

## WOMEN, DEMOCRACY, AND THE STATE

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What role do states and democracies play in development? Although many scholars have addressed this question, fewer have done so with respect to women. In this chapter, we argue that renewed attention to the relationship between states and women would powerfully improve existing sociological analyses of development. We begin by defining how states are fundamentally gendered institutions, and how states both create and reproduce gender relations in the societies they govern. We then turn to the question of whether states are valid sites of contestation for empowering and emancipating women. We examine this question across three different categories of states: Western nations, East European nations, and developing nations. We conclude that a feminist perspective of the state would powerfully extend existing theories about whether and how states influence "development." This is especially true for a new generation of state-centered development research that examines how individuals, through social mobilization and participatory democracy, can influence state development practices (see, e.g., Baiocchi, Heller, and Silva 2011; Evans 2010; Lee 2007; Wolford 2010. See also Paul Almeida's chapter in this volume).

Our chapter is premised on the understanding that gender<sup>1</sup> is always implicated in sociological analyses of development, regardless of how development is formally defined. Our arguments below prioritize a capabilities approach to development, where the importance of gender is relatively straightforward. In this approach, an "ideally" developed society requires that every individual's rights, resources, and "capabilities" exist wholly independently of his or her gender or sexuality (Nussbaum 2000). Yet we note

that the more traditional, market-based approaches to development are also fundamentally gendered (see Valentine Moghadam's and Rae Lesser Blumberg's chapters in this volume). The way a society defines "men" and "women" in turn structures the organization of its families, its labor markets, its wealth transfers, its use of technology, and its knowledge production, among other factors commonly analyzed in development studies. Gender, we argue, mediates states' influence on these development processes.

### GENDER AND THE STATE

To best understand the relationship between states and gender, feminist scholars advocate studying both the *gender of governance* and the *governance of gender* (Brush 2003). In the former, gender systems structure states. In most West European countries, democracies began with men in rule and with women excluded from political participation (Yuval-Davis 1997). During that time period, women were viewed as nurturing and were expected to remain in the home, attend to domestic affairs, or work within feminine-related occupations, such as education or tailoring. The West European society shaped the political realm, and these societal and political constructions were later exported through the process of colonization (Mamdani 1999; Oyèwùmí 1997). Although pre-colonial countries did not necessarily structure their governance according to male leadership, colonizers exerted their force and implemented male-dominated government institutions (Fallon 2008; Parpart and Staudt 1990). Because of men's historical dominance in society, leading to the initial creation of male-only national governments, men continue overwhelmingly to occupy the most powerful positions within government today. For example, in 2014, men held approximately 78.2 percent of all parliamentary positions around the world, whereas women made up only 21.8 percent (Inter-Parliamentary Union 2014). Based on the historical development of state institutions, the assumptions of male dominance continue to influence the structuring of state agencies, laws, and programs in countless ways.<sup>2</sup>

The gender of governance leads, in turn, to the governance of gender; scholars agree that all states "govern" gender because their institutions, policies, and practices help create, maintain, and reproduce the categories of men and women in both direct and indirect ways (Phillips 2012). Directly, states use the categories of "men" and "women" to dictate, among other things, who can vote, who can go to school, who can marry whom, who has the right to control their own sexual and reproductive behavior, and who can be drafted into military service. Indirectly, states shape gender in countless additional ways: for example, social welfare programs formally define what can constitute a "family"; taxations systems place differential values on paid and unpaid labor; the presence, absence, or form of parental leave programs shape expectations and opportunities for mothers and fathers; the availability of affordable child care mitigates mothers' access to paid labor and economic independence; and public healthcare systems determine who can control their own sexual health and reproduction through the drugs and procedures they provide (Brady 2009; Misra, Moller, and Budig 2007; Orloff 2009).

Whether using the frame of the gender of governance or the governance of gender, feminist scholars overwhelmingly agree that states are gendered institutions. However, they frequently disagree about whether states are valid sites of contestation and change for citizens seeking gender equity (Borchorst 1999; Brush 2003; Phillips 2006). In the more pessimistic camp, scholars argue that fighting for women's rights within a masculine state has ultimately been self-defeating because it reifies the category "woman" (Squires 2001, 2008), changes women's dependence from private patriarchy to public patriarchy (Eisenstein 1981; Holter 1984), or simply augments state power and control over citizens in ways that reinforce the existing "condition and construction of women" (Brown 1995: 173). Others see "the state" as too ambiguous and unwieldy to be a useful category for analysis or a useful target for activists (Allen 1990; Kantola 2007). The most radical in this camp argue that the state is simply irredeemable: it is too sexist and too masculine to serve as a vehicle for change (Gould 2014; Davis 2001; MacKinnon 1989; Smart 1989). Therefore, pessimists often suggest that feminist activism is more profitably targeted at other social relations, such as gendered interactions in day-to-day relationships, rather than at "state transformation."

