POLITICAL SYSTEMS AND GENDER

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INTRODUCTION

Two central questions have dominated the literature on regime type and gender: does the political system matter in promoting gender equality, and if so, how? This chapter explores the debates on these topics, first by looking at general cross-national studies and then by examining more closely the patterns found in democracies, authoritarian regimes, socialist states, and hybrid regimes with respect to gender equality. The chapter takes a look at the impact of transitions to democracy on gender equality and discusses new directions for research in the area of political systems and women's status. It also briefly compares various political formations within regime types and their impacts on gender policy and outcomes, contrasting, for example, better-off welfare states with poor welfare states; postcolonial countries by former colonizers; established democracies with emerging or newer democracies; and socialist with postsocialist countries.

Cross-national research has produced varying findings on the importance of political systems, depending on the measures and methodologies employed. One of the most studied questions with respect to regime type has been in relation to women's political representation in national legislatures. However, this bias in the literature may have limited a fuller understanding of the relationship between regime type and women's status, which needs to be studied by looking over time at a combination of factors that include first and foremost gender inequalities across a wide range of outcomes beyond formal representation, such as in economic, social welfare, and cultural arenas as well as in

a variety of political arenas. In addition, one also needs to include an understanding of the attitudes toward gender equality; gender policies adopted by governments; extent of women's rights activism to bring about change; and the broader international environment of gender norms and institutional changes in the adoption of treaties and conventions. However, policies, attitudes, activism, even international pressures—while important—do not tell us enough about outcomes for equality. Negative cultural attitudes toward gender equality, for example, can be circumvented by policies, such as the use of parliamentary reserved seats for women. Policies can be diluted or not implemented. Women's movements and international pressures can be ignored and counter-movements can undermine their efforts. Moreover, even the adoption of policies does not tell us enough about how they are framed and whether women's interests and welfare are at the core of the intervention. Thus, gender equality outcomes are key to any comparison of regimes.

By introducing a broader range of measures of gender equality beyond women's representation in parliaments, the relationship between regime type and women's status becomes clearer. This is because representation of women in legislatures cannot be taken as a sole measure of women's advancement since so many nondemocratic countries have introduced quotas to improve women's representation in parliaments without always adopting other more far-reaching policies (see also the chapter by Mona Lena Krook and Leslie Schwindt-Bayer in this volume). They have adopted quotas for reasons that range from conformity to changing international norms; response to institutional pressures from the United Nations (UN) system, Inter-Parliamentary Union, and other regional bodies; and as a result of lobbying by women's movements (Tripp and Kang 2008). Socialist countries in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union had quotas as part of their ethos of equality within a generally undemocratic order. Quotas may also serve symbolic purposes for the state or signal a modernist stance of the establishment or ruling party in the face of a populist Islamicist challenge. In other cases, quotas have been used to obtain women's votes, to create new patronage networks, or to cultivate national legitimacy on a world stage. Because quotas are not always introduced with the goal of promoting gender equality, the popular measure of women's representation in parliaments provides only a partial measure of women's overall status.

For this reason, some cross sectional studies have found an inverse relationship between women's representation and democracy (Paxton 1997; Kunovich and Paxton 2005; Tripp and Kang 2008), while some earlier studies by Kenworthy and Malami (1999) and Reynolds (1999) did not find any correlation. Most recently, Paxton, Hughes, and Painter (2012) found in a longitudinal study that democracy does not influence *levels* of women's political representation at the start of political liberalization, but it does affect the *growth* of women's representation over time by creating conditions under which women can mobilize to improve their status by increasing representation. They found that the growth in civil liberties, in particular, results in the growth of female

legislative representation, suggesting that political opening allows for greater mobilization of women for representation. Tripp and Hughes (2010) were able to replicate these findings in a more detailed longitudinal study of women's legislative representation in Africa, where the women's movement has played an especially important role in bringing about gender reforms after the 1990s, when political liberalization took hold across the continent.

Htun and Weldon (2010) seek to explain global variation in gender equality policies to explain how and why regime type matters. They find that the priorities, strategies, and effectiveness of advocates and opponents of advancing women's rights are influenced by state capacity, policy legacies, international vulnerability, and the degree of democracy. They find considerable variability in policies adopted and found that regime type was not always an automatic predictor of support for, or opposition to, particular reforms. Variation depended on (1) whether the policies in question were "status policies" that challenged practices and policies that kept women in a subordinate position (e.g., policies and laws regarding the family, violence against women, reproductive freedoms, and gender quotas), (2) class-based policies that targeted women's position in the sexual division of labor (e.g., maternity or paternal leave and child care), and (3) policies that challenged religious, traditional, or customary institutions. Their study found that democratic countries had more developed civil societies, which allowed women's organizations to have greater influence, whereas authoritarian regimes tended to suppress civil society. At the same time, democracy also empowered religious institutions and other institutions resistant to change.

