

# FORGING IRON LADIES

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DISSECTING THE GLOBAL SPREAD OF PARLIAMENTARY GENDER

QUOTAS

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*States Parties shall take in all fields, in particular in the political, social, economic and cultural fields, all appropriate measures, including legislation, to ensure the full development and advancement of women, for the purpose of guaranteeing them the exercise and enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms on a basis of equality with men.*

- Article 3, Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women

*Quotas for women entail that women must constitute a certain number or percentage of the members of a body, whether it is a candidate list, a parliamentary assembly, a committee, or a government.*

- International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (IDEA)

## ABSTRACT

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This paper seeks to explain the global proliferation of parliamentary gender quotas by analyzing its relationship with democracy and conflict. I argue that long-standing democracies, transitional democracies, and post-conflict states are more likely to adopt quotas, albeit for different reasons. I also argue that the size, type, and outcome of a quota are influenced by whether the quota adopter is a long-standing democracy, a transitional democracy, or a post-conflict state. A cross-national study of 169 countries between 1970 and 2011 largely supports these predictions. The evidence suggests that the spike in quota adoption in recent decades is readily explicable: the collapse of the USSR ushered in a wave of democratization and renewed age-old ethnic conflicts. Such changes created the ideal conditions for quota adoption in many parts of the world.

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## INTRODUCTION<sup>1</sup>

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In the past two decades, the number of countries adopting parliamentary gender quotas has soared. Between 1930 and 1990, twenty-two countries introduced quotas (Krook and True 2009). Since then, as Figure 1 illustrates, over ninety countries have joined the list (Krook 2009). Notably, developing nations in Asia, Africa, and the Middle East are leading the way in quota adoption. Afghanistan, for instance, has reserved 27 percent of seats in its lower house and a third of the seats in its upper house for women (Dahlerup 2009). Meanwhile, in Rwanda, women outnumber men in parliament (Dahlerup 2009). This paper will explain why quotas are adopted, examine how they are implemented, and assess to extent to which the measures promote gender equality.<sup>2</sup>

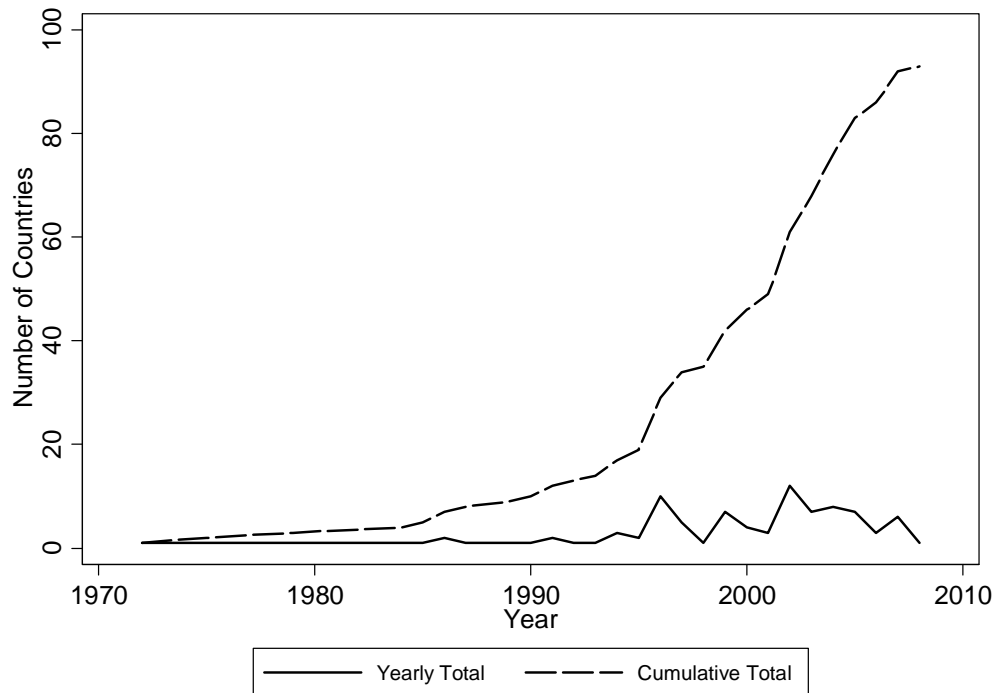
The rapid growth of parliamentary gender quotas is puzzling for several reasons. First, quotas have spread rapidly and are concentrated among developing nations. Second, although quotas reduce the number of male legislators, they are often passed with large margins of support by male-dominated parliaments (Murray, Krook and Opello 2009). Third, quotas have become more stringent. A growing number of countries have introduced reserved seats for women while minimum thresholds of 30 percent are fast becoming the norm (see Fig. 2). Yet, despite having

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<sup>2</sup> While parliamentary gender quotas currently exist to a lesser extent at provincial and municipal levels, this paper focuses on national-level quotas.

become one of the most visible instruments for politically empowering women, quotas are still viewed with skepticism. Critics contend that such measures are a superficial fix that ultimately reinforce gender stereotypes and undermine the legitimacy of independently elected female legislators (Mansbridge 2005).



**FIGURE 1.** Adoption of Parliamentary Gender Quotas Worldwide, 1970-2009

*Note:* Countries with populations <500,000 are excluded along with countries for which the date of quota adoption is unknown.

*Source:* Author.

This paper seeks to explain recent patterns of quota adoption by analyzing its relationship with democracy and conflict. I argue that being a long-standing democracy, a transitional democracy, or a post-conflict state not only increases a country's likelihood of adopting quotas, but also determines the size, type, and outcome of the quota. A cross-national study of 169





The current scholarship on quotas focuses on three areas of debate: (1) the theoretical value of quotas, (2) why quotas are adopted, and (3) why quotas have different outcomes. At the theoretical level, scholars disagree over whether quotas are necessary, or even useful for promoting gender equality. Supporters believe measures that increase female parliamentary representation help strengthen democracy by creating legislatures that better reflect the electorates they serve (Dahl 1989; Pitkin 1967). Advocates of quotas also believe that female politicians are needed to represent women's interests (Phillips 1995; Reingold 2000). Gender inequality, these scholars argue, will be reduced only when women are better represented in parliament (Phillips 1995).

Critics of quotas, however, see the dearth of female legislators as a manifestation of broader gender inequalities. Such scholars argue that discrimination against women extends beyond politics into other social institutions such as schools and the workforce. Opponents of quotas argue that priority should be given to fostering social change: once gender inequalities are breached, the number of women in parliament will naturally increase (Krook 2006). Quotas, meanwhile, may simply *hide* rather than reduce the prevalence of gender discrimination (Caul 1999).

The current literature has also studied the quota adoption process. Currently, there are four primary explanations for *why* quotas are adopted. The first explanation argues that quota adoption is primarily the result of *women's movements*. Female politicians and women's organizations can instigate quotas by acting as agenda-setters and policy innovators (Bruhn 2003; Connell 1998; Kittilson 2006). The second explanation argues that *political elites* strategically introduce quotas to consolidate power. Specifically, quotas can enhance a party's appeal to the public and allow leaders to bring female supporters to power (Howard-Merriam

1990; Matland and Studlar 1996; Millard and Ortiz 1998; Schmidt 2003). Meanwhile, the third account of quota adoption focuses on *changing social norms*. This explanation argues that the recent growth in quotas is an offshoot of growing public sensitivity towards representational equality (Bauer and Britton 2006; Hassim 2002; Krook 2006; Opello 2006). Finally, a fourth explanation examines quotas in the developing world. According to this account of quota adoption, *international actors* – notably Western democracies, NGOs, and intergovernmental organizations – have increasingly used financial and political incentives to press developing nations into adopting quotas (Ballington and Dahlerup 2006; Bush 2011; Corrin 2001; Htun and Jones 2002; Leijenaar 1997).

Most recently, scholars have turned to analyzing why quotas have disparate effects. Presently, three competing explanations have arisen to account for the differences in quota outcomes. The first explanation argues that *quota size* and *type* determine the extent to which quotas increase the number of women elected to power (Leijenaar 1997; Jones 1998; Schmidt and Saunders 2004). The second line of thought focuses on how quotas align with existing electoral institutions. Here, scholars conclude that *proportional representation systems* are better at increasing the number of female legislators than majoritarian systems (Caul 1999; Htun and Jones 2002; Matland 2006). Meanwhile, a third explanation argues that active support from *political elites* is crucial for quota success (Araujo 2003; Holli, Luhtakallio, and Raevaara 2006; Murray 2004).

A key weakness in the literature, however, is the fact that scholars have often drawn their conclusions from country and regional studies. As a result, existing research lacks coherence and generalizability (Krook 2007). For instance, scholars studying gender quotas in the West emphasize the steady increase in the number of women elected to parliament (Caul 2001). By

contrast, those studying Latin America and Africa have reported great variability in the levels of female representation following quota adoption (Htun and Jones 2002). Meanwhile, the literature on Eastern Europe stresses public opposition to quotas in the years after the collapse of the USSR (Matland and Montgomery 2003).

In an effort to address the weaknesses in the literature, this paper undertakes a cross-national study of the universe of cases on quota adoption. The goal of this study is to provide a more complete and coherent narrative of why quotas are adopted, how they are implemented, and why some succeed while others fail. This study's findings will be useful for forecasting future developments in the field and assessing whether quotas are worthwhile, if at all.

This paper is divided into six parts. In Section I, I detail the history and recent developments in quota adoption around the world. In Section II, I review the current literature on quotas. In Section III, I outline my proposed framework for understanding quotas. Drawing on existing research, I hypothesize that being a long-standing democracy, a transitional democracy, or a post-conflict state increases a country's likelihood of adopting quotas and determines the size, type, and outcome of the quota. In Section IV, I discuss the data used in my study. In Section V, I present and analyze the results of my study. Here, I conclude that the presence of democracy and conflict *do* influence the likelihood of quota adoption as well as the size, type, and outcome of the quota. Finally, in Section VI, I use comparative case studies that contrast Sweden and Finland, Lithuania and Latvia, Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Jordan and Morocco to illustrate this paper's empirical findings with greater detail and nuance.

## QUOTAS: A BRIEF HISTORY

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### OVERVIEW

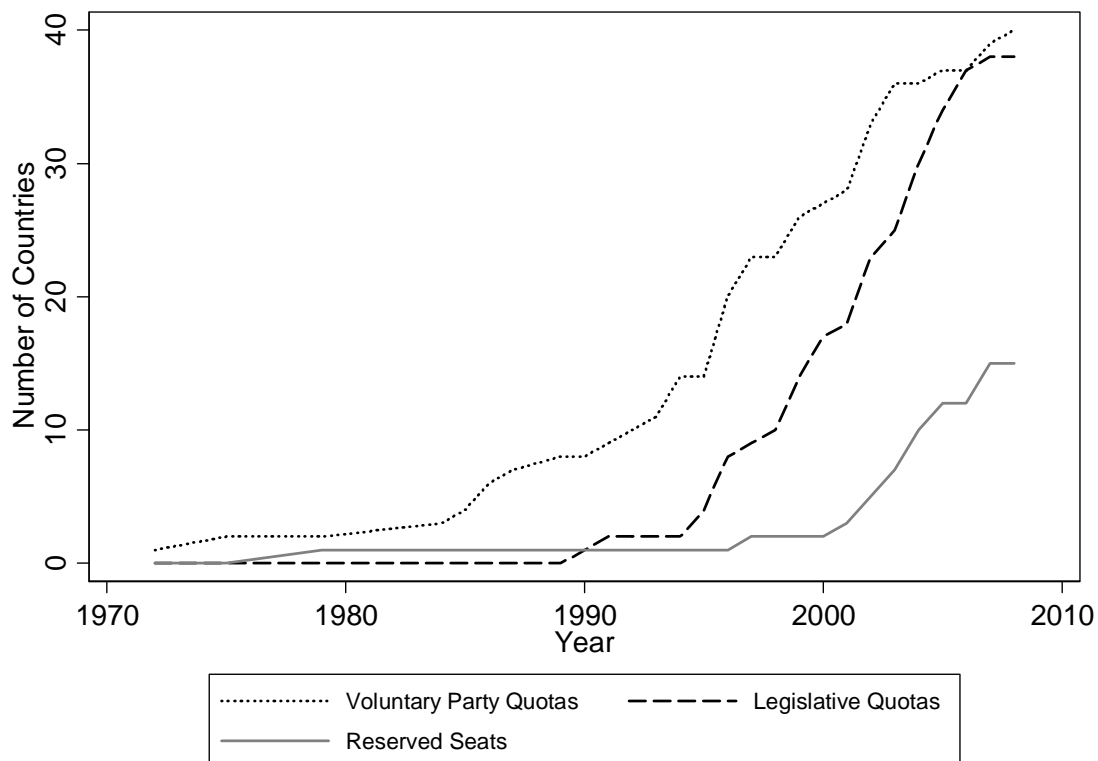
In this section, I outline the three types of quotas currently in existence and how quotas have evolved from when they were first introduced in India in 1935. The history of quotas reveals three long-term trends: (1) democracies are overrepresented among quota adopters, (2) the type and size of quotas has changed over time and place, and (3) international actors are playing a growing role in quota adoption. These trends help inform my argument that democracy and conflict influence *whether* quotas are adopted, *why* they are adopted, and the *extent* to which they affect gender outcomes.

### ABOUT PARLIAMENTARY GENDER QUOTAS

Parliamentary gender quotas have been introduced over the past century by governments and political parties. While quotas are implemented with the ostensible purpose of enhancing female political representation, ulterior motives have often played a key role in their adoption. For instance, during the 1980s, the USSR imposed a 30 percent quota as a token measure of support for gender equality (Dahlerup 2004). More recently, international actors have created significant economic and political incentives for impoverished nations such as Afghanistan and Kosovo to adopt quotas (Krook 2006).

There are three main types of parliamentary quotas: *voluntary party quotas*, *legislative quotas*, and *reserved seats* (Krook 2009). As shown in Figure 3, *voluntary party quotas* are the most common type of quota. These quotas are non-legally binding commitments by political parties to increase the number of women candidates. Introduced in the 1970s and 1980s by

socialist and social democratic parties in Western Europe, voluntary party quotas are particularly common in the West (Krook 2009). Party quotas recognize the gender biases in candidate recruitment and signal a party's increased sensitivity toward promoting female political participation (Lovenduski and Norris 1993, Schwindt-Bayer 2009). Interestingly, party quotas remain largely confined to the West – a phenomenon that I address in later sections.



**FIGURE 3.** Adoption of Parliamentary Gender Quotas by Type, 1970-2009

*Note:* For countries that have changed quota type, only the most current quota type is depicted.

*Source:* Author.

Typically, party quotas set aside 25 to 50 percent of the candidate list for women (Freidenvall, Dahlerup, and Skejje 2006). How the quotas are implemented varies according to the electoral system and the party's own policies. In countries with proportional representation

systems, party quotas affect candidate lists and may be applied to the list as a whole or to the seats that the party anticipates on winning (Opello 2006). In countries with majoritarian systems, party quotas often involve nominating a certain percentage of female candidates across all districts. Alternatively, a proportion of seats that the party expects to capture at the next election may be reserved for women (Campbell, Childs, and Lovenduski 2006; Russell 2005).

As Figure 3 illustrates, the second most common type of quota are *legislative quotas*. This type of quota is most commonly found in Latin America (Krook 2004). Legislative quotas are enacted through amendments to the electoral laws or to the constitution. Under legislative quotas, *all* political parties are legally required to nominate a certain number of female candidates. Appearing en masse in the 1990s in Latin America, legislative quotas are the newest form of quota. (Later on, I argue that it is no coincidence that quotas appeared in Latin America following the collapse of military rule in the region). The minimum female threshold for legislative quotas is around 30 percent. Like voluntary party quotas, how legislative quotas are implemented depends on the country's electoral system: quotas can be applied either to party lists or to single-member districts (Meier 2004; Murray 2004). However, unlike voluntary party quotas, legislative quotas signal pan-partisan support for gender equality (Krook 2009). Moreover, legislative quotas are typically subject to external oversight and non-compliance may result in sanctions (Baldez 2004; Jones 1998).

*Reserved seats* are the third and most stringent type of quota. These quotas are found primarily in Africa, Asia, and the Middle East (Krook 2009). Reserved seats were the first type of gender quota adopted, and as Figure 3 illustrates, they have been resurgent in the past decade. (Krook 2009). Under a reservation system, the country's constitution, and occasionally the

electoral laws, set a minimum threshold for the number of female legislators. However, unlike legislative quotas and voluntary party quotas, reserved seats guarantee the election of women.

Traditionally, a very low percentage – one to ten percent – of seats were reserved. In the past decade, however, larger thresholds of 30 percent or higher have become widespread (Krook 2009). The election process for reserved seats usually involves creating districts where only women candidates can run, or apportioning a certain number of seats in a multi-member district to women (Norris 2006). In some reservation systems, members of parliament elect the women following the main election (Goetz and Hassim 2003). Consequently, reserved seats can create a strong dependence among female politicians on their male colleagues. Later, in my case study on Morocco and Jordan, I illustrate the deleterious effect of this dependency on the ability of quotas to improve gender equality.

#### PARLIAMENTARY GENDER QUOTAS BEFORE 1990

The first parliamentary gender quota was introduced in India in 1935. In response to calls from three prominent women's groups – the Women's India Association (WIA), the All India Women's Conference (AIWC), and the National Council for Women in India (NCWI) – for enhanced suffrage and political representation, British administrators pushed for the introduction of a reservation system (Randall 2006). The proposal, however, was poorly received (Sharma 2000). Roused by growing nationalist sentiment, Indian leaders saw the British plan as an effort to divide the political elite and rob Indian women of real power. Nonetheless, in 1935, a revision to the Indian constitution led to the creation of forty-one reserved seats for women in India's national parliament (Sharma 2000).