By contrast, scholars in the more optimistic camp argue that states are "where the power is" (Brush 2003, 3; see also Dahlerup 1994). These scholars agree that state structures, policies, and ideologies generally work to reinforce masculine privilege. They maintain, however, that state institutions still provide important sites of contestation and negotiation for women (Chapman 1993; O'Connor, Orloff, and Shaver 1999; Orloff 1996; True and Mintrom 2001; Watson 1990). Indeed, scholars have documented how women's activism has fundamentally altered states' genders in terms of extending voting rights to women (McCammon 2001; McCammon et al. 2001), expanding welfare benefits to reduce women's dependence on men (Brady 2009; Bolzehndahl and Brooks 2007; Gordon 1994; Koven and Michel 1993; Skocpol 1992), and increasing legal protections against gender discrimination in the workplace, in the legal system, in the home, and surrounding the body (Bauer 2008; Chaudhuri 2010; Cooke 2007; Gelb and Hart 1999; Gould 2014; Rhode 1989). Working within a masculine state structure certainly limits, and sometimes undermines, women's victories, they argue, but the state is simply too powerful an arena for leveraging power for feminists to disassociate from it completely (Brush 2003).

In the next section, we review existing arguments about whether states can be sites for gendered change in Western nations, in Eastern Europe, and in developing countries.

#### WESTERN WELFARE STATES

Most early theorizing about states and gender in mainstream sociology focused on wealthy nations.<sup>3</sup> In the 1980s, Catherine MacKinnon (1989), Carole Pateman (1988), and others opened the conversation by arguing that (Western) states are inherently male institutions, created by men, in male-dominated societies, to maintain a social order that

privileges hegemonic masculinity. Feminist scholars supported these contentions by demonstrating, for example, how welfare systems encouraged women's continued reliance on men (Gordon 1990, 1994), how legal systems were more concerned with regulating—rather than prohibiting—rape (MacKinnon 1989), or how variations in states' support and organization of child care directly affected women's power in labor markets and politics (Ruggie 1984; Siim 1990).

As the field developed, feminist scholars became increasingly interested in gendered variations across welfare states. They sought to document whether some states were more "women friendly" than others (Borchorst 1994; Brady and Burroway 2012; Orloff 1996; O'Connor, Orloff, and Shaver 1999; Sainsbury 1996; Wernet 2008) and what historical processes (especially women's mobilizations) might account for these variations (Abramowitz 1988; Muncy 1991; Skocpol 1992; Sklar 1993; Gordon 1994; Goodwin 1997; Pini, Panelli, and Sawyer 2008).<sup>4</sup> They concluded that women's movements' successes in creating more women-friendly states depended on a number of factors: how they framed their issues (Ferre and Gamson 2003; Hobson 2003; Stetson 2001); the organizational structure of the movement (Clemens 1993; Staggenberg 1988); the strategies they utilized (McCammon et al. 2001; Taylor and Van Dyke 2004); the cohesiveness of the movements (Lovenduski 2005); and whether they had allies within the government (Mazur 2001; Stetson 2001). They also found that historically specific characteristics of the state influenced the outcomes of women's mobilizations, attributing cross-national variations to, for example, "strong" versus "weak" states (Koven and Michel 1993), a history of fascism (Bock and Thane 1991), the balance of power among workers, employers, and the state (Pederson 1993), or the demands placed on feminists by the small realm of available allies (Gordon 1994).

These theories demonstrate that states are complex systems of institutions, strategies, and ideologies and tend to reinforce hegemonic masculine privilege in their respective societies, but that states are also vulnerable to change according to historical developments and the influence of (generally women's) mobilizations. Feminist scholars of Western states have given us important tools for theorizing from what types of mobilizations, and under what social and political conditions, gendered change might be possible. However, given their focus on rich, relatively stable nations, these studies often conceptualize states' genders as something that crystallized in the past with the formation of states' welfare systems. They frequently see states as valid sites for contesting gender inequalities, but the changes they study are often incremental, such as modifications of state policies or personnel—the kind of changes expected from social movements operating under the protections, and limitations, of long-standing democratic systems. Thus, feminist theories of Western states provide an important framework from which to start our analysis, but their ability to answer questions about how women's movements might target less-democratic states, or how radical state transformations might lead to more justly gendered political systems, is limited.

## EASTERN EUROPE

The political, social, and economic transformation of Eastern Europe in the 1990s encouraged scholars to ask how states' genders might change in moments of radical transformation. Feminist scholars were initially highly optimistic about the possibility of women's empowerment in the transitioning nations of Eastern Europe. Since women were already active within the government and the public sphere under the former communist regimes, scholars anticipated that this historical female presence in political positions would help create a more feminist-oriented state with democratization (Einhorn 1993). Yet, contrary to this expectation, the transition did not create more women-friendly states, and many writers would argue it reinforced the masculinity of the state apparatus (Einhorn 1993; Watson 1993). With democratization, women's participation in the state dropped precipitously, and men came to dominate the national government and its agenda. To illustrate, in the first post-transition elections, women's representation dropped from 29.5 to 6 percent in the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic, from 20.9 to 8.5 percent in Bulgaria, from approximately 50 to 9.5 percent in Poland, and from 33 to 3.5 percent in Romania (Watson 1993). Moreover, maternity leave policies were curtailed, women's legislative quotas were dismantled, funding for child care centers decreased significantly, and there were attempts to end women's rights to abortion (Einhorn 1993; Gal and Kligman 2000; Haney 1994; Pascall and Manning 2000; Watson 1993). After democratization, many of the East European states began to resemble the highly masculine makeup of their West European neighbors.