Research in the area of attitudes has sought to explain why regime type matters. Inglehart and Norris (2003) find that attitudes toward women's leadership are more egalitarian in democracies. Examining seventy countries that account for 80 percent of the world population, Inglehart, Norris, and Welzel (2002, 322) find that democracies create citizens who are more supportive of gender equality. But the relationship is mediated by culture and the changes in attitudes that accompany democratization. While in the past, the existence of democratic institutions preceded the expansion of citizenship rights (like granting women the right to vote), support for gender equality today is a consequence of democratization, and at the same time it is fostering greater democracy and support for democratic institutions. Modernization, economic development, and the emergence of a postindustrial society leads to cultural change, which in turn transforms gender roles and fosters greater political representation of women along with the development of democratic institutions. Inglehart et al. argue that democratic societies usually have more women in parliament than undemocratic societies because economic development leads to social and cultural transformations, which simultaneously allow for gender equality and make it more likely for democratic institutions to flourish.

They also use culture to explain variation among democracies. For example, they argue that women in the Nordic countries have advanced in terms of political leadership faster than women in France and Belgium, even though all

are postindustrial countries. Culture matters more than economic development in determining women's political leadership. Cultural change creates an atmosphere of tolerance, trust, and political moderation. It leads to values of gender equality; to tolerance of foreigners, gays, and lesbians; to societies that value self-expression and individual freedom; and to activist political orientations—all values that are crucial to their definition of democracy.

While much of the literature has focused on political systems in relation to attitudes, policy adoption, and the one measure of female legislative representation, the big gap in the literature remains in the area of outcomes. Simple cross-national bivariate regressions between regime type and broader measures of women's status reveal a strong correlation between democracy and women's status, even when controlling for economic growth (gross domestic product) (see Table 20.1).[1] This is evident from bivariate correlations using data from 134 countries, including Freedom House[2] data, to capture levels of civil liberties and political rights and the Global Gender Gap Index of the World Economic Forum to measure economic participation, political empowerment, educational attainment, and health and survival (see Table 20.1). The findings are similar using Polity Data in lieu of Freedom House data. Further multivariate analysis would be required to refine these findings, but the correlations between these measures the gender gap and levels civil liberties and political rights are strong and statistically significant.[3]

Thus, adopting a broad range of measures, particularly outcomes in gender gaps in political, economic, education, and health arenas, would strengthen existing work that has found correlations in policy adoption in a variety of fields and in attitudinal orientations in examining the importance

Table 20.1 Democracy and Gender Gap Index

	Correlation with Level of Democracy	Correlation with Level of Democracy Controlling for GDP Per Capita
Overall Equality Composite	0.61***	0.54***
Economic Opportunity	0.45***	0.44***
Educational Attainment	0.40***	0.28***
Health and Survival	0.34***	0.35***
Political Empowerment	0.44***	0.37***
% Women in Parliaments	0.32***	0.25***

*$p < .10$.
**$p < .05$.
***$p < .01$.

Source: Freedom House (http://www.freedomhouse.org) 2010 data on regime type; The Global Gender Gap index from World Economic Forum 2010 data on Economic Opportunity, Educational Attainment, Health and Survival and Political Empowerment (http://www3.weforum.org/docs/WEF_GenderGap_Report_2010.pdf); UN Human Development Report for 2010 GDP per capita.

of regime type in advancing women's rights. However, more fine-grained existing studies of particular regime types show that, while these general patterns hold, there is still considerable variation across issue area, regions, and time.

For example, there are differences in gender equality when one contrasts democracies in advanced postindustrial countries with democracies in emerging economies like India, Mexico, Chile, and Indonesia. There are similarly differences between authoritarian regimes, with socialist states adopting policies more akin to the welfare states than to bureaucratic authoritarian regimes in Latin America or the colonial state. Postconflict countries in Africa have adopted more legislation and made more constitutional changes regarding women's rights and political representation than nonpostconflict countries (Tripp 2011, Tripp and Hughes 2010). Oil-producing countries in the Middle East are particularly slow to adopt gender reforms relative to others (Ross 2008). Countries where women's rights have been framed in collective terms as parallel to class or as collective maternal rights (in contrast to more individualistic liberal frames) have often found it easier to adopt certain policies that treat women as a group, such as adopting electoral quotas, welfare policies providing generous child care, maternity leave, and other incentives for mothers to enter the labor force.

DELINEATING REGIME TYPES

For the purposes of this chapter, I delineate regimes into three basic types: democracies; hybrid regimes; and authoritarian regimes. In *democracies*, civil liberties and political rights are generally protected. Elections allow for a regular changeover of leadership. Even with all their flaws, democracies have mechanisms in place to ensure transparency and accountability. Civil society can operate independently of the state, can serve as a watchdog of the state, and can pressure the state for change.