The next country to adopt quotas was Pakistan. In 1956, Pakistan's constitution set aside ten seats for women in the National Assembly (Bush 2011). The reservations were retained in subsequent constitutions adopted in 1962, 1970, 1973, and 1985 before eventually lapsing in 1988. Later iterations of the reservation policy saw quotas being applied to both provincial and national assemblies. However, reserved seats never exceeded ten percent of the total number of seats available. Moreover, it was legislators – not the public – who decided how the reserved seats were filled (Reyes 2002).

After World War II, countries in the Eastern Bloc also introduced legislative gender quotas. The quotas were part of a Soviet “forced emancipation” of women (Dahlerup 2004). Under the Soviet-era quotas, the number of women in parliament varied by country and over time, peaking at 30 percent in the 1980s (Dahlerup 2004). In most Eastern Bloc states, women made up less than five percent of the legislature and political power remained firmly in the hands of male politicians (Dahlerup 2004).

By the 1980s, voluntary party quotas had begun to appear in Western and Northern Europe. Buoyed by the popularity of social-democratic parties and the growing presence of women in the workforce, women's groups began to push for a greater female presence in politics (Dahlerup 2004; Krook 2009). During this period, parties in Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Sweden, Germany and Iceland adopted voluntary party quotas. However, the adoption process remained relatively slow and largely confined to Europe: quotas appeared in only a dozen countries during the 1980s (Tripp and Kang 2008).

## THE POST-SOVIET DECLINE

The fall of the Soviet Union saw the collapse of quotas in Eastern Europe and Central Asia (Pascall and Manning 2009). In the Czech Republic, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Romania, Estonia, Lithuania, Moldova, Ukraine, Armenia, and Georgia, female politicians all but vanished (Pascall and Manning 2000). Their disappearance illustrated the inability of token quotas to exert real improvements to women's political representation. Soviet-era quotas also left a strong public distaste for such policies (Dahlerup 2004). To this day, quotas are still regarded in many parts of Eastern Europe as a symbol of Soviet hypocrisy. Lithuania and Poland, as I will discuss in a later case study, have both resisted quotas despite European Union pressure to increase the number of women legislators in parliament (Lokar 2004; Taljunaite v2004).

## A MATTER OF GLOBAL CONCERN

In 1979, the UN General Assembly adopted the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). The Convention marked the beginning of international efforts to promote quotas. CEDAW established a legally binding human rights framework for women. CEDAW signatories agree to (1) eliminate all forms of discrimination against women in all aspects of life, (2) ensure that women are given the same means and opportunities as their male counterparts in the exercise and enjoyment of their human rights and fundamental freedoms, and (3) regularly report to CEDAW on their progress toward fulfilling the convention's obligations.

Notably, in Articles 7 and 8, CEDAW signatories are explicitly required to eliminate discrimination against women in elections to all levels of public office (Schopp-Schilling 2005).

Over 180 countries have signed and ratified the convention and a number of nations have used CEDAW as a framework for their quota policies (Schopp-Schilling 2005).

Since the adoption of CEDAW, international support for quotas has grown. The UN Fourth World Conference on Women held in September 1995 reaffirmed the goals of CEDAW. The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action, which was adopted by all 189 UN member states at the Conference, called for the use of quotas as a temporary measure to improve female political representation. Later, in September 2000, the United Nations Development Program's Millennium Development Goals indicated its support for quotas (Kabeer 2005).

The past two decades have also seen efforts among regional bodies to increase the number of women in politics. The European Union (EU), the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), Organization of American States (OAS), the African Union (AU), and the Southern African Development Community (SADC) have all called on their members to implement a 30 percent minimum threshold for women in parliament (Krook 2006). Notably, adopting measures to improve gender equality has become a requirement for accession to the European Union (Gaber 2008). Meanwhile, the African Union has implemented a legally binding 50 percent quota for women in all its bodies (Kethusegile-Juru 2004).

Non-governmental organizations have added their support to quota adoption. Since 1987, the European Women's Lobby (EWL) has brought together over 4,000 women's organizations from across Europe. The EWL monitors the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action, facilitates the flow of information among grassroots women's networks, and engages in European-level lobbying for quotas (Greboval and Elomaki 2008). Other NGOs such as the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI), the International Institute for Democracy Assistance (IDEA), the Institute for Women's Policy Research (IWPR), and the

International Foundation for Electoral Systems (IFES) have also undertaken research on quotas and partnered with local women's organizations to promote women's participation in politics. Later in the paper, I use case studies on Poland, Lithuania, the Democratic Republic of Congo, Morocco and Jordan to illustrate the direct and indirect influence of international actors on quota adoption.

#### FROM LATIN AMERICA TO AFRICA AND THE MIDDLE EAST

During the 1990s, a wave of quota adoption swept across Latin America (Peschard 2003). Argentina led the way with the introduction of the *Ley de Cupos* in 1991. The law established a 30 percent minimum threshold for women on all candidate lists for national elections in Argentina. Between 1996 and 1997, ten other Latin American countries followed Argentina's lead (Peschard 2003). The proliferation of legislative quotas in the 1990s marked a move away from the voluntary party quotas that dominated the previous decade.

Today, quota adoption has shifted to Africa and the Middle East. Amid growing international pressure, even countries with histories of entrenched gender discrimination such as Sudan, Eritrea, and Somalia have adopted quotas (Dahlerup 2004). Interestingly, these countries have implemented reserved seats - the most stringent type of quota (Krook 2009). In later sections, I explain how political self-interest largely explains why quotas have arisen in the region. Nonetheless, the arrival of quotas has yielded some surprising changes: today, more than half of Rwanda's parliament is composed of women, a four-fold increase in just over a decade.

#### RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

Quotas continue to spread rapidly around the world. Last year, Armenia and Kosovo introduced national and sub-national quotas (Quota Project 2012). Meanwhile, several states in

India increased their quota threshold to 50 percent (Quota Project 2012). Earlier this year, Tunisia's new electoral law introduced a 50 percent quota for women on all candidate lists for its lower house. Ecuador and Costa Rica have also recently tightened their legislative quotas by implementing 50 percent thresholds for women (Quota Project 2012). Meanwhile, a bill proposing to halve public funding for parties whose candidate lists fail to meet a 30 percent female threshold is being debated in the Irish parliament (McTeirnan 2012). The most recent developments suggest that a new global norm is emerging where quotas are becoming a hallmark of democracy and good governance. In the subsequent sections, I test the influence of democracy and conflict on quota adoption, implementation, and outcomes.

## EXISTING EXPLANATIONS FOR THE SPREAD OF QUOTAS

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### OVERVIEW

In this section, I cover the three major themes explored in the literature on quotas: (1) the theoretical value of quotas, (2) why quotas are adopted, and (3) why quotas have different effects in different countries. I note that the literature largely bases its findings on country and regional studies – a practice that is losing its generalizability as the quotas spread across the world. I also highlight the dearth of research distinguishing the ability of quotas to increase the number of female legislators from its ability to decrease gender equality. Later in my study, I seek to address these weaknesses by conducting a systematic comparative study of all quota adopters and analyzing changes in gender outcomes after quota adoption. Drawing upon the arguments and evidence in the literature, I propose a set of hypotheses that trace the development of quotas from adoption to outcome.

### THEORETICAL DEBATES ON THE MERITS OF QUOTAS

At the heart of the literature on quotas are two competing discourses on increasing female political representation: the *incremental track* and the *fast track* (Dahlerup 2005). Advocates of the incremental model of female political participation oppose the use of quotas. These scholars believe that the number of women in politics will increase in line with a country's socio-economic development (Bacchi 2006; Baldez 2004; Dahlerup 1988; Freidenvall 2003; Karvonen and Selle 1995; Inglehardt and Norris 2003; Mansbridge 2005). Supporters of incremental change argue that the underrepresentation of women in politics is symptomatic of broader social problems. Improving women's political representation, therefore, requires fostering social

change. Such change can be brought about by enhancing women's participation and influence in civil society and improving education, employment, and targeted welfare provisions for women (Dahlerup 2005).

Advocates of incremental change believe quotas are discriminatory and potentially harmful. Such measures are seen to reinforce gender stereotypes and the belief that *only* women can represent women's interests (Bacchi 2006; Mansbridge 2005). Scholars supporting incremental change also argue that quotas can stigmatize female politicians who are elected without electoral assistance while generating public distrust and ill will against those who are assisted into power (Mansbridge 2005).

On the other hand, supporters of the fast track model of increasing women's political representation contest the view that women's political influence should increase in step with socio-economic development (Dahlerup 2005). Rather, such scholars believe that great leaps can be made in women's political participation (Dahlerup and Freidenvall 2005; Kittilson 2006; Vincent 2004). Supporters of the fast track model see gender inequality as the result of systematic discrimination that is *unlikely* to end without external intervention. Therefore, efforts to reduce gender inequality cannot rely on social change or on the initiative of political elites. Advocates of the fast track model see quotas as a means of breaking through the structural barriers women face when attempting to enter the political arena (Dahlerup and Freidenvall 2005).

The two competing discourses on increasing female political representation can be distilled into two different notions of equality. Advocates of incremental change subscribe to the idea of equal opportunity favored by Enlightenment philosophers such as John Stuart Mill. Supporters of quotas, on the other hand, are more focused on the equality of outcome, a concern

expressed by contemporary philosophers such as John Rawls. Competition between the two discourses continues to play an active role in attitudes towards quotas (Dahlerup 2007). Intergovernmental agencies such as the United Nations Fund for Women (UNIFEM), for instance have chosen to straddle the two discourses. While UNIFEM advocates quotas, it qualifies its support by stipulating that quotas should be temporary measures and must be supplemented by broader social and political change (UN 2011).

#### EXPLANATIONS FOR QUOTA ADOPTION

The current literature on gender quotas offers four competing explanations for why gender quotas are adopted. The explanations focus on the influence of women's movements, political elites, social norms, and international actors (Krook 2009).

Accounts of quota adoption focusing on the role of *women's movements* argue that any effort to introduce quotas requires the prior mobilization of women (Krook 2009). Scholars have outlined various ways in which women can initiate quotas. Some argue that quotas are adopted in response lobbying efforts by women's organizations at the national and international level (Baldez 2004; Beckwith 2003; Lubertino 2000; Pires 2002). Others note that women exert influence through the sharing of information and the creation of regional lobbying networks (Bruhn 2003; Howard-Merriam 1990; Hassim 2002). Some scholars also argue that women within political parties often successfully lobby for quotas (Abou-Zeid 2006; Kittilson 2006; Schmidt 2003).

Critics of this explanation, however, point to a growing number of counterexamples. In many countries that have recently introduced quotas, female mobilization has either been non-existent or ignored by political elites. This is particularly true of quotas introduced in Africa and



the Middle East (Krook 2009). Moreover, the emphasis on female mobilization overlooks the fact that not all women's movements support quotas (Huang 2002; Kishwar 1998). In Costa Rica, for instance, some female politicians openly denounced the introduction of quotas (Garcia Quesada 2003).

A second explanation for quota adoption focuses on the goals of the *political elite*. This explanation argues that politicians introduce quotas for strategic purposes (Caul 2001; Davidson-Schmich 2006; Matland and Studlar 1996; Meier 2004). According to supporters of this theory, quotas are fueled by party competition. Consequently, political elites may be tempted to introduce quotas when in opposition for a long period of time, or after having experienced a large drop in support (Kolinsky 1991; Perrigo 1996). Scholars note that political elites may also introduce quotas to bolster support for their chosen female candidates and thereby consolidate their grip on power (Howard-Merriam 1990; Millard and Ortiz 1998). This strategic explanation of quota adoption implies that quotas may not necessarily improve female political representation (Htun and Jones 2002; Krook 2009). Indeed, some scholars argue that quotas are simply token gestures (Mossuz-Lavau 1998).

Nonetheless, an explanation of quota adoption based on strategic motives overlooks instances where quotas are imposed despite strong opposition from party leaders (Haug 1995; Huang 2002). Even among parties that eventually adopt quotas, there is often serious internal disagreement about the wisdom of such measures (Scott 1998; Squires 1996). Moreover, there is evidence that political parties *do* introduce quotas in response to genuine concerns about gender equality (Araujo 2003; Meier 2004).

Indeed, the third explanation for quota adoption argues that quotas are primarily a response to *changing social norms* on equality and representation. Scholars favoring this

explanation argue that quota adoption is often initiated by the left and accompanied by other progressive policies (Hassim 2002; Kolinsky 1991; Opello 2006). Others posit that growing public awareness of the lack of female presence in politics is driving the present growth in quotas (Krook 2009). Scholars also argue that periods of political transition can trigger shifts in social norms, which in turn, can lead to quota adoption. Notably, the drafting of a new constitution presents an opportunity to improve political representation for traditionally marginalized groups (Bauer and Britton 2006; Reyes 2002).

Using social norms to explain quota adoption, however, has its pitfalls. Studies from several countries indicate that quotas have been blocked for being discriminatory and unconstitutional (Haug 1995; Lovenduski 1997; Mossau-Lavau 1998). Indeed, reformers in certain countries have in the past rejected quotas on the grounds that they are undemocratic and thus threaten the legitimacy of the government (Waylen 1994).

The fourth theory on why quotas are adopted shifts focus to the role of *international actors*. Scholars argue that international conferences and agreements help spread recommendations and strategies for improving women's political representation (Htun and Jones 2002; Krook 2006; Leijenaar 1997). International agreements such as CEDAW, together with the efforts of regional organizations such as the EU, OSCE and OAS, have helped spur the spread of quotas around the world. Moreover, scholars note that in some post-conflict societies, international actors place direct pressure on governments to adopt quotas (Corrin 2001; Ballington and Dahlerup 2006). In other instances, international actors help establish domestic campaigns demanding quota adoption (Araujo and Garcia Quesada 2006).

While a number of countries have adopted quotas specifically in line with CEDAW recommendations, critics note that international actors have not always been successful. In countries such as East Timor, international pressure led to the rejection of quotas (Pires 2002).

#### EXPLANATIONS FOR VARIATIONS IN QUOTA OUTCOME

More recently, scholars have attempted to understand why quota outcomes vary from country to country. Currently, the most common explanations revolve around variations in quota policies, the type of electoral system in which quotas are introduced, and the level of support from political actors (Krook 2009).

Initial attempts to explain differences in quota outcomes focused on the *nature of the quota* itself. Early studies suggested that reserved seats tend to produce smaller changes compared to legislative quotas and voluntary party quotas (Chowdhury 2002; Norris 2006). More recent studies have examined the content of quotas, specifically with respect to the threshold and presence of enforcement measures (Baldez 2004; Jones 2004; Murray 2004; Schmidt and Saunders 2004). Scholars argue that independently enforced quotas with high thresholds tend to be most effective at increasing the number of women elected to power (Krook 2009).

However, studies focusing on the content of quotas have yielded evidence to the contrary. It appears that the three quota types have comparable effects on the number of women elected to power. The proportion of women in parliaments with reserved seats ranges from 6.4 to 48.8 percent with a mean of 13.2 percent. In parliaments with voluntary party quotas, the figure ranges from 4.1 to 47.3 percent with a mean of 16.4 percent. Meanwhile, in parliaments with legislative quotas, the range is 9 to 40 percent with a mean of 15.8 percent (Krook 2009; World

Bank 2011). Moreover, scholars have found that the absence of sanctions does not necessarily preclude compliance with quotas, nor vice versa (Leijenaar 1997; Opello 2006).

A second explanation for variances in quota outcomes focuses on the *electoral system* in which quotas are introduced. Researchers have concluded that quotas are most effective when implemented in proportional representation systems with closed lists and high district magnitudes (Caul 1999; Htun and Jones 2002; Matland 2006). These conclusions are based on the view that proportional representation systems allow female candidates to be nominated at a lesser cost to male incumbents and male candidates.

Nonetheless, there is evidence that quotas can be successfully implemented in a variety of electoral contexts (Russell, Mackay, and McAllister 2002; Tripp, Konate, and Lowe-Morna 2006). Critics note that open lists and low district magnitudes can sometimes magnify the influence of quotas through preferential voting and the relative magnitude of the largest political party (Araujo 2003; Schmidt and Saunders 2003).

The third account for why quota systems produce varying degrees of success points to the influence of *political elites*. Here, scholars argue that enforcement efforts by party leaders are crucial for quota success (Araujo 2003; Murray 2004). Political leaders can undermine quotas by failing to observe its requirements or actively subverting the measures through election fraud and the intimidation of female candidates (Krook 2009).

However, the influence of political elites on quota outcomes is difficult to ascertain. The attitudes of political elites toward quotas can often shift rapidly depending on their strategic needs (Dahlerup 1988; Steininger 2000). At the same time, efforts by elites to sabotage quotas can be confounded with opposition from certain sectors of the women's movement, judicial

misapplication of quota laws, and general public indifference (Htun and Jones 2002; Krook 2009; Zetterberg 2008).

#### LOOKING BEYOND NUMBERS

The growing focus on the effects of quotas has drawn attention to the dearth of research on the substantive outcomes of quotas. Traditionally, scholarship on quota outcomes has focused on descriptive factors, namely, the extent to which quotas increase the number of women elected to power. Substantive outcomes, on the other hand, refer to policy changes that produce measurable decreases in gender inequality (Franceschet 2008). Assessing the substantive outcomes of quotas is important because the ultimate purpose of quotas is to reduce gender inequality (Franceschet 2008).