How did this "democratic" transformation generate more highly masculine government structures? In hindsight, scholars concluded that the original communist states' "women-friendliness" was perhaps only an appearance. Women's representation within the legislative bodies was high because of quotas, but these legislatures were mere window dressings for the Central Committees of the ruling Communist Parties, where the policies and agenda of East European states were determined. Women's representation in the Central Committee for the Communist Party in the Soviet Union was less than 5 percent, and thus women's actual political power in the state was weak. The Communist Party also exalted women as both laborers and reproducers of the nation; thus, they were expected to have children, care for the family, and work regular shift hours (Einhorn 1993; Watson 1993; Haney 1994; Gal and Kligman 2000; Pascall and Manning 2000). Because of these multiple demands, women attempted to subvert the state by using the home as a refuge from the communist state's agenda (Einhorn 1993; Gal and Kligman 2000; Gerber and Perelli-Harris 2012; Haney 1994; Watson 1993).

In addition to overestimating the women-friendliness of the pre-transition states, scholars argued that the former Communist Party's iron-handed control over political organizing, and the sense that women had in some ways already achieved equality, meant that women were poorly mobilized *as women* before the transition so were not able to act on behalf of women during and after the transition (Einhorn 1993). Although women's

organizations existed, they were generally not unified and tended to focus on educational and economic concerns (Berthussen Gottlick 1999; Silova and Magno 2004). Women's organizations in pre-transition Eastern Europe had remained relatively localized, further limiting their connections to the international women's movement (Fallon, Swiss, and Viterna 2012). Moreover, because the former Communist Party expounded a commitment to gender equality, albeit more in ideology than in practice, women as well as men conflated gender equality and feminism with communism in the post-transition period, and they distanced themselves from these terms and representations (Haney 1994; Gal and Kligman 2000).

As the years have progressed post-transition, women's political access to and participation within the state appears to be improving. From the initial drop post-transition to 2014, women's representation increased from 6 percent in the Czech and Slovak Federal Republic to 19.5 percent in the Czech Republic and to 18.7 percent in Slovakia, from 8.5 to 20 percent in Bulgaria, from 9.5 to 24.3 percent in Poland, and from 3.5 to 13.5 percent in Romania (Inter-Parliamentary Union 2014). This increase in representation has occurred despite the fact that Eastern Europe continues to lag behind other regions of the world in the adoption of quotas guaranteeing minimal levels of women's representation (Fallon, Swiss, and Viterna 2012). The initial democratic transition led women to withdraw from, while men usurped, political power. Often, men who held pre-transition political power were the first elected to new political offices with democratization. However, as women became increasingly savvy about how to effectively engage the new democratic systems, post-transition limits on political office eventually helped force old-guard male politicians out of power, creating space for new players. The lessening of state coercion, combined with women's growing familiarization with and trust of the new democratic system, increased women's willingness to engage the state on behalf of their gendered rights (Fallon, Swiss, and Viterna 2012). East European women gradually reentered politics. Moving forward, current research is now beginning to examine how women's increasing physical presence in political structures may promote gender-equitable states (Forest 2006; Fuszara 2010; Millard 2014).

In sum, although democratization in Eastern Europe initially created more highly masculine states rather than more gender equitable states, scholars have not pessimistically dismissed the state as irredeemable. Rather, the East European case has provided additional evidence that states' genders are strongly influenced by path-dependent historical processes and by the presence or absence of feminist movements and allies.

## DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

Feminist scholars of developing nations lament that much theorizing about gender and the state has been developed in Western contexts (Waylen 1996). Such theories do not easily translate to non-Western nations, where men's and women's patterns of political engagement with the state are strikingly different. Often these gendered political patterns

in developing nations are rooted in European colonial histories. In many cases, colonizers usurped and restructured existing political institutions to best meet their own needs, often by encouraging women to remain in the domestic realm while encouraging men to become educated or active laborers (Bujra 1986; Fallon 2008; Stamp 1986). For example, among the Igbo in Nigeria, the *obi*, who traditionally represented the needs of the men within the community, were appointed to local government positions by the British. However, the *omui*, who represented the needs of the women within the community, were disregarded by colonial institutions. Similarly, among the Kikuyu in Kenya, male elders, who had held positions within their lineage prior to colonization, were appointed as chiefs, sub-chiefs, and judges under new colonial systems. Yet women, who also traditionally held positions of power within their lineages, were not appointed to new colonial positions.