In contrast, *hybrid* regimes range across a spectrum from *semidemocracies* to *semiauthoritarian* regimes.[4] Semidemocracies (sometimes referred to as electoral democracies) hold regularly contested, closed-ballot, multiparty elections in which political parties have free access to the electorate through media and campaigning and in which there is not massive voter fraud. They allow for changes in party dominance and the alternation of the head of state. However, there are inconsistencies in the extent to which they ensure civil liberties and political rights.

Semiauthoritarian regimes hold regular competitive elections; however, it is not clear that the rulers in these countries are interested in fully opening up the political process and relinquishing power. Ruling parties dominate the

legislature and dominate over the course of repeated elections. Semiauthoritarian regimes do not allow for genuinely competitive elections. Frequently, massive voter fraud occurs, and opposition parties do not always have either free access to the electorate through the media or the same advantages as incumbents when campaigning—for instance, state resources. Incumbents invariably return to power, and the dominant party remains dominant over long periods of time. They lack consistency in guaranteeing civil liberties and political rights. Thus, they combine characteristics of both democracies and authoritarian states.

Unlike semiauthoritarian regimes, *authoritarian regimes* make little pretense of incorporating democratic institutions beyond holding elections. Civil liberties and political rights are limited. Challenges to executive dominance are suppressed and have almost no impact in autocratic settings. Authoritarian regimes may also hold regular elections, but they are often ruled by a monarch, oligarch, military junta, or other type of autocrat. These systems encompass totalitarian–socialist regimes, fascist regimes, as well as the autocratic systems found, for example, in Latin America in the 1970s and into the 1980s or in postindependence Africa from the 1960s through the 1980s.

DEMOCRACIES

Research, primarily in Europe, has focused on the ways gender policy has evolved in a variety of democracies based on different conceptions of citizenship, gender regimes, and different welfare state arrangements. Siim's (2000) *Gender and Citizenship*, for example, contrasts both the ideology and practice of citizenship as it affects women's status in three countries. She critically examines republican citizenship in France, liberal citizenship in Britain, and social citizenship in Denmark. Not only does she look at the relationship between ideologies of citizenship and state policy regarding gender, but she also shows the ways women have influenced and engaged these policies. She explores the limitations of France's pronatalist policies deriving from notions of republican citizenship, the dilemmas posed by Britain's male breadwinner model for social policy, and some of the limitations of the Danish social citizenship model with respect to globalization and migration and restructuring of the welfare state.

Walby (2004) examines the impact of different gender regimes on advancing gender equality. She argues that there is a transformation taking place worldwide that is bringing gender relations into the public realm away from a domestic-based gender regime. These regime transformations take different forms in different parts of the world. Focusing on democracies, she identifies the Nordic social democratic public service route, which provided services like child care that facilitated women entering into the paid labor force. A second regime is the U.S. market-led route, where the mechanisms that permit

women to enter the labor force come from the market itself. The third regime is the regulatory route, adopted by the European Union (EU), which promotes women's employment by removing discrimination, regulating work hours to be compatible with care work, and promoting policies of social inclusion. These gender regimes differ based on the extent to which policy is driven by the state rather than the market, their capacity for allowing historically excluded groups into the decision-making process, and their attentiveness to inequality. Since the mid-1970s the focus in the EU has been on social inclusion as expressed through a new employment-based set of regulations.

There has also been research into cross-national variations in the impact of welfare state policies on gender relations and, in particular, differences based on the strength of organized labor, state capacity, the character of labor markets, forms of women's mobilization, nature of discourses and ideologies within various countries, and race relations (Orloff 1996, 74). According to Orloff (2009, 330), some have looked for coherent clusters of countries, or "gendered welfare regimes," based on the logic of the male breadwinner (Lewis 1992); others have focused on motherhood models (Leira 1992, 2002; Bergqvist et al. 1999; Borchorst and Siim 2002; Ellingsæter and Leira 2006); and still others on support for personal female autonomy (Saraceno 2007; González et al. 2000). Yet another approach examines the role of liberalism, which relies on equal opportunity legal and regulatory frameworks (O'Connor, Orloff, and Shaver 1999; Orloff 2009).

Some scholars have argued that the differences within democracies fall along lines of difference versus equality feminism (see also the chapter by Judith Squires in this volume). O'Connor et al. (1999), in examining social welfare policies, employment regulation, service provision, and abortion rights, found that Australia and Britain adopted more gender-differentiated policies, while Canada and the United States adopted an equality approach. They linked this to differences between the countries, such as the greater strength of organized labor in Britain and Australia, and the greater feminist mobilization around women's rights in North America. According to Orloff (2009), the gendered dimensions of welfare states are partially independent of class related features and differ from typologies based on other aspects of power, difference, and inequality.

