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Empowering Women: The Role of Economic Development, Political Culture and Institutional Design in the World's Societies

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Recent scholarship establishes that the transition to a more vibrant democratic society, where citizen values increasingly reflect democratic principles and institutions more effectively enforce democratic ideals, dramatically improves women's social empowerment (Inglehart & Norris 2003; Inglehart, Norris, & Welzel 2002; Inglehart & Welzel 2005; Welzel 2003).¹ Scholars, however, fail to establish whether this glacial process of development is the central source of societies' progression through *stages* of increasing gender equality. What societal changes initially challenge women's exclusion from greater social choice? Do these forces consistently, centrally drive improvement from initial gains in empowerment to broader, more prominent gains? Are there characteristics of societies that make them more or less conducive to social improvement of this kind? Questions such as these are unanswered by the literature. Designs that approach the study of gender equality focus on variation in one aspect of women's lives and therefore fail to view this as a larger process whose correlates might increase, diminish or shift from one gain to the next. To offer a framework for enriching our understanding of conditions that stimulate and develop women's power and social inclusion, I compare correlates identified through multiple literatures on gender equality across different stages of women's empowerment in several countries.

Multiple literatures suggest that the following factors may figure prominently in explanations of women's increasing empowerment: economic modernity factors, cultural modernity factors, cultural legacies, institutional legacies, political institutions, and the status of women's civil society. I argue that the comparison of these factors across different stages of women's empowerment will give us a clearer picture for understanding the roles of social conditions, national histories, institutional designs and associational behavior in empowering women. This, in turn, will help us clarify the ability of theories central to the study of politics to explain social change in processes of inclusion.

Such clarification holds the promise of enriching our understanding in several ways. This could illuminate the potential to accelerate achievements in some areas of women's empowerment in what research typically describes as a glacial process of social change. Comparing correlates across empowerment measures also might clarify the role of modernization in women's empowerment, determining to what extent and when this empowerment is an outcome of economic development or cultural modernity. This framework may also help us identify whether societies' cultural or institutional legacies matter with respect to gains in gender equality. In addition, the framework could help us better appraise the role of women's civil society in empowering women. Indeed, by allowing us to view relationships between these processes in explaining increasing female empowerment and therefore giving us the ability to pinpoint which forces matter, at what stage and to what degree, the design of this paper opens these new explanatory possibilities.

I compare correlates of three central measures of women's empowerment. These consist of the Gender Development Index, a measure of women's empowerment in literacy rates, educational levels, standard of living and life expectancy developed by the United Nations

Development Programme (UNDP); the Gender Empowerment Index, a measure of women's empowerment in government positions, management positions and salary²; and the percentage of women in national parliaments.

These measures offer a logical depiction of social progression in women's empowerment. In theory, it is reasonable to presume that early gains in gender equality take the form of women's greater equality with men in skill development and standard of living as measured by the Gender Development Index. These gains in skills and living conditions increase women's eligibility relative to men for sharing roles that confer social status and power. The Gender Empowerment Index captures this transition from gender equality in skill development and standard of living to equality with men broadly, throughout society, in key ways that confer social status and power. The proportion of women in parliament captures the transition from women's broad societal empowerment to gains in women's formal political representation.

As we move along this progression in women's empowerment, we consider which correlates in the literature on gender equality are central explanatory factors, to what degree, and whether this remains constant. Informed by the slew of evidence presented through recent research on social modernization and women's empowerment (Inglehart & Norris 2003; Inglehart & Welzel 2005; Welzel 2003), I hypothesize that modernization theory will explain women's early empowerment in literacy rates and standard of living and the transition from this stage to the stage that captures gender equality in management, government and salaries. I expect that cultural modernity, characterized by recent research in human development as value systems in societies that emphasize human autonomy and choice (see Welzel 2003), will be the central predictor of this higher stage of women's broad empowerment throughout society. However, departing with modernization theory, and following strong findings in research on determinants of women's parliamentary empowerment, I also hypothesize that factors particular to the political environment, measuring institutional design, will take on central relevance when evaluating determinants of women's parliamentary empowerment. In particular, I hypothesize that specific aspects of the political environment mediate gains in women's formal representation. More strongly, institutional design can take on central relevance. Particular institutions are capable of accelerating or restricting women's parliamentary empowerment *regardless of the developmental conditions women face in the larger social environment*. Thus, I expect that we will find that *we can engineer progress in this stage of women's empowerment*. I therefore expect that measures of economic and cultural modernity will exert greater influence on the measures capturing women's social empowerment: the Gender Development Index and the Gender Empowerment Index. On the other hand, the relevance of political factors should diminish the influence of culture and economic resources in predicting women's empowerment in parliament with political institutional design becoming central to explaining this third stage.