When European colonies gained independence, their new post-colonial governments often initially proved weak and unstable. Newly independent states seldom had the resources necessary to run governments, and the state institutions they inherited had been created to serve their colonizers' needs rather than the needs of their own populations (Rodney 1972). Often, the withdrawal of colonial authorities left a power vacuum, and, with no institutional process in place for choosing new leaders, many nations experienced political instability. The outcomes of those instabilities varied across nations, with some countries developing formal democratic systems, others coming under control of authoritarian regimes, and still others experiencing years of civil strife.

As a result, most developing nations tend to be weak in their administrative capacities and typically have little funding for social welfare or policy enforcement, which influences how states can interact with women.<sup>5</sup> States most often figure in non-Western women's lives when they transcend some social boundary and are returned to order by brute state force (Rai 1996, 36). Moreover, women in developing nations often have lower levels of literacy and employment and higher levels of income inequality than their West or East European counterparts and are more likely to engage the state outside of conventional politics. Not surprisingly, then, much research on gender and the state in developing nations has called for a broader definition of the political and has focused on the rich tradition of women's mobilizations and participation in civil society as key components of state challenges.

Unfortunately, the result of this focus on women's mobilizations has been the conversion of the state into a secondary character, which is often treated monolithically as "good" or "bad" in its reactions to women's organizing. Yet state structures are important because, as state structures vary, so do their responses to women's mobilizations. One particular variation in state structures, the presence of women, is critical not only in determining responses to women's mobilization but also in determining legislative action. For example, in relation to women's political presence, local councils in South Africa that have more women are more likely to focus on the urgent issue of HIV/AIDS (Lieberman 2012), and, in India, village councils with more than one-third women are

more likely to address the needs of women, such as access to drinking water—minimizing women's time spent collecting water from afar (Chattopadhyay and Duflo 2004). At the national level, women legislators in Malaysia worked to address child care, child education, and child safety concerns (Zakuan 2010); in Tanzania, they focused debates on issues ranging from education to health, poverty, water, and energy and managed to pass legislation addressing concerns ranging from sexual offenses to access to land and girls' education (Yoon 2011); in Timor-Leste, women legislators passed a resolution on gender-responsive budgeting (Costa, Sawyer, and Sharp 2013). Cross-nationally, as women's legislative representation increases, children's health also improves (Swiss, Fallon, and Burgos 2012). These findings suggest that understanding the gendered state becomes essential to the process of development. Moreover, the role of the gendered state in tandem with women's mobilization is particularly important across developing countries, where political instability and variation of government rule (or lack thereof) exists.

#### WOMEN'S MOBILIZATIONS, THE DEMOCRATIZING STATE, AND PESSIMISM

Over the past several decades, transitions to democracy across Africa, Asia, and Latin America have provided women's mobilizations with unprecedented opportunities to fundamentally transform existing state structures and promote new "women friendly" political institutions (Fallon, Swiss, and Viterna 2012; Hassim 2006; Huiscamp 2000; Viterna and Fallon 2008). Buttressed by international conventions like CEDAW and the international women's movement, local women's movements have routinely taken advantage of the unprecedented political opening of transition to push newly democratizing states to adopt national quotas<sup>6</sup> and to create national political institutions specifically tasked with supporting and maintaining gender equity in state policies and practices (Chen 2010; Krook 2006).

Unlike Eastern Europe, these developing states had little pretext of being "women friendly" prior to their transitions.<sup>7</sup> Whether transitioning from dictatorships or civil strife, undemocratic regimes were highly masculine (Manuh 1993; Tsikata 1989). Unlike men, women could not gain political positions through coups, bribes, or appointments by other men (Tripp 1994). Women who did gain political positions often did so through family members, or they held positions with little influence on government policy (Geisler 1995).

Women's absence from formal political structures in authoritarian states contrasted sharply with women's central role in the civil society mobilizations that forced these authoritarian states into democratic transitions. Feminist research documents extensive and powerful mobilizations of women's organizations against authoritarian states (and especially against their human rights abuses) at precisely the moment when more typically masculine forms of doing politics (political parties, labor unions) were effectively silenced by state repression (Alvarez 1990; Fisher 1990; Noonan 1995). Women also

constituted an estimated 30 percent of the guerrilla armies that quite literally fought to dismantle authoritarian regimes in nations like Nicaragua and El Salvador (Viterna 2006, 2013). Given scholars' previous findings that feminist changes in state structures occur most readily when women are mobilized, it is perhaps not surprising that scholars anticipated similar feminist outcomes in transitioning states. Women had proven themselves fearless fighters for political transformation under repressive authoritarian regimes; how could they not continue the political fight for gender equity under new democratic institutions?