Among the most common approaches have been those that link differences in gender policies to family policy models adopted by different political parties (Korpi 2000, Korpi, Ferrarini and Englund 2009). The family policy models promote care arrangements in a variety of ways, ranging from the dual-earner model (Denmark, Finland, Norway, and Sweden) to traditional arrangements (Austria, Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, and the Netherlands), with a large group outside of either model (Australia, Canada, Ireland, Japan, New Zealand, Switzerland, United Kingdom, and United States). Social democratic parties, for example, have often embraced the dual-earner model supported by public care services (Hobson and Lindholm 1997; Huber and Stephens 2000). Similarly, the socialist countries in the Eastern bloc adopted

a version of this latter model with respect to gender equality but without the political freedoms enjoyed by the advanced welfare states.

If one adopts a narrower definition of gender equality that focuses on women's access to employment and child care, then countries with left-leaning parties in power appear to be more amenable to promoting women's rights, while conservative parties have been less supportive of women's rights or have been supportive in ways that strengthened the breadwinner–caregiver model while limiting personal autonomy (Korpi 2000). However, according to Orloff (2009), some researchers have argued for more expansive definitions of equality that also account for participation, political freedom and equal opportunity (Ferree and Martin 1995).

Finally, important cross-national research has shown the importance of state feminism in promoting gender equality, especially when linked to women's movements. State machineries to advance women's rights are not necessary for women's movements to have policy impact, but they increase the likelihood that the state will respond. Moreover, they can be crucial when the conditions for movement success are absent (McBride and Mazur 2010) (see also the chapter by Dorothy McBride and Amy Mazur in this volume).

AUTHORITARIANISM

A wide range of regime types would fall into the category of authoritarian: fascist, socialist, autocratic military juntas, some monarchies, and most theocracies. This makes it difficult to generalize about such regimes types. The following section looks at three examples of authoritarian regimes that illustrate some of the variance: bureaucratic authoritarian regimes in Latin America (c. 1960s–1980s); single-party autocracies in Africa (c. 1960s–1980s); and state socialism in the former Soviet Union (1917–1991) and Eastern Europe (1940s–1980s).

Bureaucratic Authoritarian Regimes in Latin America

Bureaucratic authoritarian regimes in Latin America from the 1960s to the 1980s generally restricted divorce and reproductive rights, especially abortion; they upheld discriminatory marriage and divorce laws and did little to fight violence against women (Waylen 2007a, 145). Some authoritarian regimes, like Brazil, were more inclined to reform than others like Argentina and Chile. Moreover, there is variation over time as well: the authoritarian regime in Argentina in the 1960s was more socially liberal than later governments.

In Latin America, the Catholic Church was instrumental in shaping and constraining the extent to which women's movements were able to advance

women's rights during periods of authoritarianism. Htun's (2003) *Sex and the State: Abortion, Divorce, and the Family under Latin American Dictatorships and Democracies* examines these dynamics. She shows how between 1960 and 1990, conservative military governments in Latin America sometimes introduced woman-friendly policies, while democratization did not always herald changes in old laws pertaining to women, especially in the area of abortion. Divorce was legalized in authoritarian Brazil in 1978, but not in Chile (until much later in 2004) where church–state relations were much stronger. Modernization was associated with women's rights, and, by introducing limited reforms for women, the military leaders of Argentina, Chile, and Brazil believed they were modernizing in a way that would buy them political legitimacy. During the transition to democracy, elite coalitions of lawyers, feminist activists, transnational activists, doctors, legislators, and state officials brought about social change, depending on how well these elite coalitions were able to link up with state institutions. However, as the case of Chile shows, church–state relations acted as a constraint on the introduction of woman-friendly norms. Thus, according to Htun, the particular configurations of state–society alliances were more important than simply whether a country was democratic or authoritarian in bringing about changes affecting women's status.

Postindependence Autocracies in Africa

The postindependence period in Africa after the late 1950s was marked by authoritarian rule. After independence, women found their organizational efforts curtailed once again; only this time the constraints came not from colonial powers but from the newly independent single-party and military regimes, which increasingly limited autonomous associational activity. National women's activities were to be channeled through a single women's organization, usually linked to the ruling party, which used it as a source of funds, votes, and entertainment (Steady 1975; Staudt 1985). Moreover, even though these organizations claimed to represent the interests of all women in their respective countries, especially rural women, they often served as more of a mechanism of generating votes and support for the country's single party. Ruling parties and regimes sought to bring women into state-related clientelism by controlling women's associations through various strategies, including the creation of women's wings tied to the ruling party; suppressing or controlling independent associations by banning, co-opting, and absorbing them; mandating registration of autonomous associations in state-run umbrella organizations; and infiltrating associations with patronage networks. These forms of control parallel attempts to control other forms of associational life, including trade unions, cooperatives, student and youth organizations, market traders, and other societal interests that could potentially threaten the state (Wallerstein 1964; Wunsch 1991).

