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American Sociological Review 2012 77: 380 originally published online 7 May 2012

DOI: 10.1177/0003122412443365

AMERICAN SOCIOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION

American Sociological Review
77(3) 380–408

DOI: 10.1177/0003122412443365
http://asr.sagepub.com
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Resolving the Democracy Paradox: Democratization and Women's Legislative Representation in Developing Nations, 1975 to 2009

Kathleen M. Fallon,[a] Liam Swiss,[b] and Jocelyn Viterna[c]

Abstract

Increasing levels of democratic freedoms should, in theory, improve women's access to political positions. Yet studies demonstrate that democracy does little to improve women's legislative representation. To resolve this paradox, we investigate how variations in *the democratization process*—including pre-transition legacies, historical experiences with elections, the global context of transition, and post-transition democratic freedoms and quotas—affect women's representation in developing nations. We find that democratization's effect is curvilinear. Women in non-democratic regimes often have high levels of legislative representation but little real political power. When democratization occurs, women's representation initially drops, but with increasing democratic freedoms and additional elections, it increases again. The historical context of transition further moderates these effects. Prior to 1995, women's representation increased most rapidly in countries transitioning from civil strife—but only when accompanied by gender quotas. After 1995 and the Beijing Conference on Women, the effectiveness of quotas becomes more universal, with the exception of post-communist countries. In these nations, quotas continue to do little to improve women's representation. Our results, based on pooled time series analysis from 1975 to 2009, demonstrate that it is not *democracy*—as measured by a nation's level of democratic freedoms at a particular moment in time—but rather *the democratization process* that matters for women's legislative representation.

Keywords

democracy, development, gender, politics

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> "Despite the widespread movement towards democratization in most countries, women are largely underrepresented at most levels of government. . . . Globally, only 10% of the members of legislative bodies and a lower percentage of ministerial positions are now held by women. Indeed, some countries, including those that are undergoing fundamental political, economic and social changes, have seen a significant decrease in the number of women represented in legislative bodies. Although women make up at least half of the electorate in almost all countries and have attained the right to vote and hold office in almost all State Members of the United Nations, women continue to be seriously underrepresented as candidates for public office."
>
> – United Nations Report on the Fourth World Conference on Women, Beijing, 1995 (United Nations 1996:79)

Higher levels of women's legislative representation correlate with the passage of more women-friendly policies, as well as increases in women's representation in other areas of political and civil society, such as labor unions and local government structures (Britton 2002; Childs and Krook 2009; Jones 1997; Kittilson 2008; Schwindt-Bayer 2006; Waylen 2000).[1] Clearly, explaining why some developing countries—Argentina, Rwanda, Costa Rica, and Mozambique, for example—fill over 35 percent of their parliamentary seats with women, while others—such as Belize, Papua New Guinea, and Yemen—do not even reach 1 percent, is central to sociological questions of gender, development, and political power (Inter-Parliamentary Union 2011; Paxton, Kunovich, and Hughes 2007). In this article, we extend scholarship on women's legislative representation in developing nations by demonstrating the important and surprising effects of democratization.

Increasing levels of democratic freedoms should, in theory, improve women's access to political positions. Yet scholars overwhelmingly agree that democracy does little to improve women's legislative representation, and it may actually hinder women's access to formal political power. Qualitative case studies regularly document precipitous declines in women's political participation following democratic transitions (Bystydzienski and Sekhon 1999; Fisher 1993; Geisler 1995; Jaquette and Wolchik 1998; Waylen 1994). Furthermore, quantitative analyses of global, cross-national data report no significant effect, or sometimes a significant and *negative* effect, of level of democracy on the percentage of women in parliaments (Kenworthy and Malami 1999; Paxton 1997; Paxton and Kunovich 2003; Reynolds 1999; Tripp and Kang 2008). Despite the consistency of these findings across world regions, few scholars offer explanations for why democracy seems to consistently fail women.

We aim to resolve this paradox. We argue that it is not *democracy* per se—as measured by a nation's level of democratic freedoms at a particular moment in time—but rather *the democratization process* that matters for women's legislative representation. We conceptualize this process as the series of political events in a nation that, over time, shape the available opportunities for women's entrance into democratic politics. We operationalize the process as the combined effects of a nation's pre-democratic regime type, the global context of its democratic transition, its historical experiences with elections, and its changing levels of democratic freedoms over time. We limit our analysis to democratizations that occurred after 1975, when the United Nations Decade for Women was initiated and questions of women's equity in government became globally salient. This salience, we argue, is the foundational factor required for any democratization process to result in increased women's legislative representation.

Our results, based on pooled time series analyses of developing nations from 1975 to 2009, demonstrate that democratization has a curvilinear effect on women's legislative representation, especially when prior

electoral experience is taken into account. Women in non-democratic regimes may have high levels of legislative representation but little real political power. When a democratic transition occurs, women's legislative participation initially stays the same or drops. However, with increasing democratic freedoms and additional elections, it increases once again.

Importantly, the pre-democratic regime type, the global context of the democratic transition, and the presence of quotas moderate this curvilinear effect. Prior to 1995, when the United Nations Conference on Women was held in Beijing, women's representation levels increased most rapidly in countries transitioning to democracy from civil strife, but only in the few countries where civil strife was accompanied by gender quotas. After 1995, and partially due to the Beijing Conference, gender quotas become more universally effective, with the exception of post-communist societies. Yet the curvilinear effects of democratization remain significant and positive for women's representation above and beyond the effects of quotas alone. Our findings make clear that variations in the process of democratization—including a nation's pre-transition political legacy, transition timing, and post-transition democratic freedoms and quotas—matter for women's political representation.

IDENTIFYING THE DEMOCRACY PARADOX FOR WOMEN'S LEGISLATIVE REPRESENTATION

We divide the existing scholarship on democracy and women's legislative representation into three fields: (1) quantitative studies that use cross-national analyses to explain global variations in women's legislative representation but that give little attention to democracy; (2) qualitative studies that explore effects of democratization on women's political power (conceptualized broadly) for specific countries; and (3) studies examining the effectiveness of quotas for improving women's parliamentary presence.

Quantitative Studies

Large-scale cross-national studies seek worldwide, generalizeable patterns in women's legislative representation. These scholars consistently find that political and cultural factors, more so than socioeconomic factors, contribute to women's increased parliamentary presence (Inglehart and Norris 2003; Kenworthy and Malami 1999; Paxton 1997; Paxton and Kunovich 2003). Political factors especially likely to improve women's legislative representation include a proportional representation electoral system and a left party in power. Despite this emphasis on political factors, most studies give scant discussion to the surprising lack of significant, or sometimes significant and negative, effects of democracy (Kenworthy and Malami 1999; Paxton 1997; Paxton and Kunovich 2003; Reynolds 1999).[2] In most studies, democracy is operationalized using an index of political freedoms measured at a particular moment in time; little attention is paid to whether a recent transition radically changed the levels of these freedoms, or how these indices trend over time.

Two recent developments in quantitative analyses of women's legislative representation may help resolve the paradox. First, there is now clear evidence that the forces driving women's legislative representation in developed countries are different, and more clearly understood, than the factors shaping representation in developing countries (Lindberg 2004; Matland 1998; Viterna, Fallon, and Beckfield 2008). We believe that level of democracy is particularly vulnerable to misinterpretation when developed and developing nations are analyzed together. Developed nations seldom score less than a perfect 10 at any point over the past 34 years on the familiar Polity IV ranking, while developing nations' scores range from –10 to 10 over the same period (Marshall, Jaggers,

and Gurr 2009).[3] These fluctuating levels make clear that democracy operates differently in developing country contexts.

Second, recent work on women's representation advocates a longitudinal approach instead of the more common cross-sectional analysis (Hughes and Paxton 2007). Yet the few longitudinal studies to date focus on either Western countries (McAllister and Studlar 2002; Studlar and McAllister 2002) or developed and developing countries together (Paxton, Hughes, and Green 2006; Paxton et al. 2010).[4] We believe a longitudinal analysis is particularly necessary for resolving the democracy paradox in developing nations, where democratization processes are recent and democracy levels fluctuate greatly over time.

Qualitative Studies

Whereas quantitative studies seldom interrogate democracy's surprising lack of effect on women's legislative representation, qualitative case studies engage the paradox head-on. These studies focus almost exclusively on women's changing political power in countries undergoing transitions to democracy in the developing world. They examine the historical developments leading to the transition, the negotiation of gender within the transition process, and the resulting institutions, laws, and discourses that shape women's political opportunities post-transition (Waylen 2007). Qualitative studies seldom focus narrowly on women's legislative representation as an outcome, but rather analyze women's political power more broadly.

In nearly every case, scholars conclude that women's gains with democratization are disappointing. With the fall of communism in Eastern Europe, women—who had relatively high levels of participation in communist-era legislative bodies—experienced a precipitous drop in representation (Watson 1993). Scholars explain this decline in two ways. First, they suggest that women's pre-transition power was actually quite low despite high legislative representation. Real power rested with the male-dominated Central Committee for the Communist Party rather than in legislatures (Einhorn 1993). Female parliamentarians therefore had relatively little political power to exert during the democratic opening and were effectively pushed out of power by men seeking access to new government institutions. Second, earlier communist governments made cultural demands of women by exalting them as both laborers and mothers who reproduced the nation. Continuing frustrations with communism's ''forced emancipation'' also contributed to women's post-transition withdrawal from politics (Einhorn 1993; Gal and Kligman 2000; Haney 1994; Watson 1993).