This paper is organized into five parts. Part I offers a review of the literature on factors that contribute to women's empowerment. Following recent research on cultural modernity and women's empowerment, the review initially describes theory and evidence presented through the human development perspective that views gender empowerment as an outcome of rising emancipative values. We also review the theory and evidence with respect to the classical modernization perspective that considers gender empowerment an outcome of economic development. As a third perspective, the review addresses the role of path dependency that considers gender empowerment neither as a result of glacial development trends nor as a result of institutional design but as a reflection of cultural and institutional legacies of the past. Fourth, we consider whether women's empowerment is an outcome of political institutional design,

assessing, in particular, democratic institutional and elite variation and women's attainment of positions in political leadership. The final perspective reviews the role of women's civil society in increasing women's empowerment.

Part II introduces the countries and variables explored and the methods conducted to investigate the roles of these potential correlates in predicting the three stages of women's empowerment. Our analyses are based on over 40 nations that were included in the third or fourth waves of the World Values Survey. This covers an exceptionally diverse set of nations, varying in their social conditions, political institutions, elite compositions and empowerment of women. Part III analyzes the patterns of women's empowerment and the correlates of these patterns. I conclude by considering the implications of the findings for future research on women's empowerment and societal change.

Explanations of Women's Empowerment

While there are many explanations for the status of women in a society and political system, our analyses focus on five dominant themes in the research literature: the human development perspective, the classical modernization perspective, cultural and institutional path dependency, the institutional design perspective, and the civil societal perspective.

Cultural Modernity: The Human Development Perspective

The human development perspective outlines an emancipative sequence of social modernization that gives rise to a culture in which human autonomy and choice are highly valued (Inglehart & Welzel 2005; Welzel 2003; Welzel, Inglehart & Klingemann 2003). According to Welzel (2003), increases in human resources reduce constraints on human autonomy and choice in individuals' everyday lives. This ultimately allows people to place more emphasis on self-expression values, a value system that emphasizes emancipative orientations such as tolerance, less authoritative child-rearing strategies, and self-fulfillment (Inglehart & Baker 2000). This rise in emancipative orientations develops mass expectations targeted at making elites responsive and inclusive. In this way, rising emancipative values lead to increases in women's empowerment throughout society (Inglehart & Norris 2003; Inglehart & Welzel 2005) and in parliament (Welzel 2003; Inglehart, Norris & Welzel 2002).

At its core, the human development perspective links social modernization to emancipative value change through changes in existential constraints. The theory highlights changes in *modern* societies particularly conducive to women's empowerment and therefore establishes a link between cultural modernity and publics that value greater equality between genders. Ultimately, Welzel (2003) ties the modern human resources crucial to the human development sequence to economic development.

The role of economic development in the human development perspective stems from earlier theories that link social modernization to democratization (Lipset 1959; Rostow 1960; Deutsch 1964; Bell 1999; Inglehart 1977, 1990, 1997; Inkeles & Smith 1974). Some of these theories elaborate on processes that link greater economic resources to increasingly emancipative values, like gender equality.

Ronald Inglehart (1990, 1997), for instance, has linked social modernization and the emergence of new, democratic quality-of-life values, like women's empowerment. Inglehart

holds that the basic value priorities of individuals correspond to the socioeconomic forces that shape individuals' environments early in life. As modernization alters what each generation experiences as scarce values and resources, intergenerational replacement transforms the social goals in modernizing societies from authoritative, conformist, security and "materialist" oriented goals to those emphasizing self-fulfillment, social equality, and self-expression; what Inglehart labels "postmaterialism."

Inglehart holds that social modernization drives this value change because improvement in the resources of each generation's environment increasingly guards individuals from risks associated with low development like unpredictable fluctuations in food, shelter, violence or health. Freedom from the uncertainty of available subsistence and social protection decreases the necessity to rely on rigid, traditional authority structures for the purposes of survival, such as traditional gender roles. As modernization continues, expansion in the scope of resources also decreases the importance of mass political mobilization based primarily on economic security and social class conflict while increasing the importance of cleavages based on cultural issues and quality-of-life concerns. As a result, issues regarding the scarcity of inclusive standards such as gender equality ascend onto the political agenda. Thus, as societies modernize conditions and traditional authority structures that perpetuate women's public exclusion erode and shifts in concern with the scarcity of women's public involvement and power rise.

Plentiful evidence supports the link between increases in human resources and increases in values supportive of women's equality. In a study of more than 70 nations, Inglehart & Norris (2003) present a watershed of evidence demonstrating that change in development from agrarian to postindustrial societies corresponds to rising attitudes supportive of women's social and political empowerment. They also find increasing cultural change within postindustrial societies, showing that generational replacement increases egalitarian attitudes with respect to gender roles.

Inglehart & Norris (2003) find that cultural modernity holds real, positive consequences for women. When controlling for alternative hypotheses, their measure of attitudes toward gender equality is the sole predictor of the proportion of women in parliament. In later work, Inglehart & Welzel (2005) buttress these findings. They show that the percent of individuals emphasizing self-expression values most strongly, positively predicts gender empowerment. Further adding to the evidence, in another study, Dalton (2002) finds that postmaterialists in advanced industrial democracies significantly, strongly support the women's movement relative to materialists.