Despite the initial optimism about organized women's potential to transform states' gender with democratization, early studies often reported disappointing outcomes.<sup>8</sup> Numerous case studies found that, with democratization, women's gains during pre-transition mobilizations were overturned (Cagan 2000; Chinchilla 1994), there was a widespread reassertion of traditional gender expectations (Jaquette 1994; Rai 1996), women's pre-transition mobilizations waned in the post-transition period (Craske 1998), and, in some nations, women's electoral representation in parliament actually declined (Fisher 1993; Jaquette and Wolchik 1998; Jelin 1990). Democratic transitions may have eliminated authoritarian barriers to women's political participation, but studies consistently found that women's political power increased little, if any, with initial democratization (Bystydziński and Sekhon 1999; Geisler 1995; Friedman 2000; Jaquette and Wolchik 1998; Kelly et al. 2001; Walby 1992), and some argued that women were likely worse off after democratization—politically, socially, and economically—than they were under previous regimes (Hawkesworth 2001).<sup>9</sup>

As in Eastern Europe, scholars of developing countries generated a number of explanations for women's disappointing gains with democratization. First, several scholars argued that the countries' historical and political contexts shaped the *manner* in which women mobilized under authoritarian regimes, and this choice of strategies limited women's ability to gain political power after democratization. By closing down political options typically considered "masculine" (such as political parties and labor unions), repressive authoritarian regimes inadvertently promoted women's "feminine" mobilizations through community-based, family-oriented protests. Women protesters shrewdly incorporated the authoritarian regimes' own gendered discourse of women as pious, self-sacrificing mothers into the framing of their claims against the state. Authoritarian regimes thus found themselves in the uncomfortable position of trying to justify the repression of women who had mobilized around feminine themes that the regime itself had earlier exalted (Alvarez 1990; Chuchryk 1989; Friedman 2000; Okeke-Ihejirika and Franceschet 2002; Ray and Korteweg 1999; Sternbach et al. 1992).<sup>10</sup> With democratization, however, new political players on both the left and the right utilized women's own discourse of motherhood, and of innate gender differences, to encourage women's return to the household (Chinchilla 1994; Fisher 1993; Friedman 1998; Schild 1994).<sup>11</sup>

Second, many argue that democratization marginalizes women because, under democratization, political parties—not social movements—control access to the state (O'Donnell and Schmitter 1986). Given that political parties are typically patriarchal and resistant to women's participation, women have historically found their strongest political voice within social movements. Paradoxically, then, authoritarian states may have opened space for women's mobilizations that was in turn closed by democratization and the institutionalization of conventional political channels (Friedman 2000; Jelin 1990; Nelson and Chowdhury 1994).

A third proposed explanation is that pre-transition women's mobilizations were co-opted or institutionalized by the state and by political parties after democratization (Alvarez 1999; Okeke-Ihejirika and Franceschet 2002; Richards 2004; Vargas 2002). For example, women associated with political parties prior to the transition often found their gender-specific goals subsumed to the party's "mainstream" goals (Luciak 2001). Likewise, states sometimes instituted a new women's office within the state machinery after democratization, but they constrained the effectiveness of these new institutions with laws, bureaucracy, and funding shortages. Leaders of women's movements were often the first to transition to the leadership positions within new women's offices of the state or women's branches of parties, or even new gender-specific NGOs, thus crippling women's social movements by removing many movement leaders at the precise moment of democratic opening (Hassim 2006; Viterna and Fallon 2008). Moreover, women who find themselves in paid positions often tend to be of a higher class, and better educated, than women who remain in community-based social movements, leading to a problem of cohesion and collaboration within the movements themselves (Waylen 1994). This concern about co-optation has led many women's movements in developing nations to declare autonomy from states and political parties, thus giving them freedom to pursue their own agendas and collaborate with a wide range of political interests, even though it may limit their access to the state and their funding options (Alvarez 1999; Beckwith 2000; Jaquette 1994; Tripp 2000; Waylen 1994).<sup>12</sup>

The final argument explaining democracy's disappointing outcomes for women is the one most familiar to development scholars: the neoliberal economic policy changes that typically accompany democratization diminished women's ability to participate in politics by increasing women's already unfair workload (Cagan 2000; Jelin 1998). Privatization and structural adjustment made basic necessities like food, healthcare, and education increasingly difficult to access, thus increasing women's time spent in care-giving roles, while liberalization of the economy reduced wages and opportunities for organizing on the job, especially in export-oriented production work often dominated by women's labor (Blumberg and Salazar-Palacios 2011; Darkwah 2010; Gideon 1999). Because of neoliberal policies accompanying democratization, then, women's free time was restricted, and their associations with individuals and organizations outside the home were limited, resulting in women having little time, resources, or networks to facilitate any sort of political involvement (Yoo 2011).<sup>13</sup>

Amid the many pessimistic prognostications for women's gains with democratization is a small, optimistic literature focusing on gender and revolution. In an initial theoretical investigation of gender and revolution, Valentine Moghadam (1997) argues that some revolutions, like those in Nicaragua, Afghanistan, and South Yemen, are modernizing, egalitarian, and focus on women's emancipation, whereas others, like revolutions in Iran and Poland, stress family and gender differences and reinforce patriarchy. In Latin America, Karen Kampwirth (2004) uses case studies to argue that revolutionary movements inadvertently engendered feminist movements by providing women with new ideologies of equality, new political skills, and new networks with other women activists, both locally and internationally. Both conclude that revolutions may not have transformed the gender of the state, but they did transform the lives of the women activists within the revolution, such that these women have launched strong, vibrant, autonomous feminist movements that are qualitatively different from feminist movements in the West.