In Latin America, women's pre-transition political activism in social movements often dissipated with democratic transitions. In some instances, women's legislative representation also declined (Fisher 1993; Jaquette and Wolchik 1998). Prior to democratization, some women confronted authoritarian regimes by co-opting the national rhetoric of motherhood. They argued they could no longer ''mother'' the nation if the nation—by disappearing their children and leaving families without the basic necessities of survival—did not permit them to fulfill their motherly responsibilities (Alvarez 1990; Ray and Korteweg 1999). In other cases, women fought alongside men in anti-state rebel armies during periods of civil strife (Luciak 2001; Viterna 2006). Yet women had difficulty converting their pre-transition activism into peacetime political positions in both authoritarian and civil strife transitions (Viterna and Fallon 2008). In the former, male politicians appropriated motherhood frames to encourage women's return to the home, while in the latter, former commanders encouraged women ex-guerrillas to give women's rights a back seat to other party priorities (Chinchilla 1994; Fisher 1989; Friedman 1998; Luciak 2001).

Studies of sub-Saharan Africa also suggest that authoritarian and civil strife

transitions to democracy failed women. On one hand, many newly democratic nations remained under the rule of former leaders who transitioned from un-elected dictators to formally elected presidents. Transitions in regime *type*, but not regime *personnel*, left few new political openings for women (Fallon 2008; Geisler 1995; Tripp et al. 2009). On the other hand, so-called ''progressive'' leaders of civil strife factions or independence movements often emphasized liberty and equality over gender, even after they won formal political power with a democratic transition (Hassim 2006; Meer 2005; Seidman 1993).

Case studies such as these overwhelmingly conclude that women lose political power with democratization, regardless of whether the country is transitioning from communism, authoritarianism, or civil strife. Yet the limited number of cross-national comparisons makes it difficult to determine whether variation exists across cases, and if so, what accounts for it. Some comparative evidence suggests that civil strife transitions may provide relatively better opportunities for women than other types of transitions (Hughes 2009; Viterna and Fallon 2008), but these analyses are countered by multiple case studies lamenting the lack of political gains for women post-civil strife. Nevertheless, it is consistently clear across all qualitative studies that the political institutions, ideologies, and personnel in place prior to a transition continue to influence political practices after democratization. Any model analyzing democracy's influence on women's legislative representation must therefore capture the consequences of these historical legacies.

Quotas

In the 1990s, the International Parliamentary Union and the United Nations argued that women politicians could not effectively promote women-friendly legislation at the national level unless they first reached a critical mass of 30 percent of the legislative body. This movement to increase women's representation scored a major success in 1995 at the United Nations Fourth World Conference on Women in Beijing, where all 189 participating states signed the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action. The Declaration asks governments to take proactive measures to ensure women's equal participation in power and decision-making structures. After Beijing, local and international pressure to implement gender quotas increased significantly. Most international development agencies now view quotas as critical for improving women's presence—and therefore power—within national political institutions (Tripp and Kang 2008; Yoon 2001).[5] Quotas may be particularly effective in developing nations, where they are often fast-tracked, or implemented quickly (Dahlerup 2006).

Despite increasing enthusiasm for gender quotas in the world polity, scholars caution that quota implementation does not guarantee greater political representation for women (Krook 2009; Tinker 2004; Vincent 2004). Some quotas are more effective than others, across nations and even over time within the same nation (Jones 2009). Early studies sought to explain this variation by examining differences in quota types, but with limited success (Dahlerup 2006). Scholars expected mandatory, nationwide quotas, instituted constitutionally or legislatively, to produce the strongest increases in women's representation. Yet nationwide quotas sometimes had little impact on women's representation because they were weakly legislated or poorly enforced (Htun and Jones 2002; Jones 1996; Waylen 2000). Likewise, voluntary party-level quotas should have more limited effects because of their narrow reach. Yet these party-specific quotas sometimes proved to be powerful tools for increasing women's representation nationally, especially when parties were powerful political players, had strong quotas, and enforced their quota guidelines (Britton 2002; Hassim 2006).[6]

These difficulties in determining how best to implement and enforce quota legislation may in part explain why quotas initially

were only mildly successful (Htun and Jones 2002). Early cross-national studies found that women's representation was not much greater in countries with quotas than in countries without (Reynolds 1999). Yet more recent studies have found that quotas do significantly increase women's presence within parliaments (Paxton et al. 2010; Tripp and Kang 2008; Yoon 2004). We believe this later finding may be attributed in part to the increasing international pressure placed on nations after Beijing 95 to legislate effective quota systems. Certainly, quota implementation increased dramatically after Beijing. In the prior decade, only 21 countries adopted quotas, and a comparable number of former Eastern Bloc countries repealed quota legislation (Tripp and Kang 2008). However, between 1995 and 2005, an additional 55 countries adopted quotas. Combining these findings with insights from the qualitative literature, we anticipate that quota effectiveness may be related to the type and the timing of a nation's democratic transition.

MODELING THE DEMOCRATIZATION PROCESS

Current studies demonstrate the existence of a democracy paradox but also suggest fruitful avenues for its resolution. Quantitative analyses suggest evaluating developing countries separately from developed and examining hypothesized causal relationships over time. Qualitative studies demonstrate that pre-democratic conditions inform post-democratic outcomes. Quota studies show how quota policies may improve women's representation, but again, their effectiveness seems in part predicated on a nation's pre-democratic history and transition timing. Taken together, these studies suggest that the process of democratization, more so than a particular level of democracy, may be central to increasing women's access to parliamentary positions.

Building from this insight, we define the democratization process as the combined effects of a nation's pre-democratic regime type, the global context of its democratic transition, its historical experiences with elections, and its changing levels of democratic freedoms over time. To model this process, we first distinguish between three types of pre-transition political arrangements that qualitative case studies often highlight as central explanatory factors for women's post-transition political power: civil strife, authoritarian regimes, and communist governments. We further assess whether quotas' effectiveness varies across these transition categories.

Second, we examine the global context in which these three types of democratic transitions occur. Democratic transitions, by definition, open existing political systems to institutional change. It is therefore not surprising that global pressures to institutionalize women's formal political participation—especially through implementation of effective quotas—may be brought to bear on transitioning nations and their political parties (Viterna and Fallon 2008). We anticipate that the effect of global feminist pressures on a transitioning state is at least partially dependent on *when* a nation transitions. To test this, we limit our analysis to post-1975 democratic transitions, as these are the first transitions that could be affected by the United Nations Decade for Women. We also investigate whether post-1995 Beijing transitions were especially successful in increasing women's legislative representation, given the increased global focus on quotas during this time period.

Third, we add the concept of electoral experience to our measure of the democratization process. At a basic level, women require electoral opportunities if they are to be elected. More importantly, elections are often a key site for political contestation, even without democracy. Opposition groups in non-democracies may challenge the legitimacy of dictatorships by challenging fraudulent or repressive elections (Almeida 2008; Clarke 2011; Schock 2005). We therefore

anticipate that women living in nations with a history of electoral competition—even non-democratic competition—may be acculturated to view elections as central sites for political contestation. Qualitative studies suggest that women often have difficulty transforming their pre-democratic social movement tactics into post-transition strategies for gaining formal political office, because they do not know how to play the formal politics game. We thus anticipate that women living in nations with longer histories of at least minimally competitive elections should be able to more effectively engage the electoral process. Moreover, we anticipate that women's abilities to successfully compete for office will increase with each additional election after democratic transition, as women continue to gain knowledge about and trust in the new democratic system.

Finally, we examine changes in levels of democracy over time, and whether the effects of these changes are contingent on pre-transition regime type, electoral experiences, or post-transition quotas.

METHODS

To assess the effects of the democratization process on women's legislative representation, we analyze a longitudinal sample of countries over a 34-year period using a cross-sectional time series approach. We employ a random-effects model that corrects for residual autocorrelation and unobserved heterogeneity.[7] This model allows us to better estimate the standard errors for our coefficients and accommodate the unbalanced nature of our panel.[8] Present levels of female political representation appear closely correlated to previous levels, so we correct for the presence of a first-order autoregressive disturbance in our panels.

Data

Our sample consists of observations for 118 developing countries from 1975 through 2009.[9] We choose this time period because 1975 was the start of the United Nations Decade for Women, which promoted women's increased political participation (Pietila and Vickers 1990). We follow Brady, Kaya, and Beckfield (2007) and define a country as developing if it had real GDP per capita below $12,000 USD (constant 2000 dollars) in 1980. This is inflation-adjusted to the year 2000 for Brady and colleagues' criterion of $5,000 per capita in 1980. Only countries with a population of at least half a million people are included in our sample.[10] The dataset is an unbalanced panel with observations taken every five years between 1975 and 2005, and after four years for the final 2009 observation. Not every country is included in each sample year of observation. The maximum number of observations for a country is eight, and the minimum is one. New countries are entered into the dataset during the first observed year following their independence or creation.[11]

Dependent Variable

Our dependent variable is the percentage of seats held by women in the national legislature or in the lower house of bicameral systems, as compiled from the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU 1995, 2011). We use the latest value listed for each country in each year of observation.[12] If no data are available for a given year, we substitute the previous year's figure to maximize the number of observations in the dataset. Over the 34-year period for which we have data, the global average of women's representation increased from 6.2 to 17.8 percent.[13]

Decomposition of the variance of our dependent variable into the cross-national (between country) and longitudinal (within country) portions shows that variance in women's representation is nearly evenly distributed: 42 percent is cross-national, 58 percent is longitudinal. Cross-national variation in our sample is extraordinarily wide, even within shared geographic regions. In Latin

America, Argentina had the highest level of women's representation in 2009 with 35.1 percent, and Colombia had the lowest with 8.4 percent. In Africa, Rwanda had the highest at 56.3 percent, whereas Chad reached only 5.2 percent. In the Asia-Pacific region, Nepal had 33.2 percent women's representation, but Mongolia achieved only 3.9 percent. Cross-national variation was lowest in the Middle East and North Africa. Aside from the outlier of Tunisia at 27.6 percent, the rest of the region ranged between Syria at 12.4 percent and Iran at 2.8 percent.