The net effect of these efforts to control women's mobilization was to depoliticize women and to keep their political activities circumscribed within their organizations rather than to give them political roles within the political parties. It kept women focused on *developmental* or welfare-type activities, handicrafts, income-generating projects, entertainment, and social concerns rather than on pushing an independent women's rights agenda. To the extent that these organizations did mobilize around women's rights concerns in this period, they could do so only as long as they did not challenge the ruling party (Tripp et al. 2009).

The relationship between the ruling party and women's organizations was sometimes solidified by placing an association under the control of the wife of the head of state or under the leadership of other female relatives of party and state leaders, a phenomenon described as a *femocracy* by Mama (Mama 1995; Ibrahim 2000). First ladies frequently headed the larger national women's organizations: Nana Agyeman Rawlings, wife of Ghanaian president Jerry Rawlings, chaired the 31st December Women's Movement in Ghana; Maryam Babangida, wife of Nigerian president Ibrahim Babangida, headed the Better Life for Rural Women Programme; while Betty Kaunda, wife of Zambia's Kenneth Kaunda, was affiliated with the Women's League in Zambia. These dynamics changed with the emergence of autonomous women's movements as political space opened up in the 1990s. These new movements had their own leaders, agendas, and funding sources independent of the ruling party and government.

State Socialism in the Former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe

State socialist countries generally have had an ideological commitment to gender equality, emerging from an interest in the *woman question* in which women were to be emancipated through their involvement in the labor force and through the abolition of class relations (Waylen 2007b, 141). In socialist Soviet Union and after the late 1940s in Eastern Europe, women's rights were advanced primarily by the state and ruling party, without impetus from an independent women's movement. Molyneux (1985) argues that women's rights and equality were subsumed under the objectives of economic development and social stability and that the roles of women were seen as symmetrical and complementary to those of men while emancipation referred to liberation from a traditional social order.

With the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution, the Soviet regime introduced reforms to improve women's status and encourage full political and economic participation. The right to vote had been won a few months prior to the revolution in 1917. Marriage, abortion, and property laws were changed to improve the status of women. Initially these policies had been influenced by Bolshevik feminists, although it was not long before their aspirations took the back seat

to other goals of establishing a socialist state and accommodating the changing goals and national production needs. The Bolsheviks drew on the Marxist rationalization that women's emancipation lay with their participation in social production. Women were to work full time both inside and outside the home, carrying a double burden that was not shared by men (Sperling 1999). The family was seen as a bastion of tradition and backwardness that needed to be undermined so that people's energies could be redirected to the public domain and toward building up the economy to create a socialist state. Women economically engaged in the workforce were critical to this shift, but to bring this equality about, the functions of household needed to be oriented toward serving the public domain (Lapidus 1993).

Although there were important differences between the Eastern European countries that became socialist in the late 1940s, they all sought to bring women into the paid workforce, reaching some of the highest rates of female employment in the world: women made up as much as 90 percent of the workforce in the Soviet Union and almost 80 percent in Poland. Unusually large numbers of these women were of child-bearing age. They were generally employed in lower-level positions at lower wages and faced considerable gender-based job segregation in the retail trades, education, medicine, and light industry (Wolchik 1995). Women were underrepresented in top economic and other white-collar positions (Fodor 2002, 371). As in the Soviet Union, they were integral to the labor-intensive strategy of economic development. Pay structures necessitated the dual-worker household and, together with reproductive policies, facilitated the high levels of female employment found in these countries (Wolchik 1995).

While increasing their involvement in the labor force, women shouldered most of the care of the home and children. In spite of occasional party rhetoric about husbands and wives sharing responsibilities in the home, in reality gender roles in the home changed little. According to Fodor (2002, 371):

> Food shortages required that women spend hours standing in line waiting for produce to arrive at a store, nursery schools were often understaffed and inadequate, laundry facilities far away, precooked meals in the supermarket proved to be expensive for most people, and hot lunches provided in the workplace lacked nutritional value as well as taste.

Policies were introduced that gave women greater access to education, particularly at the secondary level, in teachers' training colleges and technical education schools (Wolchik 1995). By the 1970s, women had parity with men in educational institutions (Fodor 2002, 371). They had extensive maternity and child-care leaves. Women were granted child-care allowances, were guaranteed their jobs after maternity leave, had access to child care, and enjoyed other social provisions. There were protections for single mothers. Women had the right to abortion and contraceptives except for Romania, where abortion was criminalized and contraceptives were unavailable (Gal and Kligman 2000a).

Women were better represented in legislatures than in most parts of the world, but their real political power was limited. In the Soviet Union women were almost completely excluded from the key policy-making institutions like the All-Union Central Committees and state Councils of Ministers (Moses 1977). Thus, women's impressively high levels of representation in the Soviet era were somewhat illusory in that they did not reflect the real nature and extent of women's political involvement. Until the late 1980s, women held on average 31 percent of the legislative seats in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union, which was the highest for any region of the world at the time.