More recent studies provide additional reasons to believe that, with time, democratic transitions may improve women's legislative representation, potentially transforming the gender of governance. Similar to Eastern Europe, democratization had a curvilinear effect on women's national political representation in developing states (Fallon, Swiss, and Viterna 2012; Bjarnegård 2013). With the initial transition to democracy, nations often experienced a precipitous drop in representation. However, with each additional year, women's representation improved. Countries that had longer histories with nominally competitive (albeit undemocratic) elections prior to their transitions saw relatively faster increases in women's legislative representation after their transitions, suggesting that women's representation improved as their familiarity with the electoral system increased (Fallon, Swiss, and Viterna 2012). Although all countries gained from democratization, those that transitioned from civil strife appear to have gained the most (Hughes 2009) in part because they were the most likely to initiate working electoral quotas with their transitions (Fallon, Swiss, and Viterna 2012). In short, the implementation of quotas plus women's increasing trust of, and adaptation to, the new political systems seem to account for these gradual improvements in women's political representation (Bjarnegård and Melander 2011; Fallon, Swiss, and Viterna 2012; Tripp and Kang 2008).

Although it remains to be seen how women's increasing legislative presence may affect gender-equitable development, we point to four additional reasons for optimism in state-gender relations among developing nations. First, women's movements in developing nations often connected to the international women's movement prior to democratization, and these transnational resources proved useful for successfully pressuring democratizing states to implement gender-equitable laws and institutions during the transition (Bush 2011; Krook 2009; Viterna and Fallon 2008). These transnational con-

nections seem to have given many women's movements in the Global South an ally that East European women's organizations were slower to expropriate, and we anticipate that transnational allies will continue to be influential.

Second, the new global trend of implementing gender quotas has spread even to nations with low levels of democracy and less powerful women's movements (Bauer 2012; Fallon, Swiss, and Viterna 2012; Paxton, Hughes, and Painter 2010; Stockemer 2014; Tripp and Kang 2008). Given quotas' proven potential for powerfully increasing women's formal political representation, we suggest that quotas may help build women's political power from the top down, even in contexts where bottom-up mobilizations may struggle.

Third, as women gain increased access to state resources and representation, and as they continue to be connected to international mobilization, they also successfully work to implement laws to protect women. Laurel Weldon and Mala Htun (2012), for example, demonstrate that domestic violence laws and resources to support survivors of domestic violence are more successful in countries where women's local and international movements are active.

Fourth and finally, many developing states are experimenting with their own novel practices for equalizing political power, such as the implementation of participatory direct democracy in nations like Brazil and India (Baioocchi, Heller, and Silva 2011). These new options for political participation have already increased women's participation at the local level in at least some instances (Agarwal 2010; Gibson 2012). Given findings that women's formal representation increases as their familiarity with electoral politics improves, we anticipate that the long-term impacts of such local-level participation on state structures may ultimately be very positive.

In sum, although scholars initially reached a largely pessimistic consensus about democracy's ability to create more justly gendered states and societies in developing nations, later studies demonstrate that, as democracy progresses, it does provide new space for women to increase their political power and participation. Women have become more involved with national politics through democratic political structures, and they have lobbied for changes in policies affecting women. Of note, despite the striking differences in national contexts, studies engaging gender and the state within developing countries concur with scholars of Western states that women's activism in social movements—albeit constrained by the path-dependent governance structures and historical political cultures already in place—are the primary vehicles for achieving more gender-equitable states.

## CONCLUSION

Existing studies sometimes suggest that developing state governments, by virtue of their relative institutional weakness, instability, and lack of resources, are not well positioned to shape development outcomes. Yet this review demonstrates how developing nations'

relative institutional instability can also open new opportunities for state-led improvements in human capabilities. Women's movements in stable democracies may often benefit from institutionalized state protection and broader social acceptance of feminist ideals, but they seldom achieve more than incremental gender changes when targeting state institutions— institutions that have been stable centers of political power across centuries. In contrast, women's movements in newly emerging democracies have often successfully capitalized on moments of instability and transition to demand that women's rights and needs be integrated into new state offices, policies, and procedures. Indeed, by some measures— particularly the measure of women's political representation in national legislatures—many poor nations have surpassed their rich counterparts in promoting gender equity in state governance. We certainly do not aim to downplay the difficulties that women in developing nations suffer when their national governments provide inadequate and gender-biased legal, judicial, educational, or welfare systems. Rather, we draw attention to how, despite the gutting of state power with neoliberal policies, *all* states' policies and practices continue to shape the different opportunities and identities available to men and women, making states valid sites for studying and supporting a gender-sensitive, capabilities-driven development.