Independent Variables

Our analysis focuses on how the process of democratization affects women's legislative representation in developing countries over time. We also control for a number of political, socioeconomic, and cultural factors that other studies identify as significant.

Measuring the democratization process. We operationalize the democratization process as the combined effects of a nation's pre-democratic regime type, the global context of its democratic transition and quota implementation, its historical experiences with elections, and its changing levels of democratic freedoms over time. To examine effects of pre-transition legacies on women's post-transition representation, we first create a three-part categorical variable consisting of countries transitioning from civil strife, authoritarian regimes, and communist regimes. The reference category is no transition since 1975 and includes countries that never transitioned to democracy and long-standing democracies that transitioned prior to 1975. We code these countries together because we are interested in the effects of post-1975 transitions, which we theorize are the first to seriously incorporate ideals of gender equity in government positions. In addition, our initial explorations of the data indicate that the changing levels of women's parliamentary participation in non-democracies over time are very similar to the changing levels of women's parliamentary participation in longer-term democracies.[14] These initial explorations provide preliminary evidence of our overall conclusions: the *process* of post-1975 democratization, more so than a particular level of democracy, matters for women's legislative representation.

In our sample, 14 countries transitioned from civil strife. We define civil strife as at least three continuous years of intrastate war, with more than 1,000 deaths in each year, that took place within a five-year period prior to the transition.[15] Nineteen countries in our sample transitioned from communism, which we define as nations that emerged as democratic with the dissolution of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics or other communist states.[16] Finally, 39 countries in our sample transitioned to democracy from authoritarian regimes, and the 46 remaining countries did not experience a democratic transition after 1975.

Next, to assess the global context of a nation's transition, we code the date in which each nation transitioned to democracy. We define the year of transition as the first year in which (1) universal, multiparty elections were held and deemed ''free and fair'' by international standards, or (2) a new constitution requiring universal, multiparty elections was adopted.[17] In addition, the democratic state must last.[18] We use these dates to determine in which panel year a nation moves from the ''no transition'' to ''transitioned'' category, or whether it remains coded as ''no transition'' throughout the analyzed time period. Our models also include a control variable for the number of years since democratic transition. The control is set to zero in all countries that did not experience a democratic transition between 1975 and 2009.[19]

Third, we use data from the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA) and Stockholm University's Quota Project to create a dichotomous variable indicating whether a country has any

electoral quotas that reserve national legislative seats or candidate nominations for women, and in what year they were implemented (IDEA and Stockholm University 2010).[20] Following previous work (Tripp and Kang 2008), we expect the presence of electoral quotas to have a positive effect on women's political representation independent of democratization, and we include this basic measure as a control in all models. Extending previous work, we also examine how the effects of quotas vary according to different processes of democratization. Specifically, we analyze the interaction of quotas with pre-transition regime type (the reference category is all countries that have not experienced transition since 1975 and have no quotas), and we model the effects of quotas before and after 1995, the year of the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action.[21]

Fourth, to capture a nation's electoral experience, we include a count of the number of elections a country has held since 1945.[22] We create this count using the IDEA Voter Turnout database (International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance 2002); it includes all democratic and non-democratic elections where at least one opposition party was on the ballot. It excludes elections in one-party states.

Finally, we measure the changing quality of democratic freedoms over time with the commonly used Polity IV score (Marshall et al. 2009).[23] Acknowledging the limitations of a quantitative measure of democracy, and the existence of multiple alternate measures like Freedom House, Vanhanen's Polity scores, and the World Bank's DPI index, we select Polity IV because of its broad coverage and consistent coding over time. We include a Polity IV score for each country at each of the time-points in the dataset. We replace Polity IV missing data with imputed Polity IV scores following Gerring, Thacker, and Moreno (2005). We also examine the interaction between level of democracy and electoral experience.

Political controls. Following previous research, we control for several political features of the state. First, we measure the longevity of a country's acceptance of female political participation by including a count of the years since female suffrage. We expect countries with a longer experience of female political participation to have higher levels of female legislative representation (Kenworthy and Malami 1999; Paxton et al. 2006).

Second, we control for left-party influence with a dummy variable indicating whether a left party is in power or is the dominant party in a coalition government. Previous research demonstrates the positive influence of socialist or left-leaning political parties on women's political representation, but primarily in developed countries (Kenworthy and Malami 1999). We compile these data from the World Bank's Database of Political Institutions, which codes parties as either left or right by analyzing party names and economic platforms, and by cross-referencing with several alternative data sources (Beck et al. 2001). We also include a dummy variable to identify Marxist-Leninist regimes (Kenworthy and Malami 1999; Paxton 1997; Paxton et al. 2006).

Finally, previous results overwhelmingly conclude that countries with proportional representation or mixed systems have a higher percentage of female legislators than countries using a plurality/majority electoral system (Kenworthy and Malami 1999; Kunovich and Paxton 2005; Matland 1998, 2002; Paxton 1997; Paxton et al. 2006; Paxton and Kunovich 2003). We therefore include a categorical variable for electoral system that uses a plurality/majority system as the reference category and distinguishes between proportional representation and mixed/other systems (International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance 2005).

Cultural controls. We include five controls for cultural context. First, we control for region with a categorical variable using sub-Saharan Africa as the reference category and including Central and Eastern Europe,

Middle East and North Africa, Asia-Pacific, and Latin America as other regions (Kenworthy and Malami 1999; Paxton 1997). Second, we control for a nation's dominant religious group with a categorical variable for Protestantism, Catholicism, Islam, and other religions. Protestantism is the reference category. Previous research concludes that countries with mostly Protestant traditions are more accepting of women's political participation and have correspondingly higher levels of female legislative representation (Kenworthy and Malami 1999; Paxton 1997; Paxton et al. 2006). Third, because the experience of Western European colonization fundamentally influenced the subsequent development of social, economic, and political institutions in much of the developing world, we include a dummy variable to indicate whether a country was colonized in the past. The reference category is no experience of colonization (Hughes 2005; Paxton et al. 2006; Swiss 2009).[24]

Fourth, following previous studies, we use ratification of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) as a proxy for women's cultural status within a nation (Kenworthy and Malami 1999; Paxton 1997; Paxton et al. 2006; Viterna et al. 2008). In theory, countries that adopt CEDAW should be more accepting of women's participation in formal politics. Yet results of these analyses are mixed, likely because many nations adopt CEDAW ''with reservations'' that essentially nullify its content. We therefore create a dichotomous CEDAW variable, where 1 = nations that accept CEDAW with no reservations, or with reservations that do not contradict the spirit of the declaration; and 0 = nations that do not ratify CEDAW, or that ratify CEDAW with reservations that allow them to maintain some aspect of legalized gender discrimination in their political institutions.[25]

Finally, Paxton and colleagues (2006) find that women's political representation increases with higher levels of influence of the international women's movement within a country. We include their variable, a count of country-level memberships in key women's international nongovernmental organizations (WINGOs), in our model[26] (see also Kenworthy and Malami 1999; Swiss 2009).

Socioeconomic controls. Even though our analysis is limited to developing nations, we control for variations in the level of economic development within our sample. We include a measure of real Gross Domestic Product per capita in constant 2000 U.S. dollars (Heston, Summers, and Aten 2006) and transform the variable to its natural logarithm to reduce skewness. We also control for women's socioeconomic participation in society, using the percentage of a nation's appropriately-aged women enrolled in secondary education, as compiled by the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). Studies hypothesize that higher levels of female secondary education in a society should correlate with higher levels of women's political representation by increasing the supply of qualified candidates. However, this variable has not reached significance in previous analyses (Kenworthy and Malami 1999; Paxton 1997; Paxton and Kunovich 2003). To reduce skewness, we transform this variable to its natural log.[27]

RESULTS

We present our results in three tables. Tables 1 and 2 examine our central arguments; Table 3 tests the sensitivity of our results to alternative measures of the independent variables.[28]

Table 1 estimates effects of each variable of our democratization process. We first estimate the influence of changing levels of democracy and electoral experience on women's political representation, while controlling for countries' political, cultural, and socioeconomic contexts. In Model 1 of Table 1, the Polity IV score is significant and negatively related to women's political representation, which supports the findings

Table 1. Estimating the Effects of the Democratization Process on Women's Legislative Representation in 118 Developing Countries, 1975 to 2009 (N = 712)

Variable	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3
CONTROLS			
Political			
Years Since Female Suffrage	.110***	.114***	.104***
Left Party in Power	2.669***	2.605***	2.459***
Marxist-Leninist Regime	12.228***	11.381***	11.623***
Electoral System (Plurality/Majority)			
Proportional Representation	1.714	1.806	1.185
Mixed/Other	1.334	1.362	1.176
Cultural			
Colonized	1.281	1.619	.681
Region (sub-Saharan Africa)			
Middle East and Northern Africa	–7.242***	–7.169***	–6.517***
Asia-Pacific	–3.841**	–3.630**	–3.302*
Latin America	–5.643**	–5.506**	–4.149*
Central and Eastern Europe	–.619	–.207	2.100
Religion (Protestantism)			
Catholicism	–2.818	–2.621	–2.547
Islam	–2.948	–2.780	–2.479
Orthodox	–2.379	–2.225	–1.932
Other	–2.617	–2.457	–2.164
Ratified CEDAW	1.274	1.223	1.377*
WINGOs Memberships	–.108	–.085	–.091
Socioeconomic			
Logged GDP per Capita	–.006	–.130	–.018
Logged Female Secondary Education	1.506**	1.654**	1.310*
DEMOCRATIZATION			
Polity IV Score	–.228***	–.338***	–.339***
Number of Elections	.439**	–.092	–.050
Polity IV-Elections Interaction		.034**	.027*
Any Female Political Quotas	5.255***	5.207***	5.002***
Democratic Transition from (None)			
Civil Strife			4.319**
Authoritarian Regime			.974
Communism			–2.787
Years Since Transition			.067
Constant	1.777	2.562	3.402
R^2 Overall	.410	.419	.444
Autocorrelation Coefficient (rho)	.512	.513	.503

Note: Reference category in parentheses.
*$p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$ (two-tailed tests).

of previous research. The number of elections is significant and positive.