The lack of scholarship on substantive outcomes is largely due to the long-held assumption that putting a “critical mass” of women into power would automatically lead to an improvement in substantive outcomes (Cowell-Meyers and Langbein 2009; Franceschet 2008; Mansbridge 2005). Some scholars, however, has cast doubt over this assumption (Berkman and O’Connor 1993; Bratton 2005; Childs and Krook 2006; Reingold 2000). There is ongoing debate over what threshold of women is required to bring about improvements in gender outcomes. Scholars are also challenging the popular belief that women elected to politics will act in the interests of women (Cowell-Meyers and Langbein 2009). Instead, there is growing concern that quotas yield diminishing marginal returns: as quotas become more rigorous, a possible public backlash may only serve to exacerbate gender inequality (Crowley 2004; Rosenthal 1998).

## TOWARD A MORE COHERENT QUOTA NARRATIVE

An examination of the current literature reveals a relatively fragmented understanding of gender quotas. Current research is divided between scholars who focus on quota adoption and those who study quota outcomes. Meanwhile conclusions have often been drawn from a small selection of case studies. As quotas sweep across the globe, findings in the current literature are becoming increasingly unrepresentative of the quota phenomenon as a whole. At the same time, the recent shift towards analyzing variations in quota outcomes has exposed a gap in research on the substantive effect of quotas.

In the following section, I propose a new framework for understanding of quotas that seeks to address the weaknesses in the current literature. Informed by existing arguments and anecdotes, I test a set of hypotheses that trace the development of quotas from adoption to outcome.

## REFRAMING THE QUOTA PHENOMENON

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### OVERVIEW

In this section, I argue that democracy and conflict increase the likelihood of quota adoption and influence the size, type, and outcomes of the quota. The role of democracy and conflict on quota adoption has only been studied tangentially as supplementary explanations for why quotas are introduced (Ballington and Dahlerup 2006; Corrin 2001; Krook 2009). I seek to uncover whether democracy and conflict can provide the basis for an overarching framework explaining quota adoption and implementation.

I divide my argument into five hypotheses. First, I argue that democracies, transitional democracies, and post-conflict states are more likely to adopt quotas than other countries. Second, I argue that democracies, transitional democracies, and post-conflict states tend to adopt different types of quotas. Third, I argue that democratization has a positive effect on the size of quotas. Fourth, I argue that quota adoption in democracies, transitional democracies, and post-conflict states are motivated by different reasons. Finally, I argue that quotas are less likely to have a visible effect on gender equality in democracies than in other countries.

### DEMOCRACY AND CONFLICT ARE INFLUENTIAL

Parliamentary gender quotas did not appear spontaneously. Instead, quotas first appeared in Scandinavia and Western Europe before moving to Latin America, and finally, to Africa and the Middle East. As Table 1 illustrates, the spread of quotas appears to have occurred in three phases and is correlated with the presence of democracy and conflict. Figure 4 shows that democracies led in the way in quota adoption beginning in the 1970s. Countries that underwent

democratic transition began adopting quotas in the mid 1980s. Post-conflict states, meanwhile, joined the quota bandwagon in the 1990s (see Table 1).

Evidence from country case studies seems to support a relationship between quota adoption and the presence of democracy and conflict. During the 1960s and 1970s, socialist and social democratic parties gained unprecedented levels of popularity in the West. At the same time, there was a dramatic rise in the number of women entering the workforce and attaining tertiary education (Dahlerup, 2005). These trends were particularly noticeable in Sweden and Norway whose political parties were among the first in Europe to introduce quotas. Scholars have argued that during the 1970s, lobbying by the women's movement aligned with the progressive philosophies of leftist political parties to implement a series of voluntary party quotas (Dahlerup 2005; Krook 2009).

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Standard Deviation</i>	<i>Minimum</i>	<i>Maximum</i>
<b>QUOTA YEAR</b>				
OVERALL	1999	7.007	1972	2008
DEMOCRACY	1991	9.668	1972	2006
TRANSITIONAL DEMOCRACY	1999	4.483	1984	2008
POST-CONFLICT STATE	2001	3.568	1994	2007
OTHER	2002	8.121	1979	2007

**TABLE 1.** Timing of Quota Adoption in Democracies, Transitional Democracies and Post-Conflict states, Summary Statistics, 1970 – 2011.

*Note:* I exclude adoption years for quotas that were introduced but subsequently retracted.

*Source:* Author.

Meanwhile, studies on Latin America and Southern Europe suggest a link between quota adoption and democratic transition. The 1980s saw the demise of a number of military dictatorships in Southern Europe and Latin America. The replacement of old autocratic regimes with democratically elected governments was often accompanied by new constitutions that



mandated female participation in politics (Htun and Jones 2002). Whereas quotas in Western Europe specifically targeted gender inequality, a new wave of legislative quotas was subsumed under the broader concerns about human rights (Peschard 2003). Adopting quotas became a symbol of democratization, and for the first time, quotas received pan-partisan support (Peschard 2003).

The latest research on quotas suggests a connection between the post-conflict states and quota adoption. The adoption of quotas by countries with high levels of gender inequality has long puzzled scholars. Increasingly, scholars are attributing this development to the influence of international actors (Bush 2010; Krook 2009). In particular, researchers have noted that conflict often provides the international community with opportunities to use economic and political incentives to exact concessions from beleaguered governments (Ballington and Dahlerup 2006; Corrin 2001). Countries that have experienced conflict are often reliant on Western aid and foreign peacekeepers. Consequently, Western governments concerned with promoting gender equality can often leverage their economic and political strength to bring about reforms such as quota adoption (Corrin 2001).

Hence, anecdotal evidence from Europe, Latin America, Africa and the Middle East suggest the following hypothesis:

*H1: If a country is a long-standing democracy, transitional democracy, or post-conflict state, then it is more likely to adopt quotas than other countries.*

#### NO QUOTA FITS ALL

As previously noted, there are three main types of quotas: voluntary party quotas, legislative quotas, and reserved seats. In order to be adopted, each quota type must meet certain

political conditions. For instance, voluntary party quotas require the initiative of political parties (Krook 2009). A political party intent on implementing voluntary quotas must conclude that the vote-winning appeal of a quota outweighs internal and public opposition (Davidson-Schmich 2006; Krook 2009).

Legislative quotas, meanwhile, are more difficult to adopt than voluntary quotas. Whereas voluntary quotas can be introduced at will and are not legally binding, legislative quotas require amendments to the constitution or the electoral laws (Krook 2009). In order for legislative quotas to be approved, there needs to be pan-partisan support (Araujo 2003; Baldez 2004; Reyes 2002). As a result, opportunities to introduce legislative quotas may be limited.

Reserved seats, like legislative quotas, also require changes to be made to the constitution or the electoral law (Krook 2009). Unlike legislative quotas and voluntary quotas, however, reserved seats guarantee women election to political office. As such, reserved seats directly threaten the political careers of male incumbents and future male candidates (Krook 2009). In order for reserved seats to be approved, incumbents must agree to significant political sacrifices (Dahlerup 2009; Norris 2006). Hence, it comes as little surprise that reserved seats have remained largely absent until very recently and remains the least common of the three quota types.

The political conditions required for the adoption of different types of quotas suggest that there ought to be some relationship between quotas and local political institutions. For instance, voluntary quotas appear particularly suited to long-standing democracies where party competition encourages policy innovation (Davidson-Schmich 2006). At the same time, differences in party philosophies may obstruct efforts to generate the consensus necessary for the adoption of legislative quotas and reserved seats.

Countries undergoing democratic transition, meanwhile, may be more likely to adopt legislative quotas. These quotas allow fledgling governments to demonstrate to the public and the international community that their country has entered a new political era. The introduction of legislative quotas can also serve as a confidence building measure. The political consensus required for passing legislative quota legislation allows a new government to demonstrate the stability of the new political system (Howard-Merriman 1990; Krook 2009; Reyes 2002).

By contrast, reserved seats are less compatible with democracies. Setting aside seats for women has often been regarded as highly undemocratic (Krook 2009). Moreover, the political cost of reserved seats to incumbents and male candidates is particularly high compared to the other two quota types (Krook 2009). Given the possibility of adopting voluntary quotas or legislative quotas, it would seem foolish for political elites in democracies to consent to reserved seats.

Nonetheless, reserved seats have the advantage of guaranteeing female representation. This guarantee may be necessary in countries that have traditionally seen few or no women in power (Meier 2000). Moreover, violations of reservation policies are easy to identify. For international actors seeking to bolster the presence of women in highly conservative societies, lobbying for reserved seats might be particularly appealing (Htun and Jones 2002). Adopting reserved seats can also be a powerful signal for autocracies hoping to enhance their political legitimacy in the eyes of the international community (Welborne 2010). For these reasons, reserved seats may be more likely to appear in non-democratic contexts. Meanwhile, post-conflict nations that have concluded peace agreements with the help of international mediators and are heavily reliant on foreign aid would be prime targets for international actors intent on promoting quotas (Hughes 2007). The evidence points to the following hypotheses:

*H2: (a) If a country is a long-standing democracy, then it is more likely to adopt voluntary party quotas than other countries. (b) If a country is a democracy, its quotas are more likely to be initiated by the left and adopted by multiple parties than other countries. (c) If a country is a transitional democracy, then it is more likely to adopt legislative quotas than other countries. (d) If a country is a post-conflict state, then it is more likely to adopt reserved seats than other countries.*

#### NOT ALL QUOTAS ARE MADE EQUAL

There is anecdotal evidence suggesting that the size of quotas vary depending on whether the quota adopter is a democracy, transitional democracy, or post-conflict state. Countries that have pioneered quota adoption, such as Norway and Sweden, have particularly generous quota thresholds (Dahlerup 2004). Meanwhile, quota adopters in Africa have set more modest thresholds. Kenya, for instance, has a threshold of only three percent (Krook 2009).

One reason why quota thresholds may be connected to democracy and conflict lies in the hypothesized connection between democracies and the adoption voluntary quotas (*H2 (a)*). If the hypothesis is correct, then the larger quota thresholds found among democracies may be explained by the party competition that led to quota adoption in the first place. Indeed, evidence from Western Europe suggests that political parties often attempt to surpass thresholds set by other parties (Bruhn 2003; Davidson-Schmich 2006). The race among parties to promote gender equality has led to thresholds of 50 percent in Denmark, Belgium, France, Iceland, Austria, Italy and the United Kingdom (Krook 2009).

Meanwhile, the profusion of legislative quotas and reserved seats in new democracies and post-conflict states may help explain why these countries have smaller quota thresholds.

When quotas are imposed on the entire political system, parties no longer have the incentive to outdo each other (Krook 2009). Instead, efforts to install large quota thresholds may be thwarted by the need to accrue pan-partisan support. Moreover, as noted previously, interests other than the promotion of gender equality may motivate the adoption of legislative quotas and reserved seats. If quotas are intended as token measures, there may be a reluctance to impose generous thresholds. The argument can be summarized as the following hypothesis:

*H3: If country is a democracy, then the size of its quota will be larger than that of non-democratic quota adopters.*

#### MANY ROADS LEAD TO QUOTAS

As discussed in the previous section, scholars have debated a variety of reasons for why quotas are adopted. There are currently four commonly cited explanations: the efforts of women's movements, the influence of international actors, the strategizing of political elites, and shifts in social norms (Krook 2009). As critics have already pointed out, these explanations fit some cases better than others. Scholars studying the adoption of quotas in Western Europe, for instance, have repeatedly emphasized the importance of women's movements and shifts in social norms (Ballington and Binda 2004; Dahlerup 2004). Meanwhile, those studying quotas in Latin America have highlighted the initiative of political leaders (Araujo 2003; Peschard 2003; Garcia Quesada 2003). In case studies on quota adopters in the Middle East and Africa, scholars have focused on the influence of international actors (Pires 2003).

Evidence suggests that explanations for quota adoption might be more usefully applied if consideration were given to the presence of democracy or conflict at the time of quota adoption.

Case studies on Western Europe indicate that quota adoption in democracies is heavily dependent on the lobbying efforts by the women's movement. This view is supported by the fact that long-standing democracies typically offer numerous outlets for voicing public demands (Dahlerup 2004). Moreover, politicians in democracies are more sensitive to the interests of the electorate. Indeed, political parties may regard lobbying by women's movements as an opportunity to generate policy innovations that could provide strategic benefits (Davidson-Schmich 2006).

Meanwhile, exogenous explanations for quota adoption in long-standing democracies seem less likely. Democratic nations tend to be the projectors of international norms and may view external pressure as a threat to their sovereignty (Held 1991). Being on average wealthier and better governed than non-democracies, democracies can also afford to ignore external pressures on domestic politics.

By contrast, in transitional democracies, political elites appear more likely to initiate quota adoption. Unlike long-standing democracies, new democracies are often composed of parties that have recently worked together to oust the previous regime. Amid the optimism of democratic transition, party leaders are often more willing to collaborate on progressive policymaking (Peschard 2003; Schwindt-Bayer 2006). International actors may also be particularly influential. Countries transitioning to democracy are often reliant on external advisors for technical expertise in drafting a new constitution and dismantling the previous regime (Htun and Jones 2002; Howard-Merriam 1990). Governments in new democracies tend to regard established democracies as models for their own political system. External interference, therefore, is less likely to be seen as a threat to national sovereignty.

Women's movements and social norms, meanwhile, are less likely to play an active role in bringing about quota adoption in transitional democracies. Years of authoritarian rule would have likely suppressed the influence of civil society and promoted conservative values (Feldman 2003).

The most recent wave of quota adoption by pseudo-democratic regimes in Africa and the Middle East appear to discredit endogenous explanations for quota adoption. It seems highly unlikely that social norms and the mobilization of women played a prominent role in bringing about quota adoption in Africa and the Middle East (Krook 2009). Instead, scholars have used case studies of countries such as Afghanistan and Iraq to argue that external pressure is the central factor in quota adoption among autocracies and anocracies (Bush 2010, Howard-Merriam 1990, Reyes 2002). Economic incentives such as aid tied to gender outcomes are one way by which the West has been known to exert its influence on poorly governed nations (Bush 2011). Such influence may increase in periods of conflict when international organizations, notably the UN, are often called on to arbitrate and distribute aid (Bush 2011; Hughes 2007). Evidence indicates that the major explanations for quota adoption appear to fit certain cases better than others:

*H4: (a) If a quota adopter is a long-standing democracy, then quota adoption is more likely to be motivated by the women's movement compared to other quota adopters. (b) If a quota adopter is a transitional democracy, then quota adoption is more likely to be led by political elites compared to other quota adopters. (c) If a quota adopter is a post-conflict state, then external influences are more likely to motivate quota adoption compared to other quota adopters.*

## BACK TO BASICS

If it is proven that democracy and conflict do affect quotas are adopted and how they are implemented (*H1* and *H2*), then democracy and conflict may also influence quota outcomes. Case studies on Western Europe suggest that quotas have not made significant headway in either increasing the number of women in parliament or promoting policies that favor women (Childs 2004; Davidson-Schmich 2006; Murray 2004). One possible explanation may be the fact that women had already made significant headway into politics when quotas were introduced. Consequently, policies aimed at reducing gender inequality may have already been in place when quotas were adopted. Moreover, where there are already high levels of gender equality and where quota adoption is largely motivated by a strong women's movement, the opportunities for improving gender outcomes are fewer.

Meanwhile, studies in Africa have pointed to the dramatic increase in the number of women in parliament (Ballington 2004). Less than two decades after a brutal civil war, Rwanda now has more women in parliament than men. Other success stories include Mozambique, Angola, Uganda, and South Africa. In those countries, more than one third of parliamentarians are female (IPU 2012). The dramatic increase in the number of women in power in Africa belies the fact that prior to the introduction of quotas, women had minimal political influence (Ballington 2004). There is a danger of overlooking the lower gender equality baselines found in new democracies and post-conflict states when measuring the effects of quotas. Hence:

*H5: If a quota adopter is a democracy, then the descriptive and substantive outcomes of quotas will be less evident compared to other quota adopters*



## DATA

### OVERVIEW

In this section, I detail the variables that will be used to test the five hypotheses outlined in the previous section. Below is a summary table:

Hypothesis	Explanatory Variable(s)	Dependent Variable(s)
<b>H1:</b> If a country is a long-standing democracy, transitional democracy, or post-conflict state, then it is more likely to adopt quotas than other countries.	Long-Standing Democracy, Transitional Democracy, Post-Conflict State	Quota Adoption
<b>H2 (a):</b> If a country is a long-standing democracy, then it is more likely to adopt voluntary party quotas than other countries.	Long-Standing Democracy	Adoption of Voluntary Party Quotas, Legislative Quotas, Reserved Seats
<b>H2 (b):</b> If a country is a democracy, its quotas are more likely to be initiated by the left and adopted by multiple parties than in other countries.	Long-Standing Democracy, Transitional Democracy, Post-Conflict State	Leftist Quota Adopters, Multiple Party Quotas
<b>H2 (c):</b> If a county is a transitional democracy, then it is more likely to adopt legislative quotas than other countries.	Transitional Democracy	Adoption of Voluntary Party Quotas, Legislative Quotas, Reserved Seats
<b>H2 (d):</b> If a country is a post-conflict state, then it is more likely to adopt reserved seats than other countries.	Post-Conflict State	Adoption of Voluntary Party Quotas, Legislative Quotas, Reserved Seats
<b>H3:</b> If a country is a democracy, then the size of its quota will be larger than that of non-democratic quota adopters.	Long-Standing Democracy, Transitional Democracy, Post-Conflict State	Average Quota Size in Long-Standing Democracy, Transitional Democracy, and Post-Conflict States
<b>H4 (a):</b> If a quota adopter is a long-standing democracy, then quota adoption is more likely to be motivated by the women's movement than in other countries.	Women's Movement, International Actors, Political Elites, Social Norms	Democratic Quota Adoption, Transitional Quota Adoption, Post-Conflict Quota Adoption
<b>H4 (b):</b> If a quota adopter is a transitional democracy, then quota adopter is more likely to be led by political elites than in other countries.	Women's Movement, International Actors, Political Elites, Social Norms	Democratic Quota Adoption, Transitional Quota Adoption, Post-Conflict Quota Adoption
<b>H4 (c):</b> If a quota adopter is a post-conflict state, then external influences are more likely to motivate quota adoption than in other countries.	Women's Movement, International Actors, Political Elites, Social Norms	Democratic Quota Adoption, Transitional Quota Adoption, Post-Conflict Quota Adoption
<b>H5:</b> If a quota adopter is a democracy, then the descriptive and substantive outcomes of quotas will be less evident compared to other quota adopters.	Democratic Quota Adoption, Transitional Quota Adoption, Post-Conflict Quota Adoption	Women in Parliament, Maternal Mortality, Adolescent Fertility, Total Fertility, Female to Male Secondary Enrollment, Female Labor Force Participation

**TABLE 2.** Summary of Hypotheses and Variables

**DATA FOR H1:**

To test whether being a democracy or a post-conflict state increases a country's likelihood of adopting quotas, I use *Long-standing Democracy*, *Transitional Democracy*, and *Post-Conflict State* as the explanatory variables and *Quota Adoption* as the dependent variable. The variables are defined below:

**Long-Standing Democracy**

I define long-standing democracies as countries that have retained a score of 10 from 1970 to 2010 on the Polity IV index. The Polity IV index measures the key qualities of executive recruitment, constraints on executive authority, and political competition (Gurr, Jagger and Marshall 2010). While the index employs a relatively narrow institutional definition of democracy, it provides one of the most comprehensive measures of democratization over time. My definition of long-standing democracy serves to distinguish the large number of countries in Latin America and Southern Europe that democratized during the 1970s and 1980s. I code long-standing democracies as (1) and other countries (0).