There is still much research needed on the relationship between gender, states, and development. First, scholars still struggle to identify what factors or outcomes would constitute a "woman friendly" or "gender equitable" state. For example, Western nations that adopt more "family friendly" policies successfully increase rates of women's labor force participation, but these same family policies may simultaneously make it harder for women to achieve positions of power in the work place, effectively lowering and hardening the proverbial glass ceiling (Mandel and Semyonov 2005). In Cuba, authoritarian state crack down on some political and social freedoms—like the freedom to organize—but the same authoritarian state guarantees broad access to reproductive health services for women. Rwanda has progressive gender-sensitive laws, more girls than boys in primary school, and the world's highest percentage of women in parliament. Yet most Rwandan women continue to have difficulty accessing their new rights given entrenched social norms about the necessity of marriage (Berry 2015). Given that advances in one arena may come with—or even generate—setbacks in another, and given the masculine bias of all national governments despite level of economic development, what might a gender-equitable state look like?

Second, we need to improve our understandings of how states influence and are influenced by civil society, both at the national and the transnational levels. World-policy theorists argue that transnational networks of international nongovernmental organizations (INGOs) and intergovernmental organizations (IGOs) are creating a new "global culture" that celebrates gender equality (Berkovitch 1999; Meyer et al. 1997)—a process underlying our above discussion of the diffusion of gender quotas and laws against gendered violence. Yet the theories and methods used by world-policy scholars often ignore other powerful agents of global governance—like transnational religious institutions—that are much more likely to retrench, rather than support, women's political, economic,

and social rights. The intensifying criminalization of abortion in Latin America (Viterna 2012, 2014a, 2014b) and same-sex relations in Africa (Currier 2012; Kaoma 2012) demonstrates how states may powerfully institutionalize gender discrimination just as easily as they might legislate gender equality in the present transnational world.

Finally, although the presentation of the current literature on gendered theory of the state is presented according to geographical locations, this is not meant to indicate a homogenization of a region or a state. There are, of course, striking variations across countries within all of our categorizations. For example, Romania's access to abortion differs greatly from most other East European nations (Benson, Anderson, and Samandari 2011). States' genders are shaped by their path-dependent histories. Researchers may find it useful to group states by certain shared historical events, like colonialism, but more research investigating why even similarly situated states sometimes have different gender outcomes is needed.

Furthermore, variation is found not just across states but also within states. The way in which state policies influence gender differs across individuals, often according to intersecting characteristics such as age, race, minority status, sexuality, religion, ability, and socioeconomic status. Although some states may appear more women friendly, benefits may accrue primarily to privileged women (Currier 2012; Hughes 2011).<sup>14</sup> Individuals who fall outside the gender binary may face some of the greatest restrictions to state resources. Some scholars have begun to explore these variations (Cabral and Vituro 2006; Canaday 2009; Connell 2012; Smith 2008; Solymár and Takács 2007); however, more research is needed.

Over the past decade, development practitioners have reached an overwhelming consensus that "empowering women" is a—and perhaps *the*—fundamental condition necessary for achieving any form of development.<sup>15</sup> Meanwhile, politicians are increasingly and emphatically using gender—and states' policing of gender roles—to demarcate battle lines in the global "war on terror" (Charad 2011). Yet despite this clear real-world relevance, scholars of development have paid too little attention to the relationship between states and gender, especially as compared to the vast and varied theories of gendered states that have been developed by political scientists and political sociologists. As development scholars rethink the parameters of a "new" sociology of development—one that takes states seriously, that investigates issues of development in Western nations as well as in developing nations, and that is relevant to policy decisions (see Samuel Cohn and Gregory Hooks's introduction to this volume)—they would be wise to investigate how gendered states affect development outcomes in the societies they study as well as how citizen mobilizations can sometimes powerfully shape those development outcomes by promoting gendered transformations in state policies, practices, and institutions.

NOTES

1. Although we recognize that gender is not limited to a binary and that it incorporates a multitude of variations, for the purpose of this chapter, gender is used primarily in reference to cisgender women and cisgender men.

2. El Salvador provides a relatively straightforward illustration that the gender of government continues today. Like most of the world's nations, El Salvador signed onto the U.N. Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, or CEDAW, in 1981. To fulfill the expectations of CEDAW, and in response to pressure from local women's movements after democratization, the Salvadoran state created a national-level "women's office" in 1996 (Viterna and Fallon 2008), giving it a mandate to police all other state agencies for gender discriminatory practices. Nevertheless, since its founding, each Salvadoran president has appointed his wife, the First Lady, to head the women's institute. This creates a highly visible gendered division of political power in El Salvador: men are presidents, and their wives run the "women's institute," regardless of whether they have any qualification for that position. The idea that a woman might ever be president, or that a male president could ever have a male spouse, is thus negated by the organizational structure of the very institution that was designed to promote gender equity in state governance. (The projects prioritized by the institute have, not surprisingly, varied in accordance with the political ideologies of the party in power. Nevertheless, the institutionalization of "president" as "heterosexual male" remains the same across any First Lady's gender ideology.)

