total of 287 reforms that were enacted in the 20th Century, took place under the MPA2 (KWDI, 2001, viii).

¹⁸ The make-up of the Committee is based on the proportion of seats each party holds in the National Assembly. However, in most cases committee discussions have been divided along gender rather than party lines. Almost all women legislators participate in the SCCWA, but until the April 2000 congressional election there were so few women that they did not even constitute half of the total number of committee members. Moreover, on a practical level, committee members tend to prioritize their participation in the more powerful standing committees and therefore attendance levels are often poor (Park, 2000).

¹⁹ All standing committees are linked to a corresponding ministry but as the MPA2 did not have full ministerial status, only a special committee could be established to deal with women's affairs (Park, 2000).

²⁰ In response to demands from women's organizations, women's focal points were established in six ministries: Labor, Health and Social Welfare, Justice, Education, Agriculture and Fisheries and Government and Home Affairs. With the exception of the larger Ministry of Labor women's policy office, each focal point had six staff and was responsible for developing and coordinating the implementation of women-related policies throughout their specific ministries. In order to increase the level of expertise and women's organizations' confidence in the PCWA, a number of outside recruitments were made to the Commission and the focal points, primarily academics, women activists and women lawyers.

²¹ The Council of Commissioners was renamed as the Committee of Gender Equality Promotion but essentially retained the same functions, as did the six women's focal points.

²² Typically, bureaucrats are rotated from department to department every two or three years, in order to minimize corruption opportunities

²³ It should be pointed out that this sentiment is not necessarily shared at the local/ provincial levels where local women's chapters still feel excluded from the locus of decision-making power (e.g. Kim, 2000).

²⁴ "We all had to accept the need to transform our movement from an activists' hit-task-force into a mass organization where ordinary people could participate" (KWAU representative quoted in Kim, 1998, 210).