**Transitional Democracy**

I define countries as transitional democracies if there has been a change in the Polity Score from *less than 6* to *greater than 6* for five or more consecutive years between 1970 and 2010. The Polity IV index defines a score of 6 as the minimum for a country to be considered democratic. The requirement that countries meet the minimum threshold for democracy for at least five consecutive years serves to exclude states that have made unsuccessful attempts to democratize. A period of five years typically encompasses one or more full terms of government

and indicates democratic consolidation. I code transitional democracies as (1) and other countries (0).

### **Post-Conflict State**

I use the UCDP Peace Agreement Dataset from the Uppsala Conflict Database to identify post-conflict states. The dataset, which contains data from 1989 to 2005, records all peace agreements signed between two active warring parties. The agreement signed must outline measures for resolving or regulating the conflict (Uppsala University 2006). Any country this list is defined as a post-conflict state.

In addition, I examine any country that has received a score of -88, -77 or -77 on the Polity IV index from 1970 to 2010. For each case, I look for evidence of conflict in the country and the conclusion of a peace agreement.<sup>4</sup> I code post-conflict states (1) and all others (0).

### **Quota Adoption**

I define quota adoption as any instance where a country has implemented a quota system for women. Quotas are any measure that require women to constitute a certain number or percentage of the members of a body, whether it is a candidate list, a parliamentary assembly, a committee, or a government (Ballington and Binda 2004). I use data compiled by the Quota Project Database – updated through to 2011 – to measure quota adoption. Quota adopters are coded (1) and non-adopters are coded (0).

### DATA FOR H2:

To test whether being a democracy, transitional democracy, or post-conflict state influences the type of quota that is adopted, I use *Long-standing Democracy*, *Transitional Democracy*, and *Post-Conflict State* as the explanatory variables (defined above) and the

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<sup>4</sup> I exclude armed insurgencies from the classification.

adoption of *Voluntary Party Quotas*, *Legislative Quotas*, *Reserved Seats*, *Leftist Quota Adopters*, and *Multiple Party Quotas* as dependent variables (defined below).<sup>5</sup> All data here is taken from the Quota Project Database, updated through to 2011.

### **Voluntary Party Quotas**

I define voluntary party quotas as any non-legally binding quota adopted independently by political parties and includes measures that seek to increase the number of women in power (Araujo and Garcia Quesada 2006; Krook 2009; Lovenduski and Norris 1993; Meier 2004). Countries with voluntary party quotas are coded (1) and other countries (0).

### **Legislative Quotas**

I define legislative quotas as legally binding changes to the constitution or electoral laws that seek to increase female political representation by mandating minimum thresholds of female candidate participation in elections (Baldez 2004; Jones 1998; Krook 2009; Murray 2004). Countries with legislative quotas are coded (1) and other countries (0).

### **Reserved Seats**

I define reserved seats as measures that guarantee female political participation through the reservation of parliamentary seats (Goetz and Hassim 2003; Krook 2004; Norris 2006). Countries with reserved seats are coded (1) and other countries (0).

### **Leftist Quota Adopters**

I define leftist quota adopters as instances of voluntary quota adoption initiated by parties on the left. Countries that meet this criterion are coded (1) and other countries (0).

### **Multiple Party Quotas**

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<sup>5</sup> In cases where countries have adopted different types of quotas, I record the most current quota type.

I defined multiple party quotas as instances where more than one party has adopted voluntary quotas. Countries that meet this criterion are coded (1) and other countries (0).

#### DATA FOR H3:

To test whether democratic quota adopters are more likely to introduce quotas with higher thresholds, I use *Long-standing Democracy*, *Transitional Democracy*, and *Post-Conflict State* as the explanatory variables (defined above) and *Average Quota Size* as the dependent variable (defined below).

#### **Average Quota Size**

I define average quota size as the average threshold of women mandated by a quota. I separate the averages according to whether the quota adopter is a long-standing democracy, transitional democracy or post-conflict state.<sup>6</sup>

#### DATA FOR H4:

To test whether democracies, transitional democracies, and post-conflict states adopt quotas for different reasons, I employ *Women's Movement*, *Political Elites*, *Social Norms* and *International Actors* as the explanatory variables and *Democratic Quota Adoption*, *Transitional Quota Adoption*, and *Post-Conflict Quota Adoption* as the dependent variables. These variables are defined below.

#### **Women's Movement**

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<sup>6</sup> In cases where there are multiple voluntary party quotas, I take the average. In instances where quota size has changed over time, I take the latest figure

I use legal provisions for abortion as a proxy measure for the effect of female mobilization on quota adoption. Ensuring access to abortion has been a central goal of women's movements globally. Success in obtaining abortion rights has been regarded as a key measure of the ability of women's groups to exert political influence (Celis 2001; Haussman 2001; Kopl 2001; Stetson 2003; Robinson 2001).

I specifically examine whether a country allows *abortion on request*. This policy allows a woman to undergo abortion without requiring the permission of a doctor. I focus on access to abortion on request because it is one of the most heavily fought over abortion rights (Engeli 2009). Countries that offer abortions on request are coded as (1) and all others are coded (0).<sup>7</sup>

While the strength of abortion legislation may not fully mirror the political influence of a country's women's movement, it is a measure that encompasses all countries around the world. Data on the strength of female mobilization based on case studies and values surveys have typically yielded incomplete data with a strong euro-centric focus.

### **Political Elites**

I use two proxy measures to estimate the influence of political elites on quota adoption. First, I look at whether *a country has signed the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)*. Signing CEDAW is an important indication of whether a country's government wishes to signal its support for gender equality to the international community. Countries that have signed CEDAW are coded as (1) and all others are (0).

Second, I look at whether a country has *ratified or acceded to CEDAW*. Given that all but three countries in the world have signed CEDAW, ratification of CEDAW allows a country to

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<sup>7</sup> I include cases where abortion on request is restricted to the first trimester or varies by region still as countries that offer abortion on request.

more clearly signal its support for gender equality to the international community. Countries that have ratified CEDAW are coded as (1) and all others are (0).

### **International Pressure**

I use *Gender Aid* as a proxy measure of external influences on quota adoption. I use data compiled by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). The OECD's 2012 report on Aid in Support of Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment lists aid given by its 34 member countries that have been tied to gender outcomes. Conditions for receiving aid include: improving female literacy, preventing gender violence, strengthening anti-discrimination laws, and promoting female participation in politics (OECD 2012). Countries that have received aid tied to gender outcomes are coded (1) and all others (0).

While aid tied to improvements in gender equality is not a perfect measure of the level of international pressure on a government to adopt gender quotas, it is a clear indication of international concern about gender inequality in a country (OECD 2012). Given the wide range of conditions upon which aid is distributed, the inclusion of gender outcomes is an illustration that donor countries have prioritized the issue. The presence of aid tied to gender outcomes also serves as a proxy measure for the influence of non-governmental actors. Often, private actors lobby governments to condition aid on improvements in gender outcomes (Michael 2002).

### **Social Norms**

I use whether a quota adopter has signed the Optional Protocol to CEDAW as a proxy measure for changes to social norms in favor of gender equality. The Optional Protocol strengthens CEDAW through additional enforcement and reporting requirements. The Optional Protocol also requires that countries take concrete measures to reduce gender inequality and

engage the public on the issue (UN 2009). Most importantly, the Optional Protocol allows women to hold their political representatives accountable if they fail to implement CEDAW's standards of gender equality (UN 2011). Signing the Optional Protocol, therefore, indicates that a country's has accepted and is genuinely intent on adopting gender equality as a social norm. Countries that have signed and ratified the Optional Protocol are coded as (1) and all others are (0).

### **Democratic Quota Adoption**

I define democratic quota adoption to include only the set of long-standing democracies that may or may not have adopted quotas. Long-standing democracies that have quotas are coded (1); all other democracies are (0).

### **Transitional Quota Adoption**

I define transitional quota adoption to include only the set of transitional democracies that may or may not have adopted quotas. Transitional democracies that have quotas are coded (1); all other transitional democracies are (0).

### **Post-Conflict Quota Adoption**

I define post-conflict quota adoption to include only the set of post-conflict states that may or may not have adopted quotas. Post-conflict states that have quotas are coded (1); all other post-conflict states are (0).

DATA FOR H5:

To test whether democratic quota adopters are less likely to see significant improvements in gender outcomes compared to other quota adopters, I use *Democratic Quota Adoption*, *Transitional Quota Adoption*, and *Post-Conflict Quota Adoption* (defined above) as the



explanatory variables and *Women in Parliament*, *Maternal Mortality*, *Adolescent Fertility*, *Total Fertility*, *Female to Male Secondary Enrollment*, *Female Labor Force Participation* as dependent variables.

The last four dependent variables in this study are designed to measure the substantive outcome of quotas. These proxy measures are the same used by the United Nations Development Program's (UNDP) Gender Inequality Index (GII). Together, these indicators are designed to measure the loss in human development due to inequalities between men and women (UNDP 2011).

For all the dependent variables, I measure the percentage change in the variable after quotas are introduced for each quota adopter and average the results according to whether the adopter is a democracy, transitional democracy or post-conflict state. All data is taken from the World Bank, updated through to 2011.<sup>8</sup>

### **Women in Parliament**

This measure is defined as the percentage of women in parliament.

### **Maternal Mortality**

Maternal mortality is a measure of the number of women who die during pregnancy or childbirth, per 100,000 live births. The data is an estimated with a regression model using information on fertility, birth attendants, and HIV prevalence.

### **Adolescent Fertility**

Adolescent fertility a measure of the number of births per 1,000 women ages 15-19.

### **Total Fertility**

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<sup>8</sup> For countries with multiple party quotas or have revised their quotas, I use the average of the years when the quotas are introduced or amended.

Total fertility represents the number of children that would be born to a woman if she were to live to the end of her childbearing years and bear children in accordance with current age-specific fertility rates.

### **Female to Male Secondary Enrollment**

Female to male secondary enrollment is a measure of the ratio of the female to male gross enrollment in secondary school.

### **Female Labor Force Participation**

Female labor force participation is measured as the percentage of women aged 15 and over that is economically active, i.e. everyone who supplies labor for the production of goods or services for a period of time.

## ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

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### OVERVIEW

In this section, I briefly discuss my analysis of the variables before proceeding to my findings. The findings are summarized below:

Hypothesis	Finding
<b>H1:</b> If a country is a long-standing democracy, transitional democracy, or post-conflict state, then it is more likely to adopt quotas than other countries.	Supported and Statistically Significant
<b>H2 (a):</b> If a country is a long-standing democracy, then it is more likely to adopt voluntary party quotas than other countries.	Supported and Statistically Significant
<b>H2 (b):</b> If a country is a democracy, its quota is more likely to be initiated by the left and adopted by multiple parties than if it were a non-democracy.	Supported and Statistically Significant
<b>H2 (c):</b> If a country is a transitional democracy, then it is more likely to adopt legislative quotas than other countries.	Supported and Statistically Significant
<b>H2 (d):</b> If a country is a post-conflict state, then it is more likely to adopt reserved seats than other countries.	Supported but not Statistically Significant
<b>H3:</b> If a country is a democracy, then the size of its quota will be larger than that of non-democratic quota adopters.	Supported
<b>H4 (a):</b> If a quota adopter is a long-standing democracy, then quota adoption is more likely to be motivated by the women's movement than in other quota adopters.	Supported but not Statistically Significant
<b>H4 (b):</b> If a quota adopter is a transitional democracy, then quota adoption is more likely to be led by political elites than in other countries.	Not Supported and Statistically Significant
<b>H4 (c):</b> If a quota adopter is a post-conflict state, then external influences are more likely to motivate quota adoption than in other countries.	Not Supported but not Statistically Significant
<b>H5:</b> If a quota adopter is a democracy, then the descriptive and substantive outcomes of quotas will be less evident compared to other quota adopters.	Supported for Descriptive Outcomes Only

**TABLE 3.** Summary of Findings

## ANALYSIS

I use logistic regression to test *H1*, *H2*, *H4*, and *H5*. I model the explanatory variables first together, and then, separately as follows:

$$\mathbf{P}(y=1|x) = 1 / (1 + e^{-x_i\beta}) \text{ where } x_i\beta = \beta_0 + \beta_1 x_1 + \beta_2 x_2 + \beta_3 x_3 + \dots + \beta_n x_n \quad (1)$$

Where  $y$  represents the dependent variable and  $x$  represents the explanatory variable(s)

For *H3*, I examine the descriptive statistics.

## FINDINGS FOR H1

Table 4 reports on the relationship between democracy, conflict and quota adoption. The study tests the hypothesis that democracies, transitional democracies, and post-conflict states are more likely to adopt quotas than other countries. The regression yields statistically significant results that support the hypothesis. In (1), we see that being a long-standing democracy, transitional democracy, or post-conflict state increases a country's likelihood of quota adoption. Meanwhile, if we look at (5), which estimates the likelihood that all other countries will adopt quotas, we see a statistically significant *negative* relationship. This finding indicates that countries that are not post-conflict states and are not democracies have a *lesser* likelihood of adopting quotas compared to other countries. This relationship is consistent with the hypothesis.

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Quota Adoption</i>				
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
DEMOCRACY	2.385*** (0.64)	1.084* (0.58)			
TRANSITIONAL DEMOCRACY	2.232*** (0.45)		1.230*** (0.37)		
POST-CONFLICT STATE	1.564*** (0.49)			0.175 (0.41)	
OTHER					-2.048*** (0.39)
CONSTANT	-0.827	0.474	0.175	0.562	1.222
<i>N</i>	169	169	169	169	169

Standard errors are in parentheses. \* significant at 10% \*\*significant at 5% \*\*\*significant at 1%.

*Note:* Other refers to countries that are not democracies, transitional democracies, or post-conflict states.

**TABLE 4.** Binomial Logistic Regression, Quota Adoption, 1970 - 2011

#### FINDINGS FOR H2 (a)

Table 5 reports on the relationship between democracy, conflict and the adoption of voluntary party quotas. Here, the study tests the hypothesis that long-standing democracies are more likely to adopt voluntary party quotas than other countries. The results appear to support the hypothesis. In (1), we see statistically significant positive relationships for long-standing democracies and transitional democracies and the adoption of voluntary party quotas. On the other hand, if we look at the results for post-conflict states in (1), we have what appears to be a much weaker connection with voluntary quota adoption. The hypothesis gains additional traction when we consider the explanatory variables separately. The weaker relationships shown for transitional democracies and post-conflict states in (3) and (4) underscore the connection between long-standing democracies and the adoption of voluntary party quotas.

Variables	Voluntary Party Quotas				
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
DEMOCRACY	3.178*** (0.69)	1.944*** (0.492)			
TRANSITIONAL DEMOCRACY	1.857*** (0.58)		0.540 (0.34)		
POST-CONFLICT STATE	1.001 (0.67)			-0.657 (0.46)	
OTHER					-1.905*** (0.55)
CONSTANT	-2.351	-1.117	-1.035	-0.693	-0.446
N	169	169	169	169	169

Standard errors are in parentheses. \* significant at 10% \*\*significant at 5% \*\*\*significant at 1%.

Note: Other refers to countries that are not democracies, transitional democracies, or post-conflict states.

**TABLE 5.** Binomial Logistic Regression, Adoption of Voluntary Party Quotas, 1970 - 2011

#### FINDINGS FOR H2 (b)

Tables 6 and 7 report on the relationship between democracy, conflict, the introduction of quotas by the left, and the adoption of quotas by multiple parties. The study tests the hypothesis that if a country is a democracy, then its quota is more likely be initiated by the left and adopted by multiple parties than if it were a non-democracy. The results appear to support the hypothesis. In Table 6, we see positive and significant relationships between democracies and transitional democracies and the initiation of quotas by the left (see (1)). If we consider the two democracies separately, we notice that the relationship is stronger for long-standing democracies than for transitional democracies (see (2) and (3)). Meanwhile, the weakly positive and negative relationships for post-conflict states shown in (1) and (4), indicate a *lesser* likelihood of the left initiating quotas. This finding lends additional support to the hypothesis.