The control variables support some, but not all, of our expectations. The political controls are all statistically significant and positive, with the surprising exception that electoral system has no significant effect. Moving to the cultural controls, coefficients for religious groups are all negative in relation to the Protestant reference category, as anticipated, but none are significant. Coefficients for all regions are negative in contrast to sub-Saharan Africa, with all but Central and Eastern Europe reaching significance. Neither the coefficient for CEDAW nor for WINGOs is significant. Unlike previous studies, one of our socioeconomic controls—secondary educational enrollment—shows a positive and statistically significant relationship with female legislative representation. However, our other socioeconomic control, GDP per capita, does not. Our control for gender quotas is positive and significant as expected.

Model 2 adds an interaction term between the Polity IV score and the cumulative count of elections since 1945. This term is significant and positive, challenging the prior consensus that level of democracy does not matter for women's legislative representation. With the addition of the interaction term, the coefficient for the number of elections becomes negatively related to women's representation. The negative main effects for both Polity IV and elections suggest that in the absence of either, the effect of the other is negative: democratic liberties cannot increase women's representation without electoral experience, but elections without increasing democratic freedoms seldom place more women in office. When both electoral experience and democratic freedoms increase, they interact to positively influence women's representation.[29]

In Figure 1, we use coefficients from Model 2 (Table 1) to graph the predicted change in women's political representation as elections and democracy simultaneously increase, holding all continuous covariates at their mean and categorical covariates at the reference category of zero. We find that the estimated percentage of female parliamentarians is relatively high when democracy levels and number of elections are low. Initial increases in democratic freedoms and election counts result in a *decline* in the percentage of women in parliament, supporting previous findings. However, as democracy levels and electoral experience continue to increase, women's representation also begins to climb. In short, the effect of democratization on women's legislative representation is curvilinear, but this curvilinear effect only functions through democracy's interaction with electoral experience.[30]

Model 3 of Table 1 assesses the effect of pre-democratic regime type on women's political representation. We also add our control for the number of years elapsed since democratic transition. Countries transitioning from civil strife have significantly higher levels of women's representation than those that did not experience a democratic transition since 1975. Transitions from authoritarian or communist regimes are not significantly distinct from the reference category. The coefficient for number of years since transition is not significant. Effects of our control variables remain consistent, with the exception that the CEDAW variable gains significance.

In Table 2, we examine how the influence of quotas may vary according to the context of democratic transition by estimating an interaction between pre-transition regime type and electoral quotas. We also examine this interaction in different global contexts: Model 1 shows results for the full period (1975 to 2009); Model 2 shows results for all countries during the pre-Beijing conference period (1975 to 1995); and Model 3 shows results for all countries during the post-Beijing period (1996 to 2009).

In the full time period model, we find no significant interaction between transition type and the presence of electoral quotas. In the pre-Beijing period, the effect of quotas in post-civil strife countries are significantly different than the reference category of no

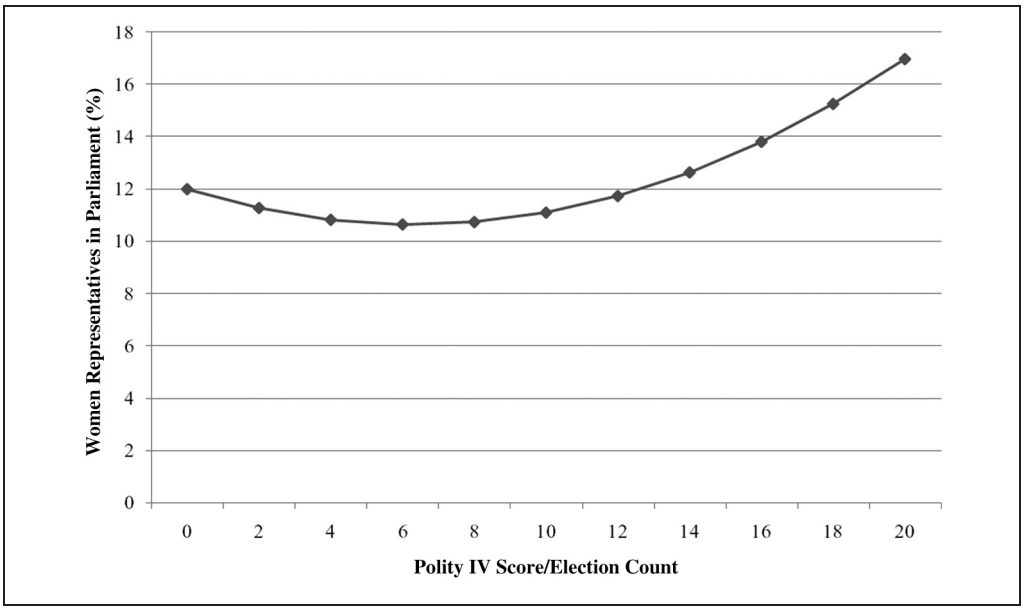

Figure 1. Expected Values for Women's Political Representation as Level of Democratization and Number of Elections Change
Note: Simulated values estimated using coefficients from Table 1, Model 2.

transition and no quotas. Interestingly, the main effects of the civil strife variable, representing countries that transitioned from civil strife but have no electoral quotas, drop from 4.14 to 2.84 and are no longer significant. Similarly, the main effects of the quota variable, representing countries that have quotas but have not transitioned from democracy since 1975, drop from 5.73 to 1.61 and are also no longer significant. Thus, prior to 1995, quotas are effective in increasing women's legislative representation only when accompanied by a civil strife transition, and civil strife transitions are effective only when accompanied by quotas. Prior to 1995, quotas increase women's representation in civil strife countries by an impressive 10 percentage points.[31] Importantly, only three cases account for this strong correlation—Mozambique, Philippines, and South Africa. All three transitioned to democracy from civil strife and implemented quotas prior to 1995, and all experienced sharp increases in women's representation shortly thereafter. These findings help mediate earlier disagreements about whether civil strife transitions promote or inhibit women's political gains.

By contrast, the main effect for quotas is again significant in the post-Beijing period (Model 3).[32] In this era, even non-transitioning countries with quotas experienced a boost to women's representation of 7.76 percent, in contrast to their non-transitioning counterparts with no quotas. Effects of quotas in countries transitioning from civil strife or authoritarianism are not significantly different from non-transitioning countries. This lack of a significant effect is driven by the increasing effectiveness of quotas in non-transitioning countries and post-authoritarian countries, rather than by a decreasing effectiveness of quotas in post-civil strife countries. However, quotas remain relatively ineffective in post-communist regimes. Even after 1995, quotas boost women's legislative representation only 1.83 percent—significantly less than non-transitioning nations with quotas.

In Table 3, we explore the sensitivity of our main explanatory variables to alternative

Table 2. Estimating the Effects of the Interaction between Quotas and Transition Contexts on Women's Legislative Representation in 118 Developing Countries, 1975 to 2009

Variable	Model 1 Full Sample	Model 2 1975 to 1995	Model 3 1996 to 2009
CONTROLS			
Political			
Years Since Female Suffrage	.102***	.040	.122*
Left Party in Power	2.465***	2.357***	2.781**
Marxist-Leninist Regime	11.621***	6.953**	15.183***
Electoral System (Plurality/Majority)			
Proportional Representation	1.185	.294	1.851
Mixed/Other	1.120	1.572	.159
Cultural			
Colonized	.627	–.326	1.550
Region (sub-Saharan Africa)			
Middle East and Northern Africa	–6.446***	–4.152*	–6.519*
Asia-Pacific	–3.180*	–1.912	–2.744
Latin America	–4.065*	1.930	–9.182**
Central and Eastern Europe	2.271	6.376**	.554
Religion (Protestantism)			
Catholicism	–2.420	–1.066	–1.904
Islam	–2.440	–.028	–5.438
Orthodox	–2.037	–2.663	.067
Other	–2.124	.774	–4.734
Ratified CEDAW	1.347*	.899	3.714
WINGOs Memberships	–.098	.098	–.273**
Socioeconomic			
Logged GDP per Capita	.039	–.591	1.151
Logged Female Secondary Education	1.268*	1.429**	1.175
DEMOCRATIZATION			
Polity IV Score	–.343***	–.420***	
Number of Elections	–.075	–.607*	
Polity IV-Elections Interaction	.028*	.053***	
Any Female Political Quotas	5.729***	1.612	7.758***
Democratic Transition from (None)			
Civil Strife	4.135**	2.838	4.180
Authoritarian Regime	1.267	.922	.391
Communism	–2.354	–1.913	–7.738*
Years Since Transition	.081	–.091	.009
Transition-Quota Interaction			
Civil Strife and Quotas	–.120	8.592*	–3.118
Authoritarian and Quotas	–1.255	4.610	–.695
Communism and Quotas	–2.229	.438	–5.932*
Constant	3.228	6.336	–5.271
Observations	712	429	283
Number of Countries	118	116	113
R^2 Overall	.449	.430	.394
Autocorrelation Coefficient (rho)	.502	.177	.243

Note: Reference category in parentheses.
* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$ (two-tailed tests).

