



South Korean Democracy: Legacy of the Gwangju Uprising (New Political Science)

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This new book offers a retrospective appraisal of the Gwangju Uprising by academics, activists and artists from Gwangju, Korea.

In 1980, South Koreans took to the streets to demand democracy. When the military threatened brutal suppression of the popular movement, only in Gwangju did people refuse to submit. After horrific bloodshed, the citizens of Gwangju drove the military out of the city and held their liberated space for a week. As a "beautiful community" emerged, newspapers were published, hundreds of thousands of people congregated in popular assemblies, and the city's life gave new meaning to democracy.

Although crushed by overwhelming military force, Gwangju's example inspired the eventual overthrow of the military dictatorship and ushered in a new democratic wave in East Asia. Providing a detailed analysis of the events of the Gwangju uprising, this new volume traces the birth of South Korean democracy in Gwangju's stubborn refusal to accept life without freedom. The book also focuses on the socio-economic background, the role of women in the uprising, issues of collective identity and the international significance of the revolt.

Scholars and researchers of South Asian politics, social movements, history, democracy and development studies will find this volume to be of keen interest.

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About the Author

Georgy Katsiaficas is Professor of Humanities and Social Sciences at Wentworth Institute of Technology in Boston, Massachusetts, USA.

Na Kahn-chaе is Professor of Sociology at Chonnam National University, Gwangju, Korea.

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