In Table 7, we see a statistically significant positive relationship for long-standing democracies and the presence of multiple party quotas (see (1)). A positive, though insignificant, relationship also exists for transitional democracies in (1). Here, we can conclude that

established democracies *do* have a greater likelihood of having multiple party quotas. By contrast, the negative, though not significant relationship between post-conflict states and multiple party quotas in (4) suggests that such countries are *less likely* to have multiple party quotas. Overall, the results of the study are consistent with *H2(b)*.

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Quotas Initiated by the Left</i>				
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
DEMOCRACY	2.931*** (0.64)	1.907*** (-0.49)			
TRANSITIONAL DEMOCRACY	1.609*** (0.54)		0.491 (0.34)		
POST-CONFLICT STATE	0.754 (0.64)			-0.690 (0.46)	
OTHER					-1.658*** (0.508)
CONSTANT	-2.104	-1.080	-0.985	-0.660	-0.446
<i>N</i>	169	169	169	169	169

Standard errors are in parentheses. \* significant at 10% \*\*significant at 5% \*\*\*significant at 1%.

*Note:* Other refers to countries that are not democracies, transitional democracies, or post-conflict states.

**TABLE 6.** Binomial Logistic Regression, Quotas Initiated by the Left, 1970 - 2011

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Quota Adoption by Multiple Parties</i>				
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
DEMOCRACY	2.331*** (0.84)	2.066*** (0.53)			
TRANSITIONAL DEMOCRACY	0.927 (0.81)		0.278 (0.48)		
POST-CONFLICT STATE				-0.901 (0.77)	
OTHER					
CONSTANT	-2.773	-2.507	-2.124	-1.872	-1.639
<i>N</i>	123	169	169	169	123

Standard errors are in parentheses. \* significant at 10% \*\*significant at 5% \*\*\*significant at 1%.

*Note:* Other refers to countries that are not democracies, transitional democracies, or post-conflict states.

**TABLE 7.** Binomial Logistic Regression, Quota Adoption by Multiple Parties, 1970 - 2011

## FINDINGS FOR H2 (c)

Table 8 reports on the relationship between democracy, conflict and the adoption of legislative quotas. This study tests the hypothesis that transitional democracies are more likely to adopt legislative quotas than other countries. Again, we see results that support the hypothesis: in (1), we see a statistically positive relationship for transitional democracies. The result for democracies, while positive, is not statistically significant and indicates a weaker relationship with the adoption of legislative quotas. Interestingly, we see a statistically significant positive relationship for post-conflict states in (1), suggesting that they are *also* more likely to adopt legislative quotas. However, when we model the variables separately, only transitional democracies yield a positive and significant relationship (see (2), (3) and (4)). This indicates that, *consistent* with the hypothesis, transitional democracies are most closely connected with legislative quotas. Meanwhile, the statistically significant negative relationship for all other countries, as shown in Model (5), reveals that such countries have a *lesser* chance of adopting legislative quotas. This finding is also consistent with *H2(c)*.

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Legislative Quotas</i>				
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
DEMOCRACY	1.194 (0.95)	-0.780 (0.65)			
TRANSITIONAL DEMOCRACY	2.660*** (0.77)		1.504*** (0.39)		
POST-CONFLICT STATE	1.912** (0.83)			-0.317 (0.45)	
OTHER					-2.247** (0.75)
CONSTANT	-3.091	-1.117	-1.935	-1.210	-0.843
<i>N</i>	169	169	169	169	169

Standard errors are in parentheses. \* significant at 10% \*\*significant at 5% \*\*\*significant at 1%

*Note:* Other refers to countries that are not democracies, transitional democracies, or post-conflict states.

**TABLE 8.** Binomial Logistic Regression, Adoption of Legislative Quotas, 1970 - 2011



## FINDINGS FOR H2 (d)

Table 9 reports on the relationship between democracy, conflict and the adoption of reserved seats. This study tests the hypothesis that post-conflict states are more likely to adopt reserved seats than other countries. The results of this study appear to be consistent with the hypothesis. In (1) we see a positive, though not statistically significant, connection between post-conflict states and the adoption of reserved seats. This suggests that being a post-conflict state may increase a country's chances of adopting reserved seats. Meanwhile, the statistically significant *negative* relationship for transitional democracies in (1) indicates that such countries are *less* likely to adopt reserved seats. Interestingly, (5) yields a statistically significant *positive* relationship for all other countries. This finding suggests that such countries are *also* more likely to adopt reserved seats.

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Reserved Seats</i>				
	<i>(1)</i>	<i>(2)</i>	<i>(3)</i>	<i>(4)</i>	<i>(5)</i>
DEMOCRACY					
TRANSITIONAL DEMOCRACY	-1.908** (0.82)		-2.481** (1.04)		
POST-CONFLICT STATE	0.379 (0.56)			1.460*** (0.53)	
OTHER					0.981* (0.52)
CONSTANT	-1.558	-2.027	-1.693	-2.639	-2.539
<i>N</i>	146	146	146	146	146

Standard errors are in parentheses. \* significant at 10% \*\*significant at 5% \*\*\*significant at 1%.

*Note:* Other refers to countries that are not democracies, transitional democracies, or post-conflict states.

**TABLE 9.** Binomial Logistic Regression, Adoption of Reserved Seats, 1970 - 2011

## FINDINGS FOR H3

Table 10 summarizes quota size according to whether the quota adopter is a long-standing democracy, transitional democracy, or post-conflict state. Here, I test the hypothesis that democracies are more likely to adopt large quota thresholds compared to non-democracies. The data in Table 10 appears to support this hypothesis. We see that long-standing democracies, on average, have larger quota thresholds than all other countries. The comparatively small standard deviation for long-standing democracies indicates that their quota thresholds are also more closely clustered. This finding lends additional support to the hypothesis.

Meanwhile, we find that average quota sizes appear to decrease with levels of democratization. Indeed, among countries that are not post-conflict and are not democracies, the average quota threshold is the smallest (see Other). We also see larger standard deviations in transitional democracies, post-conflict states, and all other countries compared to long-standing democracies. From these findings, we can conclude that quota thresholds are more widely distributed in transitional democracies, post-conflict states, and all other countries. This finding suggests that long-standing democracies more consistently adopt larger quota thresholds.

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Standard Deviation</i>	<i>Minimum</i>	<i>Maximum</i>
<b>QUOTA SIZE</b>				
OVERALL	30.520	9.760	3	50
DEMOCRACY	41.327	6.399	30	50
TRANSITIONAL DEMOCRACY	29.554	8.778	3	50
POST-CONFLICT STATE	27.026	7.525	10	35
OTHER	24.269	9.623	5	40

*Note:* The Other category refers to countries that are not long-standing democracies, transitional democracies, or post-conflict states but have adopted quotas.

**TABLE 10.** Average Quota Size in Democracies, Transitional Democracies, and Post-Conflict States, 1970 - 2011

## FINDINGS FOR H4

Table 11 reports on the significance of explanations commonly given for quota adoption: female mobilization, the initiative of the political elite, shifting social norms, and international pressure. I test three hypotheses: (a) if quota adoption occurs in a long-standing democracy, then it is more likely to be motivated by female mobilization than in other countries, (b) if quota adoption occurs in a transitional democracy, then it is more likely to be spearheaded by political elites than in other countries, and (c) if quota adoption occurs in a post-conflict state, it is more likely to be motivated by international actors than in other countries. The evidence partly *contradicts* the hypotheses.

Among long-standing democracies that have adopted quotas, we see that Abortion on Request (the proxy measure for the influence of female lobbying) is the only variable that increases the likelihood of quota adoption. Though the relationship is not significant, the finding is consistent with *H4 (a)*. Among transitional democracies, we see that signing the Optional Protocol – a proxy measure for the influence of social norms – yields a statistically significant positive relationship. This result *contradicts H4 (b)* which predicted political elites as the leading instigators of quota adoption. Instead, the evidence shows that changing social norms as the key force driving quota adoption in transitional democracies. The evidence suggests that political elites who initiate quotas are perhaps motivated more by a genuine desire to improve gender equality rather than by calculated strategic considerations.

Among post-conflict states, we see that the women's movement, international actors, social norms and political elites all contribute to quota adoption. While the relationships are not significant, they are positive. These findings *contradict H4 (c)*, which predicted that international

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Competing Explanations for Quota Adoption</i>									
	<i>In Full Democracy Only</i>		<i>In Transitional Democracies Only</i>		<i>In Post-Conflict States Only</i>		<i>Among Other Quota Adopters Only</i>		<i>Among all Quota Adopters</i>	
	<i>(1)</i>	<i>(2)</i>	<i>(1)</i>	<i>(2)</i>	<i>(1)</i>	<i>(2)</i>	<i>(1)</i>	<i>(2)</i>	<i>(1)</i>	<i>(2)</i>
ABORTION ON REQUEST	1.872 (1.61)	1.322 (1.52)	0.020 (0.72)	-0.038 (0.70)	0.730 (1.05)	1.093 (1.18)	0.393 (0.79)	0.399 (0.80)	0.249 (0.39)	0.325 (0.40)
OPTIONAL PROTOCOL			1.338** (0.67)	1.383** (0.66)	0.270 (0.95)	-0.464 (1.06)	0.885 (0.77)	0.866 (0.78)	1.405*** (0.38)	1.404*** (0.38)
GENDER AID			0.410 (0.69)	0.429 (0.68)	0.233 (0.87)	0.512 (0.84)	1.540** (0.76)	1.532** (0.76)	0.654* (0.38)	0.759** (0.38)
CEDAW SIGNATORY			0.235 (0.69)		1.205 (0.90)		-0.066 (0.75)		0.656* (0.36)	
CEDAW RATIFICATION/ACCESSION						2.075 (1.23)		0.063 (1.407)		1.069 (-0.78)
CONSTANT	0.693	1.386	0.331	0.461	-0.964	-1.944	-1.907	-1.979	-0.874	-1.617
<i>N</i>	17	21	66	66	34	34	46	46	169	169

Standard errors are in parentheses. \* significant at 10% \*\*significant at 5% \*\*\*significant at 1% N.B. CEDAW Signatory and CEDAW Ratification are modeled separately to account for possible correlation.

*Note:* The Other category in column 4 refers to countries that are not long-standing democracies, transitional democracies, or post-conflict states but have adopted quotas.

**TABLE 11.** Binomial Logistic Regression, Variables Leading to Quota Adoption, 1970 – 2011

actors would be most influential in quota adoption. Instead, we see that international actors need to work alongside the women's movement and political elites to bring about quota adoption. Tellingly, the relationship between political elites (CEDAW Signatory and CEDAW Ratification/Accession) and quota adoption appears stronger than the influence of social norms (Gender Aid). This suggests that international actors in post-conflict states still retain an important role in ensuring that quotas are properly implemented and do not simply become token measures.

Meanwhile, when we examine the factors influencing quota adoption in countries that are non-democracies and are not post-conflict states, the proxy measure for international influence – Gender Aid – is positive and significant. This suggests that international actors can play a lead role in quota adoption, albeit not in post-conflict states.

#### FINDINGS FOR H5

In Figure 4, I examine the relationship between democracy and conflict and the outcomes of quotas. Here, I test the hypothesis that the effect of quotas will be less evident in long-standing democracies than in other countries. While the evidence is far from conclusive, there appears to be some support for the hypothesis.

Figure 4 (a) shows the change in the number of women in parliament after the introduction of quotas. On average, we see an increase in female representation among all quota adopters. *Consistent* with the hypothesis, the changes are more pronounced in transitional democracies, post-conflict states, and other non-democratic quota adopters than in long-standing democracies. It appears that long-standing democracies recorded on average increases that were less than half of that experienced by all other countries. When we look at the range of change in

the number of women in parliament, we also see less variability among long-standing democracies. This further supports the hypothesis that quotas have less influence in such countries.

Figure 4 (b) illustrates changes to maternal mortality following quota adoption. Here, we see that, unlike transitional democracies and post-conflict states, long-standing democracies have experienced on average a slight *increase* in maternal mortality. This finding is consistent with the hypothesis. However, the relatively large range of change recorded for long-standing democracies appears to suggest that there are also clear exceptions to the case.

Figure 4 (c) shows changes to rates of adolescent fertility after quota adoption. While we see declines in adolescent fertility in all countries, the changes are greatest in long-standing democracies and post-conflict states. Here, the findings *contradict* the hypothesis. Indeed, if we consider the range of change for long-standing democracies, we notice that long-standing democracies record some of the largest decreases to adolescent fertility. Here, the findings suggest that quotas may not necessarily have the biggest impact on countries where the greatest gains can be made.

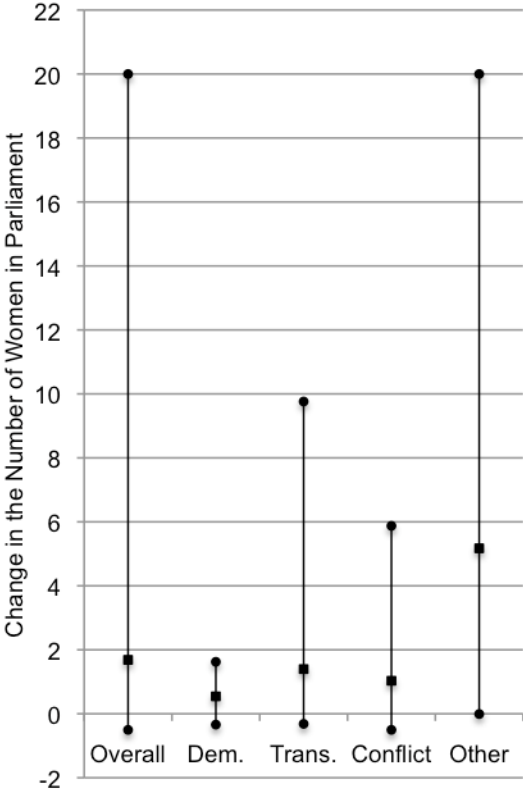
Figure 4 (d) illustrates changes to total fertility after quota adoption. *Consistent* with the hypothesis, the average change in long-standing democracies appears smaller than other countries. Nonetheless, we see a relatively large range of change among established democracies. This finding indicates that there are also cases of long-standing democracies that contradict the hypothesis.

Figure 4 (e) measures the change in the ratio of female to male secondary enrollment after quota adoption. We see that all countries - except long-standing democracies - see an increase in the proportion of women enrolling in secondary school. Among long-standing

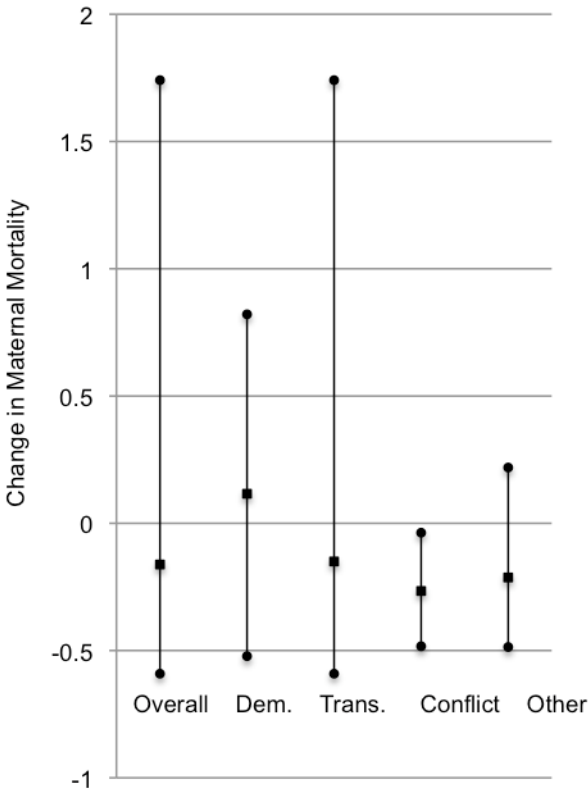
democracies, we see *very little change* in female secondary enrollment rates. These findings are *consistent* with the hypothesis and are strengthened by the small range of change for long-standing democracies.

Figure 4 (f) illustrates the change in female labor force participation. *Contrary* to the hypothesis, we see that long-standing democracies recorded the highest increase in female labor force participation. The evidence here suggests that, despite having higher baseline levels of workforce participation, women in established democracies are, on average, still making greater gains in the workplace.

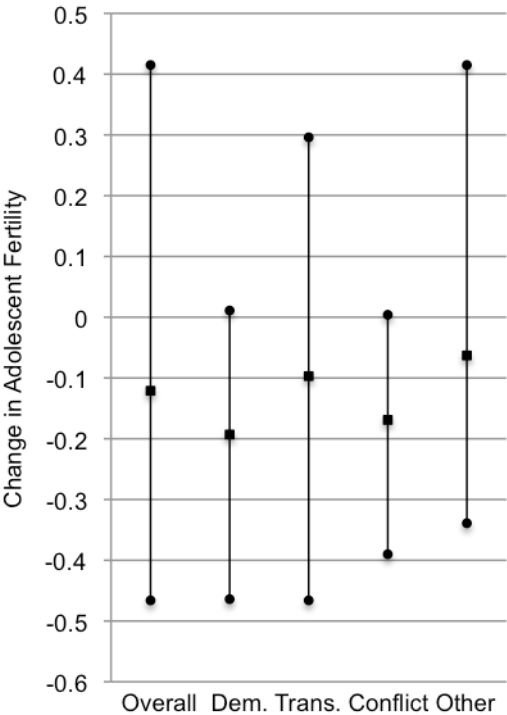
Overall, we see some evidence suggesting that quotas may have a lesser effect on long-standing democracies than on other countries. However, the findings are not conclusive. The relatively large ranges of change recorded for democracies calls for caution against any generalization. Moreover, if we compare the ranges of change among long-standing democracies, transitional democracies, post-conflict states, and all other countries, we see also great variation across the different indicators. This suggests that for the time being, the effect of quota is not closely dependent on whether the quota adopter is a democracy, a post-conflict state, or a non-democracy that is not a post-conflict state. Given that many countries have adopted quotas only very recently, it may simply be too early to draw conclusions on the substantive impact of quotas.