HYBRIDS

The largest expansion of hybrid regimes in the past two decades has taken place in Africa. Between 1975 and 2005, the proportion of democracies in the world increased by 19 percent, based on Freedom House figures. The proportion of hybrid countries did not change much globally. However, in Africa, although one saw the same 19 percent increase in new democracies in this period (1975–2005), much of the liberalization that occurred, especially after 1990, involved the softening of authoritarian regimes themselves and a movement away from politically closed autocratic systems. Thus, hybrid states in Africa increased by 17 percent, while authoritarian countries decreased by 36 percent (Tripp 2010).

Uganda was one such hybrid semiauthoritarian regime. It was also one of the first countries in Africa to significantly increase the presence of women within the legislature and government. Uganda adopted legislative quotas for women as early as 1989, thus increasing the number of women in parliament from claiming one seat in 1980 to 18 percent of the seats in 1989 and 37 percent of the seats by 2011. Women hold key cabinet positions (28 percent of cabinet seats are held by women); Uganda had a woman vice president, the first in Africa, for ten years, and in 2011 got a female speaker of the house. The 1995 constitution had an extraordinary number of clauses addressing women's rights. Thus, at the outset, the regime won the approval of large numbers of women who were convinced that this government was committed to improving the status of women.

Women's organizations were prominent within the emerging civil society in Uganda after the 1990s. As long as they avoided activities that were deemed too political, they were able to operate. Those engaged in advocacy faced restrictions and the government attempted to pass legislation restricting nongovernmental organization (NGO) activities, but these efforts were met with resistance. Some women's organizations had their workshops closed down; others experienced difficulties registering or were threatened with closure. While not pervasive, the

restrictions were enough to keep them wary of what they said and did publicly. Some civil society actors were explicitly warned against becoming too political. Nevertheless, the women's movement managed to operate within the unpredictability of these constraints that are typical of hybrid regimes.

In addition to the aforementioned involvement in politics and constitution making, the women's movement was able to get an affirmative action policy in place at the most prestigious Makerere University. It also influenced school curricula to include gender concerns in sex education classes, which was important given the high rates of HIV infection. In 2006, women's organizations were instrumental in the passage of the Disability Act, which was moved as a private member bill to provide for equal opportunities in education and employment for people with disabilities. The movement around disabilities in Uganda was an offshoot of, and has been closely related to, the women's movement. Women's rights activists have also been vocal around a number of other major pieces of legislation. Their lobbying led to legislative and policy changes regarding issues of inheritance and property rights, land rights, domestic violence, trafficking, female genital cutting, sexual exploitation during conflict, an increase in maternity leave days from forty-five to sixty days in 2007, and numerous other issues affecting women and other politically marginalized people. An active Gender and Growth Assessment Coalition is at the forefront of a lobbying and advocacy initiative around issues of women's access to land and finance, the reform of labor laws, and commercial justice. In 2011 an Equal Opportunities Commission was formed to tackle laws, policies, customs, and traditions that discriminate against women. In 2007, a constitutional court struck down key provisions of the Succession Act regarding women's right to inherit property. It also issued a ruling that decriminalized adultery for women.

Although some of these issues brought the women's movement into conflict with the regime, one might argue that a high level of interest group activity by women has been tolerated because women as a group have for a long time been among the staunchest supporters of the Museveni government. Many women initially endorsed the regime because of its antisectarian stance, believing that sectarianism would lead to the return of civil conflict. They also were encouraged by the government's support of women's advancement politically, economically, educationally, and in other areas.

It is widely acknowledged that women voted heavily in support of Museveni in the 1996 presidential elections; however, that support has been waning since then, especially after the government withdrew support of an amendment to the 1998 Land Act that would have provided the right to spousal co-ownership of land. In 2006, the government finally shelved a Domestic Relations Act, which had been in the works for more than two decades. As a result of these policies and general constraints on political rights and civil liberties, some disaffected women leaders began aligning themselves with opposition parties.

Both the progress and limitations on improving women's status speak to the priorities of a hybrid regime. The goal of remaining in power supersedes

concerns for freedom of speech, freedom of association, political freedoms, human rights, and women's rights. All democratization measures are controlled by the regime, which has been limiting political space and centralizing power since the mid-1990s, both within the movement itself and within the country. The system that has resulted has kept one person in power for more than twenty-six years and limited the possibilities for the development of a truly competitive electoral system and loyal opposition. While it has allowed women to advance themselves in ways they could not have envisioned under previous authoritarian regimes, the constraints on further democratization present real challenges to further advancing a women's rights agenda.