Table 3. Sensitivity Tests: Results for Women's Legislative Representation in 118 Developing Countries, 1975 to 2009 (N = 712)

Variable	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
CONTROLS				
Political				
Years Since Female Suffrage	.100***	.126***	.102***	.090**
Left Party in Power	2.451***	2.532***	2.464***	2.270***
Marxist-Leninist Regime	11.574***	8.585**	11.623***	11.522***
Electoral System (Plurality/Majority)				
Proportional Representation	1.149	.061		1.277
Mixed/Other	.924	.031		1.156
Alternate Electoral (Plurality/Majority)				
Proportional Representation			1.156	
Cultural				
Colonized	.651	.130	.628	.457
Region (sub-Saharan African)				
Middle East and Northern Africa	–6.911***		–6.439***	–6.068***
Asia-Pacific	–3.370*		–3.184*	–3.207*
Latin America	–4.493**		–4.043*	–4.612*
Central and Eastern Europe	1.999		2.288	3.328
Religion (Protestantism)				
Catholicism		–2.860	–2.433	–2.532
Islam		–5.050**	–2.449	–2.923
Orthodox		–1.895	–2.055	–2.591
Other		–3.069	–2.132	–2.476
Ratified CEDAW	1.349*	1.638*	1.350*	1.212
WINGOs Memberships	–.100	–.107	–.098	–.120
Socioeconomic				
Logged GDP per Capita	.103	–.106	.039	.192
Logged Female Secondary Education	1.369*	.566	1.265*	1.207*
DEMOCRATIZATION				
Polity IV Score	–.338***	–.335***	–.343***	
Freedom House Score				–1.260***
Number of Elections	–.086	–.230	–.075	–.233
Polity IV/FH-Elections Interaction	.028*	.025*	.028*	.125**
Any Female Political Quotas	5.621***	5.924***	5.730***	5.565***
Democratic Transition from (None)				
Civil Strife	4.226**	3.860*	4.141**	3.356*
Authoritarian Regime	1.181	1.663	1.267	.673
Communism	–2.280	–1.474	–2.356	–3.621*
Years Since Transition	.082	.124	.081	.084
Transition-Quota Interaction				
Civil Strife and Quotas	–.045	.011	–.120	.555
Authoritarian and Quotas	–1.233	–1.403	–1.252	–.968
Communism and Quotas	–2.359	–1.969	–2.226	–2.237
Constant	.597	6.276	3.245	4.806
R^2 Overall	.445	.398	.449	.460
Autocorrelation Coefficient (rho)	.502	.502	.502	.495

Note: Reference category in parentheses.
* $p < .05$; ** $p < .01$; *** $p < .001$ (two-tailed tests).

specifications. Model 1 replicates the full model from Table 2 but excludes religion. Model 2 excludes region. Model 3 uses an alternate, dichotomous measure of electoral system in which mixed and proportional representation systems are collapsed. Model 4 utilizes Freedom House scores, rather than Polity IV, to measure democracy.[33] No significant differences emerge in these models with respect to the various political, cultural, or socioeconomic controls. In all four models, the direction, significance, and general magnitude of the coefficients for democracy, elections, and the democracy-elections interaction remain the same. This suggests that despite the presence of collinearity of some variables in our original models, our primary results are robust to alternate measures and specification. We also conducted a Hausman endogeneity test on the democracy variable to rule out the possibility of endogeneity bias, further supporting the robustness of our findings (Hausman 1978; Wooldridge 2002).[34]

DISCUSSION

Increased levels of democracy should, by definition, improve individuals' access to political institutions. So why do previous studies find that democracy does not increase, and sometimes appears to decrease, women's legislative representation? This article addresses the paradox by capturing and contextualizing the democratization process—measured as the combined effects of a nation's pre-democratic regime type, the global context of democratic transition and quota implementation, and historical experiences with elections—as it affects women's legislative representation over time. In this section, we (1) discuss how democratization affects women's representation across developing countries, (2) examine the role that quotas play in this process, and (3) briefly present additional findings.

The Democratization Process and Women's Representation in Developing Countries

Our results indicate that post-1975, democratization has a significant curvilinear effect on women's legislative representation within developing nations. Immediately after democratic openings, women's legislative representation drops but then gradually increases with each additional election. The initial decrease in legislators is tied to pre-democratic regime types, and the slow upward trajectory is connected to a nation's electoral experience and increases in democratic freedoms over time.

The decline in women's legislative representation with democratization makes sense, particularly with transitions from communist and authoritarian regimes, where electoral party competition is less likely to occur (see Figures 2 and 3). Under these regimes, women are often appointed to political positions. This inflates their representation, but not their political power, because their mandates to govern are from controlling autocrats rather than from constituents. With the transition to democracy, pre-transition political leaders frequently retain significant power and may continue to co-opt or repress women's political mobilization in the short term. Women may also choose to disengage from the political system due to mistrust of previous regimes, where they were often controlled and manipulated by men, whether members of the polit bureau or dictators (Gal and Kligman 2000; Haney 1994; Tripp et al. 2009). Even in countries with strong pre-democratic women's movements, women's political exclusion occurs because new democracies give power to parties, not movements (Chinchilla 1994; Fisher 1989; Friedman 1998), and women

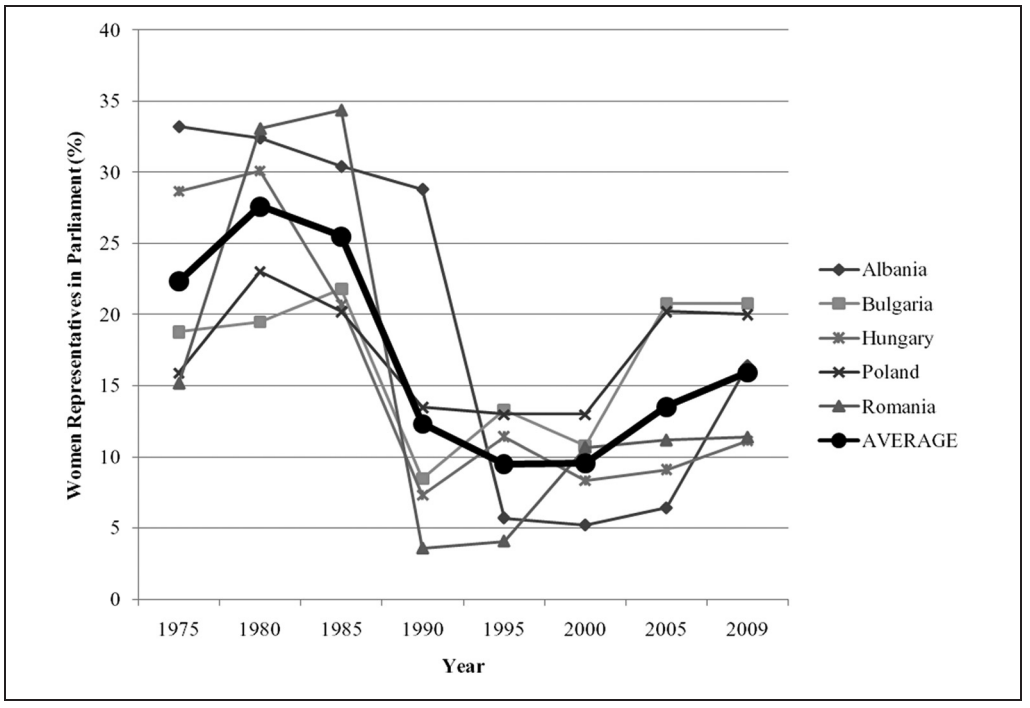

Figure 2. Levels of Women's Representation for Select Countries Transitioning from Communism, 1975 to 2009

often lack experience with party politics. Women's access to new political positions is thus initially thwarted by democratic transition (Friedman 1998; Nelson and Chowdhury 1994).

Yet especially in nations with longer histories of electoral experience, women's legislative representation begins to increase again as democracy scores continue to improve. Moreover, each additional democratic election after the initial downturn continues to bring women more political knowledge as well as increasing faith that engaging the system will be beneficial. This slow acculturation to the new system is particularly relevant for women, who are often excluded from real decision-making governmental and party positions under dictatorships (Einhorn 1993; Jaquette and Wolchik 1998; Tripp 1994). At the same time, men in control of party power may gain trust in women's abilities and may adapt to international norms that promote women's legislative representation. Incumbent power-holders begin to transition out of office with new democratic limits on re-election, opening space for new political players. Increasing political freedoms and additional elections may also give parties incentives to court women's votes by increasing their commitment to women's representation. After the initial drop is taken into account, increasing democratic freedoms *do* improve women's legislative representation over time and across developing countries.

Our findings further demonstrate that pre-democratic conditions have important consequences for women's post-democratic legislative representation. Although women across developing countries benefit from democratization, women's representation increases the most in nations transitioning from civil strife, especially prior to 1995. This supports and extends results of Viterna and Fallon (2008) and Hughes (2009).