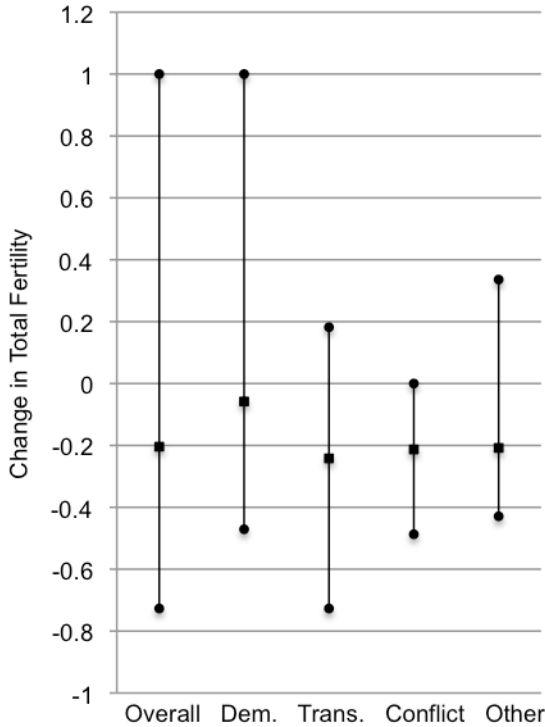
(A)



(B)

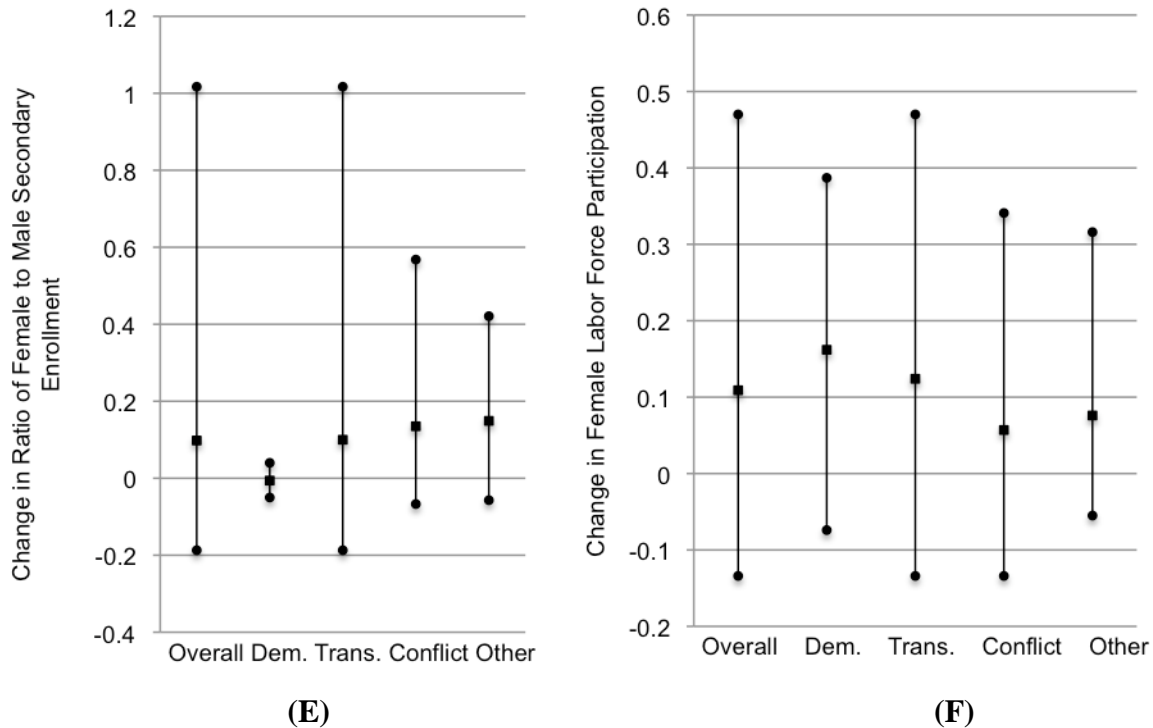


(C)



(D)





*Note:* The Other category refers to countries that are not long-standing democracies, transitional democracies, or post-conflict states but have adopted quotas.

**FIGURE 4.** Change in Gender Inequality Indicators After Quota Adoption, 1980 - 2011

#### SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Evidence from this study largely supports the view that democracy and conflict increase the likelihood of quota adoption and influence the size, type, and outcome of the quota. We see that democracies, transitional democracies, and post-conflict states are more likely to adopt quotas than other countries. We also see that decreases in levels of democratization are associated with the adoption of more rigid quota types. Voluntary quotas are most likely to be found in long-standing democracies while reserved seats appear most popular in post-conflict states. The evidence also suggests that motives for quota adoption vary according to levels of democratization and conflict: whereas women drive quota adoption in long-standing democracies, shifting social norms appear take precedence in transitional democracies.

Interestingly, while the study shows that quotas increase the number of women in parliament, *it is not clear* whether quotas eventually lead to improved gender outcomes. Although gender indicators improved on average for all quota adopters, one also cannot rule out the influence of other variables. The fact that long-standing democracies outperformed other countries in increases to female labor force participation despite having the highest baseline level of participation seems to undermine the importance of quotas in diminishing gender equality (see Figure 4 (f)). However, one must also consider the fact that many countries – particularly post-conflict states - have adopted quotas only very recently. Consequently, significant changes resulting from quotas may still be taking shape. Ultimately, research that examines change over a longer period of time and accounts for the influence of other variables appears necessary to ascertain the true capacity of quotas to improve gender equality.

## CASE STUDIES

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### OVERVIEW

In this section, I explore the evolution of quotas in democracies, transitional democracies, post-conflict states, and autocracies by comparing Sweden and Finland, Poland and Lithuania, Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of Congo, and Morocco and Jordan.

The case studies offer a more nuanced understanding of this paper's empirical findings. Finland and Sweden illustrate how female mobilization is essential for quota adoption in democracies. However, the two countries also reveal that policies which aim to promote gender equality may actually deepen gender divisions. Meanwhile, Poland and Lithuania highlight the importance of changing social norms on quota adoption in transitional democracies while also exposing the bitter legacy of token Soviet-era quotas.

In Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of Congo, we see that international actors must be supported by political elites and the women's movement if quotas are to be introduced. Notably, we find that the degree to which women participate in a conflict can determine whether they are empowered or disenfranchised by post-conflict settlements. Finally, in Morocco and Jordan, we find quotas being used to acquire aid and political legitimacy. The final case study is a reminder that quotas by no means guarantee improved gender outcomes.

### A TALE OF TWO NORDIC NEIGHBORS: SWEDEN AND FINLAND

Sweden and Finland provide contrasting insights into the adoption of parliamentary gender quotas in long-standing democracies. The two countries boast some of the highest levels of female political representation in the world. However, whereas Sweden has voluntary party

quotas, Finland's quotas apply only to indirectly elected public bodies such as municipal boards and government inquiry commissions. Today, women in both countries still struggle to access key political posts. A study of Sweden and Finland not only illustrates the importance of female mobilization for the adoption of quotas in established democracies, but also highlights the persistence of gender discrimination in politics and in the workforce.

Sweden has often been regarded as the world leader in female political representation (Dahlerup 2004; Friedenvall 2003). Beginning in the 1970s, Sweden saw a surge in the number of women in politics. At the start of that decade, women composed only 14 percent of the Swedish parliament. By 1988, however, that figure had risen to 38 percent. With the exception of the 1991 elections, the number of women elected to the Swedish parliament has risen at every subsequent election (Freidenvall 2003). Today, women make up 44.7 percent of the Swedish parliament – the fourth highest figure in the world (IPU 2011).

The dramatic increase in female political representation in Sweden can largely be attributed to the efforts of female lobbyists. In the mid-1960s, the Social Democratic Women's Federation (SSFK) published *Woman's Equality*, a policy memorandum that proposed a series of social reforms. The proposals sought to promote gender equality in areas such as taxation, labor market policy, family law, education, social security and public services (Sainsbury 2005). The proposed reforms became the basis of the *Towards Equality* program which the Swedish parliament adopted in 1969. The push for social reform was soon matched by demands for equal political representation. In 1967, women belonging to the Left Party-Communists (VPK), published the *Socialist Alternative*, a policy program that aimed to bolster gender equality. The policy's authors noted: "It is a blatant injustice and a threat to democracy that half of Sweden's population is poorly represented on boards and executive committees" (Sainsbury 2005). At the

same time, women from the Center Party also began framing the underrepresentation of women in politics as a threat to democracy. By 1968, women across the Swedish political spectrum had joined forces under the Fredrika Bremer Association, a women's rights organization, to demand measures to increase female political representation.

In the 1970s, Sweden's political parties began to respond to women's demands. In 1972, the Liberal Party adopted internal guidelines for promoting female party leadership. At its internal party congress, the Liberals decided that women should occupy at least 40 percent of all party posts (Sainsbury 2005). The Social Democrats followed the Liberals' lead: in 1978, the party declared that, since women made up half the population, they also ought to occupy half the seats in parliament. The Social Democrats also announced that the proportion of women occupying internal party posts would be equal to female party membership figures (Sainsbury 2003). By the end of the 1980s, three more parties had introduced internal quotas: the Green Party (1981), the Left Party (1987), and the Christian Democrats (1987) (Krook 2009).

The lobbying efforts of women's groups in Sweden led to the establishment of the Advisory Council on Equality between Men and Women in 1972. The council was formed in response to demands by the Social Democratic Women's Federation (SSFK) for a special cabinet-level taskforce to monitor gender outcomes (Sainsbury 2005). The Advisory Council, which was to be entirely staffed by women, would help set the agenda for future policies relating to gender equality.

From its inception, the Advisory Council actively lobbied the Swedish government on gender issues. Less than a year after it was formed, the Council raised concerns about the low representation of women in appointed bodies such as inquiry commissions and national administrative agencies (Sainsbury 2005). In 1975, the Council alerted the government to the

poor representation of women in regional administrative bodies. The Council's efforts to promote women's political representation paid off in 1985 when the Swedish government drew international attention to the Council's concerns. In its report to the United Nations, *Side by Side*, the Swedish government pointed to the growing gap between the number of women elected to parliament and the number appointed to government bodies (1985). Later that year, Sweden's Minister for Gender, Anita Gradin, established a commission to investigate ways of increasing women's representation in the state bureaucracy. The commission would eventually draft a bill mandating quotas for women on inquiry committees and administrative bodies. The first quota set a 30 percent threshold for women. That figure increased to 40 percent in 1992, and then 50 percent in 1995 (Sainsbury 2003). As a result, the number of women in appointed posts soared. In the mid-1980s, women made up only 15 percent of the Swedish bureaucracy. After quotas were introduced, the figure rose to 40 percent (Sainsbury 2005).

By contrast, in Finland, divisions within the women's movement hampered efforts to increase female political representation. During the 1970s, Finland saw slightly higher levels of female political representation than Sweden: in 1974, women composed 21.5 percent of the Finnish parliament. However, this lead did not last.

In 1972, the Finnish government established the Council for Equality between Women and Men (Holli and Kantola 2005). The new body was to initiate and draft policies on promoting gender equality. However, the Council soon became mired in partisan conflict (Holli and Kantola 2005). From the very start, Council members on the political right accused those on the left of using the body to promote leftist interests (Holli 1991). The ensuing battle meant that the resources of the Council were largely divested into efforts to increase funding for the women's sections of individual political parties (Holli and Kantola 2005). Meanwhile, measures to

increase overall female political representation were obstructed by a focus on social reform. Elder female politicians who dominated the Council believed that reforms to the education system, social policies, and the labor market system would automatically lead to an increase in female political representation (Holli and Kantola 2005; Raevaara 2005). Unlike their Swedish counterparts, it took over a decade before female politicians in Finland began to demand direct measures to increase their number in parliament.

The initiative for quota adoption eventually came from Finland's far left. In the 1970s, the Finnish People's Democratic League (SKDL), a radical left-wing party with communist ties, became the first Finnish political party to include gender equality on its party agenda (Holli and Kantola 2005). In 1986, the SKDL, despite being a male dominated organization, pushed for the introduction of the Finnish Equality Act (Sundberg 1997). The Equality Act outlawed sex discrimination and introduced measures to improve gender equality in the workplace. The SKDL's commitment to the Equality Act created pressure on the party to foster gender equality within its own ranks. In 1986, the SKDL's general secretary, Reijo Kakela, floated the idea of an internal quota. The measure was seen as a means of increasing the party's appeal among female voters and enhancing the party's image as an advocate for gender issues (Holli and Kantola 2005). The quota initially met fierce opposition from within the SKDL. Nonetheless, in early 1987, the party's executives eventually agreed to introduce a quota rule for all decision-making bodies of the party. Notably, a voluntary party quota for female candidates was not introduced.

It was the failure of government officials to properly implement the Finnish Equality Act that finally motivated Finnish women to demand quotas. One of the Act's key provisions was a commitment that government commissions, advisory boards, and municipal boards should include both men and women, unless there were special reasons not to do so (Holli and Kantola

2005). Those in power, however, interpreted this provision loosely. When the matter was brought to the Finnish Supreme Administrative Court in 1990, the judgment was highly unfavorable. To the dismay of women's groups, the Court ruled that it did not consider the presence of only one woman or man in an administrative body to be a breach of the Equality Act (Holli and Kantola 2005).

In an effort to properly enforce the Equality Act, two state commission reports suggested introducing a 40 percent quota for women in appointed government bodies. Government ministries, however, fiercely opposed the proposal. When a non-quota guideline was proposed as a compromise solution, women leaders in the Finnish parliament rose in opposition: two female ministers in the center-right government formally rejected the compromise deal (Holli and Kantola 2005). Meanwhile, the Network of Women MPs in parliament initiated two private members' bills calling for the adoption of quotas.

The pressure paid off. In 1994, the Parliamentary Standing Committee for Labor Market Affairs issued a recommendation for quotas in Finnish administrative bodies. When the issue came to a vote in parliament, women crossed party lines and joined with men on the left to defeat the government's compromise deal. Since 1995, the Finnish Equality Act has specifically decreed that women must occupy at least 40 percent of the positions in appointed public bodies. Attempts to extend this provision to private entities, however, have been defeated. After the introduction of quotas, the number of women in public commissions rose from 30 percent to 48 percent. In municipal executive boards, the proportion of women rose from 25 percent to 45 percent (Holli and Kantola 2005).

Like Sweden, it took pan-partisan mobilization of women to establish quotas in Finland. The Finnish case also demonstrates how the absence of female participation in quota adoption



can lead to token policies. When the Finnish People's Democratic League (SKDL) introduced internal quotas, the primary objective of party leaders was not to reduce gender inequality, but to improve the party's electability. Similarly, had female politicians not actively demanded quotas, the Finnish Equality Act would have been a merely symbolic measure (Raevaara 2005).

Indeed, the absence of female lobbying in Finland until the 1990s may explain why Finland, unlike most of Europe, still does not have any parliamentary quotas. Instead, parties in Finland have followed in the timid steps of the SKDL and restricted quotas to internal party bodies. The evolution of quotas in Finland is consistent with this paper's hypothesis that party competition fuels the adoption of voluntary party quotas: the failure of a single Finnish party to adopt quotas has created few incentives for others to follow (Matland and Studlar 2006).

Meanwhile, as the empirical findings of this paper already indicate, creating substantive improvements in gender inequality appears to be a greater challenge. Contrary to popular perceptions and in spite of high levels of female political representation, gender divisions remain entrenched in both Finland and Sweden. These divisions are evident in politics, and to a greater extent, in the private sector. Women in both countries are still funneled into gendered roles, and in spite of high levels of education, few rise to prominent leadership positions (Holli 2008).

In Finland, the election of Tarja Halonen as Finland's first female president in 2000 appeared to confirm the country's status as a leader in gender equality. Indeed, Halonen, an unmarried single-mother from a working class section of Stockholm could not have been a better example of progressive Finnish politics at work. However, Halonen's success story belies the fact that until very recently, Finnish women were heavily underrepresented in key political leadership positions (Holli 2008).

For many decades, there was an informal cap on the number of women in the Finnish cabinet. Finland's first female minister, Miinna Sillanpaa, was appointed in 1926. Sillanpaa's appointment established an informal tradition whereby subsequent cabinets would include only a single token female minister. These women would be restricted to "women's portfolios" such as culture and education or social affairs and health. It was not until the 1970s that the unofficial cap for women was increased to two. It took a further decade for the cap to increase to four women (Holli 2008).

Today, female Finnish ministers are still assigned gendered portfolios. From 1926 to 1992, seventy-two women were appointed as ministers. Of these women, fifty-three oversaw either the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health or the Ministry of Education. Until 1987, men held the key ministries of finance, foreign affairs, and trade and industry. No Finnish woman has ever headed the finance or the trade and industry ministries (Holli 2008).