REGIME CHANGE

With the surge of the third wave of democratization, scholars began to evaluate its impact on gender equality. They found that the democratic transitions from Latin America to East Europe were fairly disappointing in terms of their gender outcomes. Waylen's (2007a, 2007b) comparative study is supported by much of the literature on transitions in Latin America (Htun 2003; Tobar 2003; Franceschet 2005) and Eastern Europe (Einhorn 1993; Buckley 1997; Jaquette and Wolchik 1998; Gal and Kligman 2000a, 2000b; True 2003). The literature on transitions in Latin America found that democratic consolidation led to the weakening of women's movements and their autonomy as political processes became institutionalized and women's organizations were coopted by political parties (Alvarez 1989; Jaquette 1994; Waylen 1994).

The political and economic reforms in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet republics left women without their past net of social security provisions, low-cost child care, job security, and relatively high levels of political representation due to the abolition of legislative quotas for women. According to a major UNICEF (1999) report on the region, by the end of the 1990s Russia had one of the region's largest gender gaps in wages with women making about 40 percent of men's wage. In Ukraine women made one-third of the men's wages. Prior to the 1990s, Soviet women enjoyed one of the highest rates of labor force participation in the world with job security. By the end of the 1990s there were growing rates of female unemployment in all the former Soviet republics. In Russia, Ukraine, and many of the other republics women made up over 70 percent of the unemployed.

With the disintegration of the centrally planned economy in the Soviet Union, the earlier notion of woman as worker–mother was replaced by a stay-at-home mother image to allow women to "rest from production work" (Posadskaya 1993). Women, who constituted the majority of the unemployed, even among the well educated, were to be devoted to the responsibilities of caring for the family as women were among the first to lose their jobs (Racioppi and O'Sullivan 1995, 88).

One of the consequences of women's unemployment and lack of job security was the growing problem of sex trafficking in the former Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. Criminal groups lured young women with the promise of working as waitresses and barmaids overseas and then confiscated their passports, sometimes raping and beating them into submission and forcing them to work as prostitutes. The numbers of women trafficked from Ukraine, Russia, and other former Soviet republics were among the largest in the world, matching or even surpassing the numbers being trafficked from Asia and Latin America.

Economic uncertainty has also contributed to the precipitous drops in the number of births and marriage rates throughout the former Soviet Union. In the Baltic states of Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia, for example, fertility rates dropped by 40 percent between 1989 and 1997 and marriage rates similarly dropped by 52 percent in the same period.

Changes in women's political status were also stark. In the 1990s, Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union experienced some of the sharpest drops in female legislative representation in the world as quotas that had guaranteed women seats in parliament were eliminated. According to Inter-Parliamentary Union statistics, the percentage of seats occupied by women in the legislature dropped in the region from a high of 31 percent in 1980 to 9 percent in 1990, rising back to 15 percent by 2005. In contrast, the Nordic countries experienced an increase from 32 percent in 1990 to 40 percent in 2005, reflecting the overall improvement of the status of women in this part of Europe. Rates of female representation for the rest of Europe rose as women increased their number of seats from 11 percent in 1990 to 17 percent in 2005.

After the fall of communism in East Europe, religious and conservative political groups proposed new laws to restrict women's access to abortion in Hungary, Poland, Serbia, Slovenia, and Croatia, even though there were no popular demands for such restrictions. During the transition, Gal and Kligman (2000a) argue, political legitimacy needed to be reconstituted and reproductive rights became one of the arenas in which states sought power by attempting to shape and limit reproductive practices and sexuality through legislation. Reproductive rights became, in effect, a code for political legitimacy, morality, and nationalist concerns. In Romania, for example, extreme unhappiness with Ceausescu's reproductive policies, led to the legalization of abortion, which lent greater legitimacy to the new regime. In Poland, the government banned abortions, signaling its alliance with the Catholic Church. Gal and Kligman (2000a) show how public discussion about reproductive issues redefined state–society relations and notions of nationhood. Thus, they show how state power became preoccupied with the legal enforcement of normative reproductive heterosexuality, the surveillance of women's bodies, and other attempts to control women's bodies.

It should be noted that not all countries experienced this backlash following a political opening. In Africa, for example, democratization accompanied the expansion of women's rights, in part because it opened up political space

that gave women new possibilities for demanding political rights (Fallon 2003; Lindberg 2004; Yoon 2004; Bauer and Britton 2006; Tripp et al. 2009). Similarly in East Asia, democratization opened up possibilities for Taiwanese women to gain greater political representation and for South Korean women activists to make strides in the area of legislation affecting women (Clark and Lee 2000; Lee 2000a, 2000b). Women's organizations were important in pushing for democratic political opening, and when it occurred they emerged as leading participants. They had earned legitimacy as contributors to the democratic process (Lee 2000a, 124). Lee found that democratic consolidation brought about the adoption of increased woman-friendly policies in the areas of child care, education, and employment in South Korea. Women's organizations expanded and increasingly put pressure on parties to ensure that women's rights legislation was passed, including the Basic Law for Women's Development. Women, in fact, became the most vocal interest group in Korea.