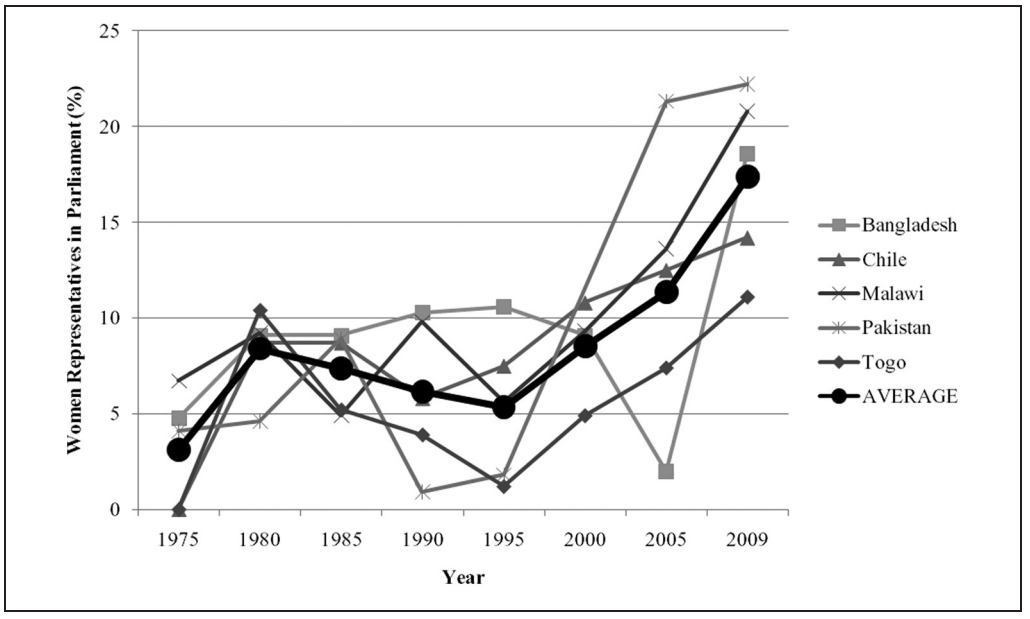

Figure 3. Levels of Women's Representation for Select Countries Transitioning from Authoritarianism, 1975 to 2009

Indeed, women's representation in many post-civil strife nations did not experience an initial decline with democratization, as is typical in other transitioning states (see Figure 4). Nevertheless, we caution that the significant effect of civil strife in our models is confined to pre-1995 cases that were accompanied by quotas, an effect driven exclusively by three cases.

By contrast, women in post-communist nations appear to make fewer gains in women's legislative representation than even their non-transitioning counterparts, especially after 1995. Existing research concludes that communist legacies encourage women's withdrawal from politics at the national level. Our findings suggest that future studies must examine how communist legacies create political systems that appear relatively immune to the world polity's explicit post-1995 push to improve women's political participation through quotas. Nevertheless, it is important to remember that even in former communist countries, where the post-transition drop in women's representation was the steepest, the combined effects of increasing democratic freedoms and additional electoral opportunities continues to significantly increase women's legislative representation over time. Of course, quota effectiveness is central to the patterns found across both post-civil strife and post-communist nations.

The Democratization Process and Variation in Quota Effectiveness

Prior to Beijing 95, positive effects of quotas for women's legislative representation were only significant in three post-civil strife countries. This helps explain why early studies of quotas found little evidence of their worldwide effectiveness. We suggest that the increased presence of international organizations, especially peace-negotiating institutions such as the United Nations, pressured post-civil strife governments to conform to international and institutional mandates for quota implementation (Hughes 2009). This pressure likely bolstered mobilized women's

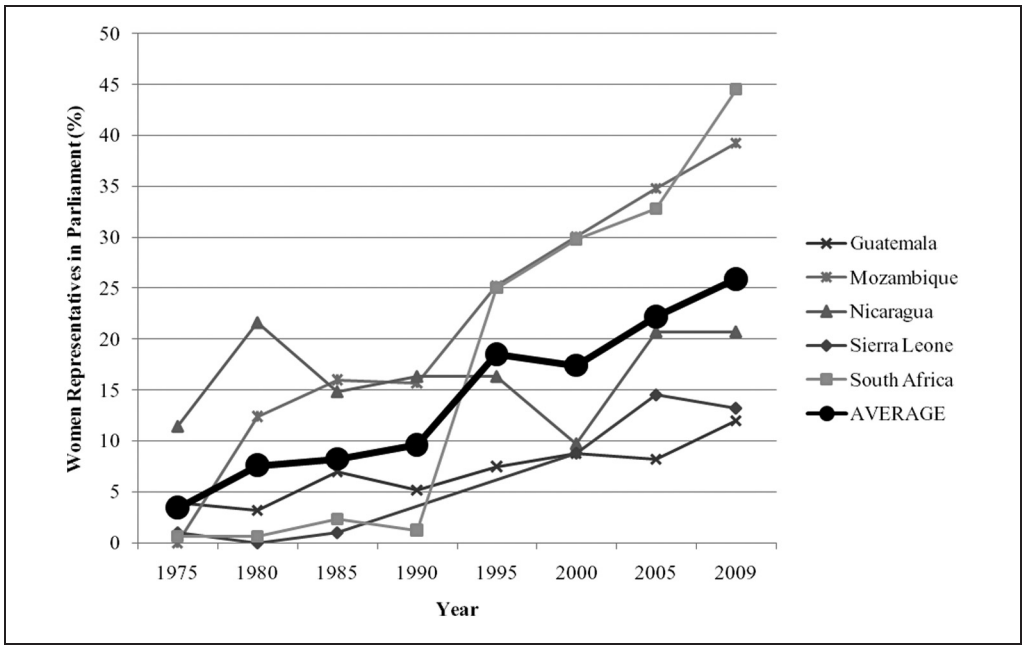

Figure 4. Levels of Women's Representation for Select Countries Transitioning from Civil Strife, 1975 to 2009

power, increasing their ability to effectively lobby new or reformed political parties to implement quotas effectively. In addition, whereas other transitioning nations often found newly democratic political systems filled by the same political leaders as during the prior autocratic era, countries experiencing civil strife were more likely to see new players enter the political arena (Viterna and Fallon 2008). This increased competition may have heightened the ability of women's movements to demand concessions from party members in exchange for their support. Prior to 1995, civil strife transitions appear to create a political context where quotas were especially effective at placing women in legislatures.

After 1995, however, the effectiveness of quotas on women's legislative representation becomes more universal, such that countries transitioning from civil strife are no longer significantly distinct in our models. The international pressure to make quotas effective—which was brought to bear primarily on civil strife countries prior to 1995—extended to other transitioning countries after the conference in Beijing. Some evidence shows that the early successes of these civil strife countries with their fast-track quotas were instrumental for propelling affirmative action measures to the forefront of international arenas like Beijing (Chen 2008; Krook 2006). International activists used the example of civil strife nations' successes to argue for the potential of quotas in transforming all nations, and for making quotas central to the international feminist agenda. Although few in number, successful cases of pre-1995 civil strife democratizations may have indirectly propelled women's successes in the post-1995 period through their influence on the world polity.

Nevertheless, quotas remain significantly less effective in nations that transitioned from communism to democracy, even in the post-1995 period. In these nations, initially steep drops in women's legislative representation after democratization were followed by slow and steady increases as levels of

democracy and numbers of elections also increased. However, these upward trajectories did not receive the same bump from quota implementation as occurred in other nations. It appears that the ability of the world polity to promote effective quotas is stifled in post-communist nations, where a pre-transition legacy of communist-required affirmative action policies may have resulted in post-transition resistance to new global norms. Our results thus demonstrate that attention to democratization processes can, in turn, improve scholars' efforts to predict variations in quota effectiveness.

Additional Findings

It is accepted knowledge in academic and policy-oriented communities that proportional representation systems increase women's representation within legislative bodies (Matland 2002). However, we find no relationship between proportional representation and women's legislative seats in any of our models. We suggest that the positive effect of proportional representation found in other studies is the result of analyzing developed and developing nations together. It is perhaps not surprising that effects of proportional representation on women's representation operate differently in developing country contexts, given that political systems in developing countries are likely to suffer from instability, weaker state structures, and variations in democratic freedoms over time; that women's movements in developing nations often have fewer civil freedoms and socioeconomic resources than women's movements in developed countries; and that alternative electoral systems that incorporate local indigenous knowledge may not be well-captured by the ''other'' category often used in models (Alvarez 1990; Kasfir 1998; Mamdani 1996).[35]

Our finding that left party in power is significant for women's legislative representation in developing nations, while in the expected direction, is also noteworthy. To our knowledge, this is the first test of this variable for developing nations. Previous studies assume that leftist parties are ideologically predisposed to promote gender equality and therefore legislative parity. However, our finding of a curvilinear effect of democratization on women's legislative representation led us to suspect that the effect of leftist party in power is perhaps better explained by its ties to non-democratic regimes than to opening spaces of gender equality. To examine this hypothesis, we ran additional models that tested a left party/Polity IV interaction term based on Model 1 in Table 2.[36] Our findings support the claim that a left party in power has the strongest effect in countries with low levels of democracy, as the coefficient for the interaction term (–.35) is negative and significant ($p < .001$). Consequently, as countries become more democratic, the overall effect of the left party variable weakens. Having a left party in power in an authoritarian regime has a much stronger effect on women's representation than does a left party in a democracy.[37]

In addition to these unexpected results from our political controls, we also highlight two surprising outcomes from our cultural and socioeconomic controls. First, scholars often posit a significant and positive effect of CEDAW ratification on women's representation, but this variable has seldom reached significance in previous models. By coding countries that adopted CEDAW with significant reservations in the same category as countries that did not ratify CEDAW at all, our variable crosses the threshold for significance, suggesting that this coding may be a better proxy for cultural attitudes toward women than measuring ratification alone. Second, our study is one of the first to find statistically significant effects of women's socioeconomic status, measured as percentage of female secondary educational enrollment, on women's political representation (see also note 27). Although data are limited, we anticipate that analyses of

women's socioeconomic status will be central to future efforts at parsing out how factors affecting women's political representation in developing countries differ from those in developed countries.