3. There was, however, a notable literature on women and state-building in developing nations that emerged in the latter part of the 1980s, especially in the Middle East and South Asia. See Valentine Moghadam's chapter in this volume for details.

4. Excellent overviews of feminist state theory, focusing on the Western welfare state, include Brush 2003, Haney 2000, Borchorst 1999, and Orloff 1996. Lynne Haney (1996) further encourages scholars to conceptualize the state as a network of institutions and to study gender variation across those institutions within a single state.

5. Strong states in the Middle East and North Africa are notable exceptions. See Moghadam 2013.

6. Generally speaking, gender quotas are political policies that mandate a certain percentage of seats to be reserved for women in elected or appointed political positions. Many nations have implemented some sort of national or party-level gender quotas, but cross-national variations in quota type, reach, implementation, and effectiveness remain extensive. See Krook 2006 and Fallon, Swiss, and Viterna 2012 for overviews.

7. Some exceptions include communist countries (e.g., Vietnam, Cuba, and China), and authoritarian governments in the Middle East like Tunisia (which instituted women-friendly laws under a staunchly secular regime) and Algeria (which prioritized some political guarantees of gender equity as an outgrowth of its revolutionary movement, even while maintaining an Islamic state). See Moghadam 2013.

8. Some scholarship did highlight positive outcomes. For example, in South Africa, the Women's National Coalition worked to improve women's representation within the constitution and formal political structures. Yet even in these more positive cases, scholars expressed strong concerns about the durability of feminist advances. Continuing with the South Africa example, the Women's National Coalition was dismantled after the transition to democracy was completed. Similarly, scholars have noted a disconnect between relatively "feminist" laws passed with democratization in the more positive cases and the continuing patriarchal practices within those states' legislative, executive, and judicial systems. Scholars also expressed concern about whether women who gained political power with democratization would con-

tinue to work with and for women's on-the-ground organizing. See, e.g., Britton 2002; Hassim 2006; Meer 2005; Seidman 2003.

9. Although the majority of this literature examines cases in Latin America (Friedman 2000), Jane Jaquette and Sharon Wolchik (1998) extend the comparison to Eastern Europe, Kathleen Sheldon (1994) and Catherine Scott (1994) find similar trends in Africa, and Valentine Moghadam (2013) explores the complexity of politics and women's rights in the Middle East. Quantitative cross-sectional studies similarly found that levels of democracy had no statistical impact, or a significant but negative impact, on women's legislative representation (Kenworthy and Malami 1999; Paxton 1997; Paxton and Kumovich 2003; Reynolds 1999).

10. Examples of activism that promoted traditional feminine images include motherhood-based human rights groups, where women marched to condemn authoritarian governments for kidnapping and killing their family members (Fisher 1990; Stephen 1997), and movements for social welfare, where women organized as housewives to protest rising prices, shrinking social services, and their increasing difficulty in feeding and caring for their families (Jelin 1990; Neuhouser 1998). Opposition groups also used traditional narratives of "mother" to justify their increasing use of political violence (Viterna 2013). Though certainly strategic, the "mother" identity was also heartfelt (Bayard de Volo 2007); women strongly believed that their status as women made them particularly qualified to talk about suffering and human rights.

11. Although these movements did little to challenge the traditional patriarchal society, some scholars argue that "feminine" movements can and do overlap and develop into "feminist" ideologies (Molyneux 1985; Stephen 1997), but little is written about which movements evolve, which languish, and whether this broadening of movement goals results in gendered changes within the state apparatus.

12. Susan Franceschet (2003) provides an excellent overview of this literature and counters that Chile's state agency for women, the Servicio Nacional de la Mujer, has actually strengthened women's mobilizing.

13. Others have shown how neoliberalism may have generated women's mobilization as well (e.g., Almeida and Delgado 2008; DiMarco 2011; Moghadam 2009).

14. Feminist literature on citizenship delves into these differences. See Dietz 2003 for an overview.

15. To illustrate: the U.N. Development Programme focuses "on gender equality and women's empowerment not only as human rights, but also because they are a pathway to achieving the Millennium Development Goals and sustainable development" (<http://www.undp.org/content/undp/en/home/ourwork/womenempowerment/overview.html>). CARE, a large international nongovernmental organization, places a "special focus on working alongside poor women because, equipped with the proper resources, women have the power to help whole families and entire communities escape poverty" (<http://www.care.org/about/index.asp>). Oxfam International simply states, "Human development is driven by empowered women" (<http://www.oxfam.org/en/about/how-oxfam-fights-poverty>).

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