Finnish women also remain underrepresented in party leadership positions. In Finland, becoming the leader of a political party is a key stepping-stone to a cabinet position. Typically, leaders of large parties automatically gain access to cabinet ministries with the leaders of the largest parties taking hold of the most important portfolios. Becoming a party leader is also crucial for securing nomination as a party's presidential candidate. Despite the large numbers of women in elected office, it took until 2003 before any of Finland's three largest parties elected a female as its leader. Even the election of women to leadership positions in smaller left-wing parties is rare (Holli 2008). Arguably, Tarja Halonen's ascendancy to the presidency is an anomaly in Finnish politics. Her rise to power may be better explained by a series of electoral reforms that reduced the power of party elites in nominating presidential candidates in the 1990s, than by the progressive nature of Finnish politics (Holli 2008).

Outside of politics, Finnish women are also having an as difficult time competing with their male peers. While Finland has extensive provisions for maternal leave and childcare, its labor force remains heavily gender segregated. Despite being on average better educated, women in Finland more likely to work in the public sector, where parental leave arrangements are more generous, and work fewer hours (Lister 2009). Some scholars argue that the generous welfare provisions for parental leave have only helped entrench gender segregation in the workforce since women are more likely than men to use childcare provisions (Datta Gupta, Smith and Verner 2006; Mandel and Semyonov 2006). Indeed, the gender wage gap in Finland is above the EU average (European Commission 2008). Finland also scored poorer than the United Kingdom in terms of occupational gender segregation (European Commission 2008).

Efforts to correct gender divisions in the Finnish workforce have appeared only very recently. In 2010, Finland mandated that at least one woman should be present on the board of a listed company. Attempts to implement a larger quota were declared unfeasible: more than half of all listed companies in Finland had no women on their boards in 2010. The quota's enforcement mechanisms are equally poor: companies that fail to comply will only be asked to provide an explanation. It is hoped that public shaming would be sufficient to ensure that the new quota is observed (European Professional Women's Network 2012).

Women in Sweden face similar obstacles as their Finnish counterparts. Despite its high levels of female political representation, Sweden is ranked at the bottom of EU states in terms of the number of self-employed women (Hedfeldt and Hedlund 2011). Compared to other developed nations, the Swedish labor market remains heavily gender segregated (Carlsson 2011). Like their peers in Finland, Swedish women tend to work in healthcare, education, and retail. Studies suggest that one reason for this division may be due to discriminatory hiring practices

(Carlsson 2011). Women in Sweden also face institutional barriers: the Swedish Labor Court has repeatedly resisted efforts to implement equal wage measures in collective bargaining agreements (Hellgren and Hobson 2009).

In its 2001 report, CEDAW reported that the gender wage gap in Sweden had not narrowed for over a decade (2001). The report attributed the lack of improvement to persistent gender segregation in the labor market. The same report noted that gender segregation extended to the education system where the attitudes of teachers helped to reinforce gender stereotypes. CEDAW additionally noted that Swedish women remained underrepresented in local government, and on public and private sector boards (2001).

In a 2008 update, CEDAW described the Swedish Constitution as “gender-blind”, but not “gender-sensitive”. Among the areas of concern was the persistence of female underrepresentation in high-ranking postings, particularly in academia and the private sector. The latest report also noted that only 20 percent of new fathers take parental leave, in spite of generous government provisions. Meanwhile, women continue to dominate part-time employment (CEDAW 2008). It appears that for the time being, Sweden has still a long way to go in attaining gender equality.

Sweden and Finland illustrate the importance of female political mobilization in bringing about the adoption of gender quotas in democratic states. In Sweden, the activism of female leaders during the 1960s and 1970s saw the adoption of voluntary party quotas by a series of parties in the following decade. By contrast, divisions among Finland’s women leaders meant that concerted lobbying for quotas did not occur until the 1990s. Today, quotas in Finland remain restricted to internal party bodies. And unlike much of Europe, no parliamentary quotas currently exist in Finland.

More interestingly, Finland and Sweden also provide an insight into the long-term outcome of quotas. The persistence of gender stereotypes and employment segregation in spite of high levels of female representation is evidence that substantive change is much harder to create than descriptive change. Indeed, international praise for Sweden and Finland's progressive policies overlook evidence that gender discrimination remains very much present. Moreover, the much lauded labor policies in the two countries may have actually helped to entrench gender divisions. Consequently, Sweden and Finland's ostensible success must be judged cautiously: increased female political representation only marks the start of the long road to gender equality.

#### SOVIET GHOSTS: POLAND AND LITHUANIA

Poland and Lithuania not only illustrate the importance of changing social norms on quota adoption in transitional democracies but also the dangers of token quotas. When the two countries introduced voluntary party quotas in the 1990s, it appeared that they were simply adding to the wave of quota adoption taking place in Latin America. However, unlike their Latin American counterparts, quotas were not new to Poland and Lithuania.

Under Soviet rule, universal gender quotas were imposed on the Eastern Bloc. In Poland and Lithuania, quotas governed every aspect of daily life from education to political appointments. The "forced emancipation" of women, as it became known, left bitter memories among Poles and Lithuanians. In Poland, gradual changes in social attitudes towards female politicians eventually prompted the country to adopt legislative quotas last year. But in Lithuania, where sexism remains pervasive, the lingering memories of Soviet-era quotas have frozen efforts to reinstate quotas.

During the Soviet era, women accounted for as much as 35 percent of Lithuania's deputies. This figure, however, had little political significance. Most of the women were token appointees and few were given positions in key administrative bodies such as the Council of Ministers and the supreme bodies of the Communist Party (Taljunaite 2005). Soviet quotas were widely regarded as a farce: women were often recruited to offices simply to meet the set threshold. Most female appointees had little political experience and many were deliberately kept uninformed (LaFont 2001). The practice even had a term: the "milkmaid syndrome" (LaFont 2001).

When Lithuania democratized in 1990, quotas were discarded. Subsequently, the number of women in parliament fell from a peak of 36 percent in 1984 to 16 percent in 1990. Since then, the figure has steadily crept back to 21 percent (Taljunaite 2005). Despite the steep initial drop in female representation, Lithuania's political parties made little effort to stem further declines. Only one party – the Lithuanian Social Democratic Party – introduced a 33 percent quota in the mid 1990s. The quota, while generous, had little influence on Lithuanian politics. The Lithuanian Social Democratic Party held only eight seats in parliament when it adopted quotas, and in 2004, the party splintered into two. The section of the party that chose to keep the quota failed to win any seats in the 2004 elections. That same year, Lithuanian parliamentarian Birute Vesaite unsuccessfully petitioned for the introduction of parliamentary gender quotas. The quota debate has since been largely forgotten (Taljunaite 2005). Indeed, Laima Liucija Andrikiene, a Lithuanian member of the European Parliament recently dismissed the renewed possibility of quota adoption: "I don't think we need quotas. The Constitution states that every body is equal. One cannot be more equal than others." (Sliziute 2011).

Notwithstanding its opposition to quotas, Lithuania has introduced a number of other measures designed to improve gender equality over the past decade. In 2003, the government established the National Program for Equal Opportunities for Women and Men. Another body, the Lithuanian Women's Advancement Program was created to monitor gender balance on candidate lists and ensures no gender makes up more than two-thirds of any government committee (Taljunaite 2005). Meanwhile, women's organizations actively consult the government on gender issues: the Lithuanian National Women's Forum was established in 2003 to coordinate communication between NGOs and government bodies. Five of the biggest parties in Lithuania have women's sections.

Lithuania's increased sensitivity toward gender equality is largely the product of its efforts to join the European Union. Following the collapse of the Eastern Bloc, Eastern European saw accession to the EU as a path to greater financial security and political legitimacy (Lohmann and Coalition 2005). Women's organizations, meanwhile, saw EU accession as an opportunity to push for gender equality in prospective member states. Meeting EU baselines on gender outcomes has now become a mandated requirement for membership (Vachudova 2005). As a result, countries joining the EU have had to adopt a variety of policies and programs designed to promote gender equality. Subsequently, the EU's concern for women's rights has prompted governments in prospective EU member states to take the issue of gender equality more seriously (Lohmann and Coalition 2005).

Nonetheless, the EU's efforts to promote gender equality appear to have had little effect in changing attitudes towards quotas. A Eurobarometer survey last year revealed that only 12 percent of the public favored quotas (Sliziute 2011). Instead, Lithuanian parties that field large numbers of women are seen as weak (Taljunaite 2005). Meanwhile, Kazimiera Prunskiene, who

served as Lithuania's Prime Minister from 1990 to 1991, calls herself an "exception". At the UN Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995, Prunskiene told the assembly that her male colleagues stopped her from appointing any female ministers (LaFont 2011). Prunskiene recalled: "In seeking to win higher positions and to reinforce their influence, and monopolist positions, men started to form intrigues and to compromise me." (LaFont 2011).

Support for quotas in remains poor even among female Lithuanian politicians. A 2004 report by the European Commission's Enlargement, Gender and Governance project revealed the absence of any coordinated effort among female legislators to lobby for quota adoption. Meanwhile, critics of quotas have continued to successfully attack quotas as a return to failed Soviet-era policies (Taljunaite 2005). Unsurprisingly, efforts to reinstate quotas in Lithuania remain dormant.

Like Lithuania, Poland also experienced a post-Soviet backlash against quotas. At its peak, Soviet-era quotas saw women occupy over 26 percent of the *Sejm*. After the collapse of the USSR, the number of Polish women in parliament fell to 13 percent (Siemienska 2005). Despite their eviction from power, female Polish politicians, like their counterparts in Lithuania, did not clamor for the reinstatement of quotas. It was accepted that, under the Soviet Union, female leaders held only symbolic value. The Soviet experience taught the Poles to disassociate quotas from efforts to promote gender equality (Heinen and Portet 2009). Ultimately, it was a shift in public attitudes towards women followed by the election of a liberal coalition that finally brought quotas back onto the public agenda.

Unlike, Lithuania, calls to address the underrepresentation of women in Poland began almost immediately after the collapse of the Eastern Bloc. Poland's transition to democracy had seen women being systematically excluded from power. The Polish Roundtable Agreement in



1989, which marked the transition to democracy, boasted only one female among the sixty opposition representatives (Zielinska 2010). In lieu of unpopular quotas, women's groups pushed for a law granting men and women equal status (Siemienska 2005). With the support of NGOs, women in Poland's parliament attempted to introduce the law several times throughout the 1990s and 2000s without success. Akin to arguments made by opponents of quotas in Lithuania, conservative male and female deputies on in the *Sejm* argued that gender equality had already been incorporated into the Constitution. Opponents of the proposed law also claimed the bill was "too feminist" and impossible to implement (Heinen and Portet 2009). The 1990s saw women retreat not only from public life but also from the public sector. Backed by the Roman Catholic Church, the conservative government dismantled the Ministry for Women and Child in 1992 and banned abortion in 1993 (Zielinska 2010). Until 2001, Poland's conservative government effectively silenced calls for gender equality legislation (Heinen and Portet 2009).

The first legislative measures seeking to promote gender equality in Poland came only as part of efforts to meet European Union standards. In 2001, the Polish parliament amended the country's labor laws to comply with EU regulations. The amendments prohibited sex discrimination in the workplace and supported the principle of equal pay for equal work (Siemienska 2005). Nonetheless, women's issues were not made a priority in talks on Polish succession to the EU. Women's groups found themselves excluded from the negotiations and women's issues appeared only in one of the 30 areas of negotiations (Zielinska 2010).

The key turning point came from the results of the Polish elections in 2001. That year, a coalition of two left-wing parties – the Alliance of the Democratic Left and the Labor Union – won by a landslide. The victory ousted Poland's long-serving conservative government from power and replaced it with two parties that already had implemented internal party quotas for

women. The change in Poland's political landscape appeared to be triggered by a decline in conservative thinking in the years leading up to the election: whereas surveys in 1997 reported that only 28 percent of Polish men disagreed with the statement that "men are better suited to politics than women", the figure increased to 40 percent in 2001 (Siemienska 2005). Among women, the figure rose from 40 percent to 50 percent (Siemienska 2005).

Following the 2001 Polish elections, efforts to reinstate quota resumed in earnest. In 2002, the new ruling coalition responding to public demands introduced a quota for the local government elections (Siemienska 2005). Last year, following a public petition for the re-introduction of legislative quotas, the Polish government introduced a 35 percent threshold for women in all candidate lists for national elections (Warsaw Business Journal 2011). In the elections that followed, the number of women in the *Sejm* rose from 20 percent to 24 percent (IPU 2011).

Poland and Lithuania highlight the dangers of token quotas. The hypocrisy of Soviet-era quotas left a lasting public distaste for quotas. This distaste has become a potent weapon for those who oppose the reinstatement of quotas. In the absence of quotas, Poland and Lithuania saw a drastic decline in the number of women legislators. Although Soviet quotas afforded women no political power, they did offer visibility. After independence, Polish and Lithuanian women vanished from public life.

The Polish and Lithuanian experiences also underscore the importance of changing social norms in the adoption of quotas. In Lithuania, where sexism remains common and widely accepted, quotas remain absent from politics. In Poland, however, renewed public concern about gender equality led to the election of a liberal coalition that paved the way for the re-introduction of legislative quotas.

The cases of Poland and Lithuania suggest that the current wave of quota adoption sweeping the world should be carefully monitored. The Polish and Lithuanian experience with Soviet-era quotas illustrates that token measures can jeopardize more legitimate efforts at improving gender equality. As increasing numbers of autocracies seek to adopt quotas, the legacy of Soviet-era quotas must be remembered and its mistakes avoided.

#### OPPORTUNITIES GAINED (AND LOST): RWANDA AND THE DEM. REP. OF CONGO

Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) provide an interesting comparison of the role of international actors and women's movements in quota adoption. Rwanda and the DRC are similar in many respects: the two neighbors share a similar colonial history, both have recently emerged from bitter conflicts, and despite efforts at democratization, Rwanda and the DRC remain autocratic. However, whereas women now make up more than half of Rwanda's parliament, they remain largely invisible in the DRC. A comparison of the two countries reveals how entrenched political disinterest in gender equality can sabotage efforts to implement quotas.

In July 1994, the Rwandan Genocide ended after the Tutsi-dominated Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) secured victory over the Hutu government. In the conflict's aftermath, a transitional government dominated by the RPF was established to return Rwanda to democratic rule. During the period of transition from 1994 to 2003, Rwanda saw a surge in the number of women in parliament. Before the outbreak of conflict in 1993, Rwandan women never held more than 18 percent of seats in Rwanda's parliament (Powley 2005). However, after the first post-conflict parliamentary elections in 2003, women held close to half of all seats in parliament (Powley 2005).

The dramatic rise in women's representation in Rwanda is a product of several measures spearheaded by RPF politicians to enhance gender equality. In 2000, the Rwandan government established a twelve-person Constitutional Commission to draft a new constitution. Included on the Commission were three women, one of whom, Judith Kanakuze, was specifically given the task of liaising with the women's movement in Rwanda. When the new Rwandan constitution was formally adopted in May 2003, it outlined a commitment to gender equality (Powley 2005). The Constitution's preamble specifically committed Rwanda to upholding the 1979 Convention on Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). The preamble also noted the need to preserve "equal rights between Rwandans and between women and men without prejudice" and tied gender equality to national development. Title One of Rwanda's Constitution went on to stress the equality of all Rwandans as one of its "fundamental principles". Most importantly, a 30 percent quota for women in "all decision-making organs" was introduced to ensure Rwanda's commitment to gender equality. What is particularly remarkable about this focus on women's rights is the fact that the rest of Rwanda's Constitution is notably less progressive (Kankuze 2004; Powley 2005).

The new Rwandan Constitution also saw several changes to the electoral system. A bicameral parliament was installed and reserved seats were created for women in both houses of parliament. In the upper house, women were to hold 30 percent of all the seats. In the lower house, 24 seats out of 80 were reserved for women. Women occupying the reserved seats were to be elected through women-only elections, where only women could run and vote (Kankuze 2004; Powley 2005). The quotas appeared to bolster the popularity of female candidates. In the 2003 general election, 15 women were elected in openly contested seats. The election saw the total number of women in Rwanda's parliament soar to 48.8 percent – a world record.

At the same time, Rwanda's Ministry of Gender and Women in Development established a national system of local women's councils. As grassroots organizations staffed entirely by women, the councils link women to Rwanda's political leaders and provide them with a sense of ownership over policymaking. In several instances, women elected to local women's councils have gone on to run for parliament (Powley 2005).

Rwanda's dedication to promoting gender equality can be largely attributed to the attitudes of the RFP which has governed Rwanda since 2003. Unlike most post-conflict governments, the RFP made promoting gender equality a priority. External influences may have helped initiate this policy: many RFP exiles spent time in Uganda where 20 percent of seats in parliament are reserved for women. RFP leaders would have been aware of the success of Uganda's quota policy and may have been inspired to introduce similar measures in Rwanda (Powley 2005).

In addition, women played an active role during the RFP's armed struggle against the Rwandan government. During post-conflict negotiations, women leveraged their contributions during the war to demand their inclusion in policy decisions. The war also gave women a chance to win the respect of their male peers. During the transitional period, the RFP consistently appointed women to half of all the seats it held in parliament (Powley 2005). When the RFP swept to victory in the 2003 elections, the presence of women in parliament became a norm.

At the same time, the Rwandan Genocide radically altered Rwanda's gender balance. In the immediate aftermath of the conflict, women composed 70 percent of the population (Powley 2005). The gaping gender imbalance forced women to assume social roles previously held by males. Women became heads of households, breadwinners and community leaders. Meanwhile, the targeting of women during the conflict roused new debate on gender equality.