CONCLUSIONS

Although access to political institutions should theoretically increase with democracy, scholars consistently find that democracy does little to improve women's political representation. We resolve this paradox by demonstrating that it is the *democratization process*, rather than a nation's *level of democracy* at a particular moment in time, that matters for women's representation. Democratic transitions are critical junctures where political institutions are created and political cultures are transformed. Nations that transition to democracy after 1975 are thus more likely to see benefits for women's representation than are early democratizers or non-democratic regimes. However, these benefits are not immediate. Women's legislative representation initially drops with new democratic freedoms and only begins to climb again as democratic freedoms increase over time and across elections. The rate of increase, in turn, is dependent in part on a nation's pre-democratic legacy, historical electoral experience, and quota implementation. The effectiveness of quotas appears to be partially dependent on whether and what type of democratic transition accompanies their implementation. Over time, women's gains become significant.

Our findings demonstrate that women's attainment of political knowledge and power, like democratization itself, is a process. Citizens often must contend with politically powerful players from previous regimes for state influence, while simultaneously learning to negotiate unfamiliar political systems. Investigating variations in democratization processes—including the pre-transition legacy, historical experiences with elections, the global context of the transition, and post-transition levels of democratic freedoms and quotas—should be central to future analyses of women's legislative representation in developing nations.

APPENDIX

Table A1. Correlation Matrix

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	(6)	(7)	(8)	(9)	(10)	(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	(15)	(16)	(17)	(18)	(19)	(20)	(21)	(22)	(23)	(24)	(25)	(26)
(1) Years since suffrage	1.00																									
(2) Any electoral quotas for women	.29	1.00																								
(3) Left party in power	−.03	.04	1.00																							
(4) Marxist-Leninist regime	.03	−.08	.23	1.00																						
(5) Proportional representation system	.06	.14	−.04	−.11	1.00																					
(6) Mixed/other electoral system	.17	.00	.06	−.08	−.38	1.00																				
(7) Colonized	−.53	.00	−.05	.09	.04	−.21	1.00																			
(8) Catholicism	.13	.25	.02	.04	.39	.07	.12	1.00																		
(9) Islam	−.06	−.06	−.11	−.10	−.10	.05	.00	−.43	1.00																	
(10) Orthodox Christianity	.29	−.04	−.02	−.04	−.02	.10	−.48	−.18	−.18	1.00																
(11) Other religion	−.20	−.12	.11	.11	−.29	−.11	.12	−.40	−.40	−.17	1.00															
(12) Middle East and North Africa	−.01	−.08	−.07	−.06	.05	.10	−.11	−.24	.47	.07	−.22	1.00														
(13) Asia-Pacific	.09	−.04	.00	.16	−.24	.14	−.13	−.27	.09	−.13	.28	−.18	1.00													
(14) Latin America	.10	.16	.03	.08	.40	−.09	.29	.69	−.34	−.14	−.27	−.19	−.25	1.00												
(15) Central and Eastern Europe	.38	.07	.13	−.06	.03	.09	−.65	.09	−.19	.57	−.22	−.14	−.18	−.19	1.00											
(16) CEDAW ratification	.51	.27	.09	.10	.11	−.04	−.17	.20	−.31	.17	.02	−.24	−.09	.17	.22	1.00										
(17) Logged GDP per capita	.36	.18	.03	−.04	.21	.06	−.14	.40	−.22	.08	−.26	.13	−.13	.44	.31	.09	1.00									
(18) WINGO memberships	.16	.24	−.01	−.07	.13	−.05	.27	.19	−.08	−.19	−.01	−.07	.04	.33	−.19	.27	.23	1.00								
(19) Logged female secondary education	.60	.20	.06	.04	.05	.16	−.38	.22	−.20	.26	−.18	.14	.10	.27	.35	.31	.71	.24	1.00							
(20) Polity IV score	.43	.34	.07	−.17	.19	−.01	−.11	.28	−.32	.11	−.05	−.22	−.02	.33	.22	.42	.40	.42	.41	1.00						
(21) Count of elections since 1945	.33	.35	−.04	−.13	.30	−.01	.18	.46	−.25	−.12	−.12	−.14	−.03	.69	−.14	.29	.46	.54	.38	.57	1.00					
(22) Polity IV-elections interaction	.35	.36	.01	−.12	.29	−.03	.14	.45	−.30	−.08	−.10	−.17	−.05	.65	−.07	.35	.47	.51	.38	.70	.94	1.00				
(23) Transition from civil strife	.06	.16	.10	−.04	.16	−.04	.13	.09	−.11	−.07	−.01	−.04	.02	.06	−.09	.16	.00	.13	.06	.19	.12	.14	1.00			
(24) Transition from authoritarian regime	.17	.26	−.07	−.07	.11	−.01	.17	.12	−.03	−.13	.02	−.08	−.03	.17	−.17	.19	.10	.37	.12	.38	.39	.42	−.12	1.00		
(25) Transition from communism	.46	.13	.03	−.05	.02	.10	−.60	.08	−.20	.52	−.16	−.02	−.12	−.18	.76	.30	.26	−.15	.32	.35	−.06	.00	−.08	−.16	1.00	
(26) Years since transition	.46	.38	.02	−.09	.15	.03	−.17	.18	−.19	.14	−.07	−.07	−.08	.08	.25	.36	.31	.18	.35	.55	.40	.48	.23	.54	.38	1.00

Note: Sample of 118 countries with 712 observations from 1975 to 2009.

Authors' Note

Authors are listed in alphabetical order. All authors contributed equally. Alternative analyses mentioned in the text are available upon request.

Acknowledgments

We are grateful to Jason Beckfield, David Brady, Lane Kenworthy, Giovani Burgos, Rae Blumberg, Elaine Weiner, anonymous reviewers, and the *ASR* editors for suggestions. We thank David Brady, Yunus Kaya, Pamela Paxton, Melanie Hughes, and Jennifer Green for collaborating in the construction of our dataset.

Funding

Fallon's research was funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada and Fonds Québécois de las Recherche sur la Société et la Culture.

Notes

1. Gendered distributions in nations' parliaments is one measure of women's political power relative to men's. We recognize that female legislators do not represent all women (just as male legislators do not represent all men), and we acknowledge that female legislators may, on average, have less status and influence than their male counterparts. Nevertheless, we argue that women's legislative representation in juxtaposition to men's is an important measure of gender equity in access to governing powers, especially in democratic nations (Mansbridge 1999; Phillips 1998). Historically, government structures were closed to women, as were general political rights. As women gained access, their rights have changed, as indicated by the women-friendly policy reforms mentioned earlier.
2. The exception is Paxton, Hughes, and Painter (2010). Using growth curve analysis on data from developed and developing countries, they find that improved civil rights are significantly associated with increases in women's legislative representation, but overall levels of democracy are not.
3. The Polity IV score is an index that combines six measures of democratic quality: regulation of executive recruitment, competitiveness of executive recruitment, openness of executive recruitment, independence of executive authority, regulation of political competition, and regulation of opposition. These six measures are scored for each nation annually to form separate democracy and autocracy scores. These scores are added to form the 21-point Polity scale ranging from –10 (fully autocratic) to 10 (fully democratic).
4. The exception is Hughes (2007), who uses event-history analysis to examine effects of legislative interruptions on women's representation in developing countries across a 50-year period.
5. Quotas are an affirmative action that establishes a minimum level of nominations or seats for women in various government positions. Quotas are often created through constitutional amendments, national-level legislation, or political parties' internal regulations. Some quota critics argue that mandating women's presence in government bodies is anti-democratic. Others worry that women who are perceived as gaining office through their gender rather than their abilities will be rendered powerless, especially given existing social and cultural barriers to women's exercise of political power. Supporters respond that quotas actually deepen democratic freedoms by helping women overcome social and cultural barriers that otherwise prevent them from obtaining political office. By establishing a minimum level of women, quotas ensure that female politicians reach a critical mass with which they can mobilize their institutionally granted political power to help overcome existing cultural barriers. See Dahlerup (2005) for analysis of these debates.
6. More recent analyses have improved our understanding of quota effectiveness by gathering within-nation data to examine variables such as closed- or open-list systems, placement mandates, district magnitude, compliance enforcement, and even elite and party attitudes toward progressive gender values (Htun and Jones 2002; Jones 2009; Krook 2009; Matland 2006; Schmidt and Saunders 2004). Beyond the consensus that quotas work best in proportional representation systems with strong compliance enforcement, more research is needed before global generalizations are made about what constitutes the most effective quota system.
7. We use Stata's *xtregar, re* program.
8. See Beckfield (2006) for a helpful discussion of fixed versus random effects. A Hausman test favors a fixed-effects approach, but a fixed-effects model does not allow us to estimate coefficients for variables that are not time-varying within countries. Because we are interested in analyzing time-invariant factors (i.e., regional effects, religious effects, electoral system, and colonial history), we choose a random-effects model. When we estimate a stripped down fixed-effects model with only variables that change over time, we find that the direction and significance of our key time-varying variables of interest—democracy levels, their interaction with electoral experience, and our democratic transition measure—remain the same. We choose this strategy over a lagged dependent variable approach

because the latter induces endogeneity bias (Achen 2000).