CONCLUSION: NEW DIRECTIONS

By contrasting regime types, it becomes apparent that there is considerable variation within them with respect to gender equality. However, in general, the factors that have made democratic regimes more likely to be successful in achieving higher levels of gender equality in contrast to authoritarian and hybrid regimes have to do with (1) their higher levels economic growth, which have given rise to class forces that have pushed for greater equality; (2) stronger egalitarian attitudes; (3) more political space, which has allowed for the expansion of women's movements to press for change; (4) the presence of femocrats within the state to push for equality; (5) the allocation of greater state resources to proequality measures as a result of higher levels of growth; (6) stronger, less corruptible, courts to enforce gender equality; and (7) for some countries, the need to comply with regional pressures (from the European Union) and international pressures for gender equality. The political dominance of left-leaning parties may also contribute to and reflect stronger egalitarian attitudes; however, their influence on positive gender policy cuts across regime type and is not specific to democracies.

Some hybrid regimes have made gains in key areas, particularly when they have had active autonomous women's movements; when they have been influenced by international norms, donors, and women's organizations; and when there has been political will on the part of the government.

While the cross-national and comparative perspectives on political formation and women's rights have helped refine many of the assumptions about regime type, there is still much that is not known about how regimes influence gender equality. There still seems to be a lack of agreement on how best to

identify patterns of gender equality policies and outcomes between countries. Moreover, many studies have focused on policies adopted and attitudes but few on actual outcomes and on how regime type influences those outcomes.

There has been growing interest in why authoritarian and semiauthoritarian states adopt female-friendly policies, even when there are no popular pressures to adopt such policies. More attention needs to be paid to why nondemocratic countries adopt gender equality policies when they are not especially interested in promoting other civil, political, and human rights. There is considerable ferment, for example, at this time in the Middle East. We are seeing the beginnings of change in countries where there has historically been little to show with respect to women's rights even prior to the "Arab spring" in Tunisia, Bahrain, Kuwait, Oman, Libya, and Yemen. Several younger Western-educated reformist monarchs in Morocco, Jordan, and Qatar see women's advancement as critical to the advancement of their countries (not just in terms of trade and relations with the European Union). They have been gradually moving their countries to adopt reforms in women's rights. What is the significance of these efforts? Why are some policies easier to change than others in semi-authoritarian and authoritarian regimes? Why are some policies easier to change in authoritarian regimes and harder to change in democracies?

How do we interpret the use of women's rights for purposes other than those of gender equality? For example, in some cases women's rights have become the battleground between secularist and Islamicist visions of national identity (Brand 1998; Charrad 2001). In many authoritarian African states women's rights have become an arena for the distribution of state patronage and the emergence of clientelistic networks. Women's rights policies and treaties are adopted to show a modern face to the world. Many countries feel pressure to comply with changing international norms regarding women and to placate donors in some cases. Historically, part of the socialist ethos in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union was the need to create conditions for the female labor force to serve national needs. What are the implications for women's rights when they are harnessed for these other ends where women's interests are not placed at the center of the policies? These are just a few of the questions that arise from new work in the area of political formation and women's rights.

NOTES

1. The Global Gender Gap index (1) measures gaps rather than levels of equality, (2) measures outcomes rather than inputs, and (3) ranks countries according to gender equality rather than women's empowerment. Economic participation and opportunity captures differences in labor force participation, earned income, and ratio of women to male legislators, managers, and technical and professional workers. Political empowerment measures the ratio of women to men in minister-level positions, parliamentary positions, and executive office. Educational

attainment looks at the gender gap in primary-, secondary-, and tertiary-level education and literacy rates. Health and survival measures include sex ratio at birth and gender gap in life expectancy survival.

2. http://www.freedomhouse.org.

3. The correlation using Inter-Parliamentary Union data and Freedom House data for 2010 reveals a correlation of .061 that is not significant. Controlling for gross domestic product (GDP) the correlation remains not significant at .136.

4. Hybrid regimes are characterized by different scholars in a variety of ways that are not entirely compatible. They are variously referred to as *pseudo-democracies* (Diamond 1996), *illiberal democracies* (Huntington 1997; Zakaria 1997, 2004), *electoral democracies* (Diamond 2002), *electoral authoritarian regimes* (Schedler 2006), *competitive authoritarian regimes* (Levitsky and Way 2001, 2002), *electoral hegemonic authoritarian regimes* (Diamond 2002), *contested autocracies* (van de Walle 2002), and *virtual democracies* (Joseph 1998). Further complicating matters is the fact that not everyone means the same thing by these categories, and insufficient research has been carried out to fully elaborate the political systems.

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