Amid the social and political disarray of post-genocide Rwanda, women were soon championing their rights. In 1992, an umbrella organization called Pro-Femmes was formed. The group served as a liaison between grassroots NGOs and the transitional government. Working with the Ministry of Gender and Women in Development and the Forum of Women Parliamentarians, Pro-Femmes helped draft a policy paper specifying measures to promote gender equality. The paper's recommendations were later incorporated into the Rwandan constitution. After the constitution was drafted in 2003, Pro-Femmes staged a countrywide campaign to muster female support for the adoption of the document (Kanakuze 2004; Powley 2005).

By contrast, in the neighboring Democratic Republic of Congo, women have found far less political success. Like Rwanda, the DRC experienced conflict in the 1990s. War in the DRC broke out when neighboring Rwanda and Uganda supported rebels attempting to overthrow President Laurent Kabila. After the fighting ended in 2002, the DRC was placed in the hands of a transitional government. Unlike, Rwanda, and despite the efforts of the international community, women remain politically invisible in the DRC.

As early as 1998, international actors began to position women as active participants in the peacemaking process. Two NGOs – Femmes Afrique Solidarité (AFS) and Synergy Africa – organized a conference on peace building that brought together women from Burundi, Rwanda and Uganda. The goal of the conference was to unite women from the three neighboring countries in hope of facilitating reconciliation. International advocacy on behalf of women grew stronger with the passing of UN Security Council Resolution 1325 in 2000. The resolution specifically called on countries to increase female participation in formal peace negotiations. The move was significant since UN Security Council resolutions effectively serve as international

law (Mpoumou 2004). Meanwhile, the Office of Gender Affairs of the United Nations Mission in the Democratic Republic of Congo collaborated with local women's groups to translate Resolution 1325 into the country's four national languages.

International efforts to increase women's participation in the Congolese peace process resurfaced in 2002. That year, the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) and Women as Partners for Peace in Africa (WOPPA) organized a meeting of women from across the DRC to formulate a common position before the start of official peace negotiations. The subsequent Nairobi Declaration called for an immediate ceasefire and the inclusion of women and their concerns in all aspects of the peace process. The Declaration additionally called for the formation of a DRC women's caucus and a 30 percent quota at all levels of government (Mpoumou 2004).

Nonetheless, the efforts of the UN and NGOs were largely in vain (Whitman 2005). Women did not participate in the 1999 Lusaka Agreement that initiated the peace negotiations. Meanwhile, the terms of the ceasefire left out any mention of violence against women (Whitman 2005). Male leaders from both sides of the conflict opposed female participation because women had not actively fought in the conflict (Mpoumou 2004). When the time came to choose delegates to represent the DRC at the Inter-Congolese Dialogue (ICD), the selection process favored male candidates. Ultimately, only six out of the seventy-three delegates to the ICD preparatory meetings were women. Some of the female delegates were appointed simply because they were the wives or girlfriends of other delegate members. Prior to the meetings, the heads of the delegations instructed female representatives to ignore gender related issues (Whitman 2005). Frustrated, the female DRC delegates issued an open letter declaring: "the underrepresentation of women does not respond to the principle of equality between the sexes" (Whitman 2005).

The low level of female representation at the ICD preparatory conference prompted the UNIFEM to intervene directly in the peace process. At the subsequent ICD meeting in Sun City, UNIFEM and the UNDP invited an additional eighty women as experts (Mpoubou 2004). However, only forty women were allowed to participate in the conference. The conference itself produced few efforts to protect the rights of women. No efforts were made to punish those who had committed atrocities against women during the war (Whitman 2005). A resolution that called for the implementation of emergency economic and social programs also made no mention of women (Whitman 2005). When the ICD concluded in Pretoria, South Africa, only ten women were in attendance. By then, their roles had become largely symbolic and restricted to private meetings with delegate heads (Mpoubou 2004).

The exclusion of women from the DRC's political system was reflected in the new constitution adopted in 2005. The Constitution made no explicit provisions for discrimination against women (Rodrigues 2010). There was also no effort to protect women against violence (CEDAW 2006). Notably, the DRC has yet to ratify CEDAW and is not a signatory to the Optional Protocol. The country also has not adopted any parliamentary gender quotas. Today, women make up only seven percent of the DRC parliament (IPU 2011).

The contrasting experiences of women in Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of Congo underscore the complexity of promoting gender equality in post-conflict states. The success of women in Rwanda was the result of several favorable conditions. First, the Rwandan Genocide depleted the male population, giving women leadership opportunities that they would not otherwise have had. Second, Rwandan women actively participated in the conflict and their contribution proved to be a valuable bargaining chip in their quest for political recognition. Third, and most crucially, the RFP has always been a keen advocate of women's rights.



By contrast, women in the Democratic Republic of Congo faced several obstacles in their quest for political power. The women had not participated in the conflict and few had held prior leadership roles. Moreover, the conflict in the DRC did not decimate the country's male population. While the international community worked assiduously to promote women's rights, their efforts were not sufficient. As this paper's empirical studies of quota adoption suggest, women's groups, political elites, and international actors must work in unison. The cases of Rwanda and the Democratic Republic of Congo appear to support such finding. In Rwanda, all the actors were in favor of quotas. But in the DRC, the odds were stacked against women. If there is a lesson to be learnt from the two post-conflict neighbors, it is the fact that international pressure – even from the highest levels – cannot compensate for domestic resistance.

#### A LIBERAL FACADE: MOROCCO AND JORDAN

Morocco and Jordan are an unlikely pair of quota adopters. Governed by autocratic monarchs, Moroccans and Jordanians regularly confront human rights abuses and restrictions on free speech. However, in recent years, Morocco and Jordan's governing elite have introduced a series of reforms aimed at protecting women's rights. Notably, both countries have implemented reserved seats for women in parliament. To outsiders, the recent policy shifts appear groundbreaking. But the introduction of quotas in Jordan and Morocco is no miracle. A closer study of Morocco and Jordan suggests that quotas have been used to consolidate power and acquire aid.

Until 1999, women in Morocco were bound to the family code which restricted female participation in public life. Women needed the approval of their husbands or fathers in order to travel, work, or attend university (Sater 2007). In 1995, however, the first efforts were made to

loosen legal controls on women. That year, women were finally allowed to obtain a passport without the approval of a male relative. The policy change spurred Morocco's women's movement to lobby for further changes.

In 2000, the Moroccan parliament issued a proposal to reform the family law. At first, Morocco's ruler, Mohamed VI, rejected the proposals in face of strong opposition from Islamic authorities and the conservative parliamentarians (Sater 2007). Undeterred, female politicians from leftist Moroccan parties formed an alliance and began to demand the establishment of a quota system. The women appealed to the relatively progressive-minded Mohamed VI who, in 1999, had asked: "how can we expect to achieve progress and prosperity when women have their interests taken away?". The lobbying efforts eventually succeeded. In 2002, reforms to Morocco's electoral code saw ten percent of seats in the Moroccan parliament reserved for women.

Although Morocco's quota is clearly defined, implementing the new policy remains a challenge. One persistent obstacle is the patronage system that dominates Moroccan politics and which remains hostile to women. The nomination of female candidates is controlled by male party elites. Women are also dependent on male support for electoral funding. As such, the term *parachutées* has been coined to describe the female relatives of party leaders who have suddenly appeared at the top of female candidates lists. Rather than opening new opportunities for women, Morocco's quota has become another mechanism by which party elites cement their control (Sater 2007; Welborne 2010). Indeed, one female candidate changed her party affiliation after a party leader told her that she could not run as for an unreserved seat (Sater 2007). After elections, male colleagues and the media frequently ignore elected female legislators. Fatna El Khiel, a female Moroccan parliamentarian who served as vice-president of the parliament from

2003 to 2004, noted that whereas the media reportedly closely on the work of her male predecessor, they paid her no interest (Sater 2007).

It appears that in Morocco, the introduction of gender quotas has largely been a token measure. The presence of women in parliament has allowed Morocco to position itself as an emerging progressive state (Sater 2007). However, real progress has been stifled by the fact that male elites have been allowed to manipulate the quotas to their own advantage. The elaborate patronage system upon which parliamentarians are elected has remained in place and continues to put women at a disadvantage. All the while, the public – which is generally distrustful of Morocco's parliament – is increasingly associating women with highly unpopular politicians (Sater 2007). As long as Moroccan's women continue to rely on existing political structures to enact change, they risk further isolating themselves from the general public and rendering themselves unelectable.

In Jordan, the adoption of gender quotas also appears to have been motivated by reasons other than the desire to promote gender equality. Jordan's decision to adopt a five percent quota for women in 2003 came after decades of lobbying by women's groups. It appears that the ultimate trigger for quota adoption was Jordan's desire to strengthen its ties with the West. Under pressure from the West to engage in progressive reforms, Jordan appears to have adopted quotas as part of efforts to signal its commitment to gender equality, and thereby secure foreign investment and development aid.

Since the 1970s, Jordanian women have been lobbying for increased political representation. The progressive political climate that prevailed in the 1970s prompted Jordan to grant women the right to vote and to stand in general elections (Rumman 2004). After ratifying CEDAW in 1981, Jordan's elites remained disinterested in promoting gender equality until very

recently (Abu-Odeh 2011). While a small number of Jordanian women have been appointed to the Cabinet since 1979, the first Jordanian woman was not elected to parliament until 1993. The success of 1993, however, was short-lived: four years later, seventeen women ran for parliament but none won (Rumman 2004).

Part of the reason why women in Jordan have been, and continue to be, so unsuccessful at the polling booth is the persistence of discriminatory laws and cultural prejudice. In 2000, CEDAW reported that gender stereotyping persisted in all aspects of Jordanian life and was preventing the country from fully implementing the CEDAW recommendations (2000). Moreover, CEDAW commissioners noted that the Jordanian constitution did not explicitly protect gender equality. Today, Jordanian women still cannot pass on their nationality to their children if their father is not also Jordanian (Abu-Odeh 2011). The Jordanian penal code also excuses husbands and male relatives accused of killing their female relatives who have committed adultery (Abu-Odeh 2011).

Given Jordan's historical indifference to gender equality, why did it introduce quotas in 2003? The explanation likely hinges on the influence international actors. Over the past four decades, Jordan has received significant amounts of foreign aid, notably from the United States (Bush 2011; Welbourne 2005). Since his accession to power in 1999, Jordan's King Abdullah II has sought to build close ties with the West and international financial institutions such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank (Bush 2011). Such ties are crucial for supplying the foreign investment and development aid necessary for Jordan's economic growth (Bush 2011; Welbourne 2005). Currently, around a quarter of Jordan's budget comes from foreign aid (Bush 2011). Maintaining such levels of aid is a difficult task given that many other countries in the Middle East and Sub-Saharan Africa compete with Jordan for development

assistance (Welbourne 2005). Since Western governments often tie aid to gender or governance outcomes, adopting gender quotas is one way by which Jordan can secure developmental aid. Quotas can also help boost Jordan's international image and attract foreign loans and investments (Welbourne 2005).

The unusually modest threshold of Jordan's reserved seats appears to support the view that Jordan's elites are not genuinely intent on improving gender outcomes. Indeed, a close examination of the new electoral law also reveals that, unlike most other quotas in existence, there are no provisions to ensure that the minimum threshold of female candidates is met (Welbourne 2005). Moreover, the Jordanian government controls the nomination of female candidates. In the last election, no female candidates were elected to parliament from Amman, the country's capital and administrative center (Dahlerup 2004). Electoral districts in large urban centers include many more constituents than districts in the countryside. The Jordanian countryside is also the political bedrock of the ruling Hashemite dynasty. By allocating women seats in rural areas, political incumbents are able to neutralize the influence of women brought about by reserved seats (Dahlerup 2004).

Morocco and Jordan are illustrative examples of why authoritarian states would choose to adopt quotas. In Morocco, quotas are a calculated means of controlling political liberalization. By adopting quotas, the Moroccan government has been able to assuage the demands of women lobbyists while allowing party elites to cement their power with token female representatives.

In Jordan, quotas have helped to create a progressive façade for an autocratic regime eager for Western aid. Jordan's decision to introduce a five percent quota was more likely a gesture designed to placate foreign donors, than an effort to create real change. It appears that in both Morocco and Jordan, parliamentary gender quotas have been used in ways that may stall or

even hinder female participation in politics. The two countries, therefore, demonstrate the danger of relying on quotas as a benchmark for improvements to gender equality.

## CONCLUSION

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Over the past two decades, a wave of parliamentary gender quotas has swept across the globe. Once the daring policy platform of socialist parties in Northern Europe, quotas have now been adopted by democracies and autocracies alike. The prolific rise of quotas has prompted many scholars to investigate why and how quotas are adopted and why quota outcomes vary across countries.

The literature offers several competing explanations for the growth and development of quotas. It is largely accepted that the women's movement, social norms, international actors, and political elites are the primary instigators of quota adoption. Meanwhile, factors such as the size and type of the quota, the attitudes of the political elite, and the structure of the electoral system have been used to account for why quota outcomes vary.

However, one key weakness in the literature is the fact that scholars have often based their conclusions on studies of select countries and regions. With quotas now a global phenomenon, the literature's findings risk losing their coherence and generalizability. In order to draw reliable conclusions, there is a growing need to consider the universe of cases of quota adoption.

At the same time, scholars are also revising their understanding of quota outcomes. Whereas scholars once assumed that an increase in the number of women in parliament would automatically lead to improvements in gender equality, many are now questioning such assumption.

This paper addresses the weaknesses in the literature by undertaking a comparative cross-national study of 169 quota adopters and analyzing both the descriptive and substantive

outcomes of quotas. Specifically, I hypothesize that democracy and conflict increase the likelihood that a country will adopt quotas and influence the type, size, and outcome of the quota.

Evidence from the study indicates that democracy and conflict *do* affect *whether* and *how* quotas are adopted and implemented. Long-standing democracies, transitional democracies, and post-conflict states are more likely to adopt quotas than other countries. In addition, long-standing democracies are more likely to have multiple voluntary party quotas with high thresholds. Transitional democracies, by contrast, are more likely to introduce legislative quotas. Meanwhile, reserved seats are most likely to be found in post-conflict states and in countries that are neither post-conflict nor democratic.

The study has also provided a more nuanced understanding of the factors that scholars claim lead to the introduction of quotas. Among long-standing democracies, the women's movement is likely to drive quota adoption. In transitional democracies, social norms appear to play the pivotal role. Among post-conflict states, multiple factors – female mobilization, support of political elites, and pressure from international actors – appear to work together to bring about quota adoption. Meanwhile, quota adopters that are neither post-conflict states nor democracies seem to be most influenced by international pressure.

What remains puzzling is whether quotas help decrease gender inequality. Evidence from the study indicates that quotas on average increase the number of women in parliament across all countries. However, the effect of quotas on gender outcomes such as maternal mortality, fertility, secondary enrollment, and labor force participation, is less clear. For instance, long-standing democracies on average recorded improvements in female labor force participation that exceeded all other countries. Given that established democracies had the highest levels of female labor



force participation *before* quota adoption, such finding appears to undermine the significance of quotas in improving gender outcomes. More tellingly, the wide ranges of change recorded by the study cautions against drawing generalizations. Indeed, the study included many countries that have only recently adopted quotas and where the influence of such measures may be still emerging. For the time being, the evidence appears to support the growing consensus among scholars *discounting* the connection between increases in the number of women in parliament and subsequent improvements to gender equality.

The inconclusive findings on the substantive impact of quotas point to a future avenue for research. The wide variability in this paper's empirical findings suggest that that substantive outcomes of quotas may be more contingent on country-specific factors than on overarching explanations such as the influence of democracy or conflict. Indeed, the current literature largely attributes the outcomes of quotas to the influence of local political institutions, the specific details of the quota, and the behavior of local political actors. As such, this paper's findings support further country-specific studies on the effects of quotas.

What can be seen more clearly from this study is that quotas appear to follow distinct paths of development. Knowing whether a country is a democracy, transitional democracy or post-conflict state can help predict whether it will adopt quotas, the type of quota that is likely to be adopted, why quotas are adopted, and the quota's effect on the number of women in parliament.

The findings lead to three policy implications. First, the inconclusive evidence on the substantive effects of quotas indicates that the adoption of quotas *alone* should not be used as a benchmark for improving gender equality. Rather, donor nations tying aid to gender outcomes should periodically monitor the effects of quotas when allocating funding. Second, evidence on

the factors leading to quota adoption indicate that despite overwhelming support in the international community for quotas, efforts to spread such policy requires discernment. For instance, when dealing with post-conflict states, international actors might find more success if they were to rally the support of political elites and the women's movement. Meanwhile, when dealing with transitional democracies, international actors might consider counting on these countries to adopt quotas of their own accord. Finally, the evidence suggests further growth in the adoption of reserved seats. With democracies already saturated with quotas, new quota adopters will mostly be non-democracies. As the study indicates, countries that are non-democratic and are not post-conflict are more likely to adopt reserved seats than other countries. This potential development calls for international observers to pay closer attention to *how* reservations are implemented, so as to prevent the seats from becoming token measures used by elites to bolster legitimacy and attract foreign aid.

Crucially, by connecting democracy and conflict with quota adoption, this paper has provided an explanation for the dramatic proliferation of quotas in recent decades. During the 1970s and 1980s, a wave of democratization swept across Southern Europe and Latin America. A decade later, the collapse of the Soviet Union reignited age-old ethnic conflicts and precipitated a further wave of democratization. These seismic political shifts generated the opportunity, energy, and motivation for the widespread adoption of the parliamentary gender quotas that we see in place today.

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