9. We also examined developed and developing nations together and then independently. As expected, the democratization process variables did not reach significance in the developed-only sample.
10. We exclude small island nations and other microstates due to data limitations. This exclusion should not influence findings because we are not testing size hypotheses, and because these countries account for only a fraction of the world's population (Bollen, Entwisle, and Alderson 1993).
11. Our sample includes 118 countries: Albania, Algeria, Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Belarus, Benin, Bhutan, Bolivia, Botswana, Brazil, Bulgaria, Burkina Faso, Burundi, Cambodia, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Chile, China, Colombia, Costa Rica, Cote d'Ivoire, Croatia, Cuba, Czech Republic, Democratic Republic of Congo, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Eritrea, Estonia, Ethiopia, Fiji, Gabon, Gambia, Georgia, Ghana, Guatemala, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Haiti, Honduras, Hungary, India, Indonesia, Iran, Jamaica, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Laos, Latvia, Lebanon, Lesotho, Liberia, Libya, Lithuania, Macedonia, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Mali, Mauritania, Mauritius, Mexico, Moldova, Mongolia, Morocco, Mozambique, Namibia, Nepal, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria, Pakistan, Panama, Papua New Guinea, Paraguay, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Republic of Congo, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russia, Rwanda, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Singapore, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sudan, Swaziland, Syria, Tajikistan, Tanzania, Thailand, Togo, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Uganda, Ukraine, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Venezuela, Vietnam, Yemen, Zambia, and Zimbabwe. Countries excluded because of missing data include Afghanistan, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Myanmar, North Korea, and Serbia.
12. IPU does not systematically update the number of women in parliaments between elections when ad hoc changes occur following deaths, resignations, or by-elections.
13. Following a reviewer's suggestion, we also coded our data by election rather than at five-year intervals to ensure we did not miss variation in women's representation occurring between our five-year measures. We found that non-democratic countries that did not hold elections were dropped from the dataset (or were limited to very few time points), while non-democratic countries that did hold elections were maintained, thus creating bias in our sample according to our key variable of interest. To alternatively address this concern, we ran a series of correlations between the percent of women in parliament at each of our five-year intervals with the percent of women in parliament at the timing of elections occurring between the five-year intervals. All correlations approached 1 and were significant at the .001 level.
14. Earlier democracies have a mean representation of 10.8 percent women in their legislatures, and countries under authoritarian control have a mean of 9.9 percent, less than 1 percent difference. Box plots reveal that the distribution of women's representation over the two samples is remarkably similar. When we plot the mean levels of women's representation as they change over time, we find the trends are nearly identical.
15. Data on civil strife are from the Uppsala Conflict Data Program (UCDP)/Peace Research Institute Oslo (PRIO) Intrastate Conflict Onset Dataset V.4 (2007) (see Gleditsch et al. 2002). We also tested effects of ongoing civil strife during the five years up to and including our years of panel observations with three alternative specifications: (1) a three-category variable where 0 = no conflict, 1 = minor conflict (< 1,000 deaths), and 2 = major conflict (> 1,000 deaths); (2) a dummy variable where 0 = no conflict and 1 = any conflict; and (3) a dummy where 0 = no conflict and 1 = major conflict. Due to data constraints, these models did not include the last (2009) panel. None of these alternative specifications reached significance in our models.
16. No country in our sample matches the criteria for both civil strife and communist transition, although nations for which we do not have data—such as Bosnia-Herzegovina and Serbia—would likely fit into both categories.
17. We determine transition years by analyzing various historical sources including the CIA-Factbook, State Department reports, and academic studies. For our coding decisions, see Part 1, Table S1 in the online supplement (http://asr.sagepub.com/supplemental).
18. Momentary lapses of democracy that are rectified within a one-year time frame, such as in Thailand from 2006 to 2007, are maintained as democratic.
19. This coding captures a moment of democratization, in contrast to our Polity IV measure, which examines changes in political freedoms over time. Graphical analyses of each nation in our sample ensures that our ''year of transition'' corresponds with a sharp upswing in democratic freedoms (as measured by Polity IV) in all cases, even though the actual Polity IV level that corresponds to each transition year is variable.
20. We also examined differences between three types of quotas: constitutional, legislative, and party. All three were significant and positive in their effects on women's representation. For parsimony, we use the dichotomous measure in the models presented here. Following the Quota Project at

International IDEA and Stockholm University, we code voluntary party quotas as present if at least one party in a legislature enacted them.

21. See Table S1 in the online supplement for quota distributions.
22. In the IDEA database, 1945 is the first year of observations.
23. See note 3. We modify the Polity IV scale by adding 10 to each score, rescaling the measure from the original –10 to 10 scale to a 0 to 20 scale.
24. In our sample of 118 developing countries, 85 experienced colonization. Following Paxton and colleagues (2006), we also estimated models controlling for the experience of a specific colonizing state; our substantive findings remained unchanged.
25. We thank an anonymous reviewer for this coding suggestion. As of 2006, 82 states had ratified or acceded to CEDAW; 58 did so with reservations. We divide these reservations into two groups. The first consists of states that express reservations to the spirit of the Convention, denying women such essential rights as the right to vote, to live in the domicile of their choosing, and to have custody of their own children. We code these states in the same category as states that did not ratify the convention. The second group consists of states that support all provisions of CEDAW in spirit, and agree to remove all discriminatory legislation from their political institutions, but maintain reservations about either implementing new legislation aimed at positive supports for women (e.g., paid maternity leave) or submitting to dispute resolution in the International Court of Justice (Article 29, paragraph 1). We code these states in the same category as states that ratified CEDAW with no reservations. We also tested an alternative specification of CEDAW where 1 = adopted CEDAW with no or minor reservations, 2 = adopted CEDAW with major reservations, and 3 = did not adopt CEDAW. This variable was not significant in any of our models. We determined our coding through analysis of a UN listing of CEDAW reservations (United Nations 2006).
26. Paxton and colleagues' (2006) data conclude in 2003. We compute extrapolated estimates based on their counts for the 2005 and 2009 panel years.
27. We also tested effects of women's labor force participation on women's legislative representation with data from 1980 to 2009. The variable was significant and positive in all of our models and did not change our central findings. However, we excluded this variable from our final analyses because we could not find data for the 1975 panel.
28. To assess collinearity in our models, we calculated Variance Inflation Factors (VIF) for each model, as well as a correlation matrix for all independent variables (see Table A1 in the Appendix). Examination of VIF scores shows significant correlation between the region and religion variables, as well as between the elections count and the multiplicative interaction of democracy and elections. This latter correlation is also evident in the correlation matrix, showing a shared coefficient of .94. However, the presence of collinearity does not cause problems in estimating the significance of the democracy variables (see Wooldridge 2009:99).
29. Although the coefficient for the main effect of elections does not show statistical significance, a Wald test for the collective significance of the interaction is significant at the $p < .05$ threshold. We also ran models measuring electoral experience only from 1975 to 2009. Results from this analysis were substantively the same as results with the longer cumulative election count, suggesting that the importance of increasing electoral experience is consistent across both time periods. We include the longer time period in these models to capture both the historical and contemporary importance of increasing electoral experience with increasing democratic freedoms. See Part 2 of the online supplement for more detail.
30. Using the cumulative election count from 1945, the slope of the curve in Figure 1 becomes positive between the sixth and eighth elections, or between a score of 6 and 7 on our modified Polity IV scale. This would correspond to a Polity IV score of between –4 and –3 on the original Polity IV scale. We also ran models testing for a curvilinear relationship between democracy and women's representation by including the conventional second-order polynomial of a transformed Polity IV score. This second-order term is not significant, suggesting that the curvilinear effect of democracy functions through the interaction with elections, in effect increasing women's political opportunities as both democracy and electoral experience increase.
31. The cumulative interaction effects for each category of democratic transition are calculated by adding the main effect for quotas and the interaction effect for each transition type. For instance, the effect for quotas in countries that transition to democracy from civil strife is 1.612 + 8.592, or 10.204. Countries transitioning from communism or authoritarian regimes do not have significant coefficients for the interaction, and therefore the total effect of quotas in each category is not significantly different than the reference category of non-democracies with no quotas (Chen et al. 2003).
32. We exclude variables for democracy, elections, and the multiplicative interaction between both measures from this model because of increased levels of collinearity between them and the democratic transition variable in the post-1995 period.

33. The Freedom House measure is the average of the Political Rights and Civil Liberties score for each country (Freedom House 2010). We invert the scale so a higher score represents greater freedom and a lower score less freedom to facilitate the comparison with Polity IV.
34. We regressed the democracy measure on all other independent covariates in the full model (Model 1) of Table 2, and then included the predicted residuals from that model in a subsequent model along with all other covariates. Because the coefficient for the predicted residuals was not significant (p = .147), we reject the null hypothesis of endogeneity bias between the Polity IV democracy measure and our dependent variable.
35. To test whether the lack of significant effects is due to multicollinearity between post-civil strife countries, proportional representation electoral systems, and quotas, we re-ran Model 2 in Table 1 without quotas (and no transition variable). Proportional representation electoral systems still did not achieve significance.
36. Due to collinearity, we dropped the Polity IV/elections interaction.
37. When we run the same regression only on countries that have transitioned to democracy, the interaction term is no longer significant, further supporting our claim.

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