Economic Modernity: The Classical Modernization Perspective

While cultural modernity offers one perspective on how modernization increases women's empowerment, other earlier approaches remove the change in values from the positive influence of modern societies making a direct link between increasing economic resources and greater human choice. Focusing on economic modernity factors, the classical modernization perspective considers increases in democracy and human choice as a direct outcome of economic development (Lipset 1959; Rostow 1960; Deutsch 1964; Bell 1999 Inkeles & Smith 1974). These researchers make a direct theoretical link between increases in economic resources and human choice and therefore provide a framework that does not consider the change in emancipative values necessary for positive shifts in gender equality.

Research more focused on positive links between economic development and gender equality holds that economic development is central to increasing the pool of women eligible for positions of social power. These scholars establish that increased economic development associates with a more broad based distribution of educational and occupational resources. Greater access to educational and occupational resources increases women's chances of professional development, creating a larger pool of women eligible for power positions such as political office.

Others note that higher levels of economic development bring more social services to societies. Through their alleviation of the costs in labor and time of everyday responsibilities associated with care giving (e.g., child-rearing, domestic work), increases in these services free up time for social pursuits in women's lives. Several studies confirm these hypotheses, establishing that developmental measures such as countries' levels of non-agricultural development, per capita gross domestic product, women in the workforce and women college graduates positively influence the percentage of women in their parliaments (Kenworthy & Malami 1999; Reynolds 1999; Rule 1981, 1987; Siaroff 2000; Welch & Studlar 1996).

Democracy and Modernization

Modernization scholars also tie the strength of democracies to increases in women's empowerment. The emergence and responsiveness of democratic systems is a key implication that modernization theory addresses. Relevant for our purposes, phenomena at the center of the evidence linking economic development, value change and democratization are cross-national changes in women's social and political empowerment (Inglehart & Norris 2003; Inglehart, Norris & Welzel 2002; Inglehart & Welzel 2005). Indeed, Inglehart et al. (2002) show that rising emphasis on gender equality improves the chances for democratic institutions to emerge and flourish. In this case, theories of modernization present strong evidence that links women's empowerment and the strength of democratic institutions (Inglehart & Norris 2003; Inglehart et al. 2002; Inglehart & Welzel 2005, see also Welzel 2003).

In summary, modernization comes in many forms. While all the measures reviewed here relate in some fashion to women's empowerment, the strongest, most consistent findings show that gains in gender equality are most dramatic in countries with high levels of development and strong emancipative values. Thus, measures of economic development should strongly relate to the measures of women's empowerment. I also expect measures of cultural modernity to strongly associate with the dependent measures. With respect to relationships between these two processes, given that the human development approach stresses the role of increasing human resources in expanding the scope of social inclusion and human choice, I expect that economic modernity will more strongly explain the initial stage of women's empowerment while cultural modernity will become more central to explanations of the higher stages.

Institutional and Cultural Path Dependency

The human development perspective and the classical modernization perspective offer theories to explain why modern societies are more conducive to gains in gender equality. This section on cultural and institutional path dependency presents historical legacies potentially capable of affecting the improvement modernization brings to women's social and political status.

The developmental trends of social modernization may face legacies of path dependent cultural and institutional organization that affect societies' abilities to improve women's lives (Krasner 1984; Skocpol 1992). Researchers note that the emergence of institutions, whether cultural or the result of policy, sometimes consists of types of social organization that have a continuing and somewhat determinant influence on phenomena relevant to those institutions far into the future (Peters 1999). This influence can take the form of an inertial tendency where institutions affect relevant phenomena that would have otherwise changed due to other social forces, like modernization. I consider three measures of path dependent processes highlighted in the literature as those capable of affecting women's empowerment: religion, female suffrage policy, and welfare policy.

Depending on the nature of their traditions, religions vary in opportunity for women's emancipation. For instance, scholars find dramatic differences between the impact of a Protestant religious heritage on the status of women in a country and an Islamic religious heritage on the status of women in a country (Inglehart & Norris 2003; Inglehart, Norris & Welzel 2002; Inglehart & Welzel 2005; Reynolds 1999; Rule 1987). With its tradition of sectarianism and volunteerism, Protestantism holds a tradition particularly hospitable to democratic values, such as respect for individualism, reciprocity and popular sovereignty. Islam on the other hand follows from a heritage of authoritarian organization thus comprising a tradition least hospitable to democratic values and consequently women's empowerment (Donno & Russett 2004; Fish 2002). In this case, the status of a country's heritage can negatively moderate the positive impact of modernization on women's empowerment (see for instance, Inglehart & Baker 2000; Inglehart, Norris & Welzel 2002).

Researchers also approach the impact of religious legacy on women's empowerment through measures of publics' levels of secularization (Inglehart & Norris 2003; Inglehart & Welzel 2005). As societies secularize there is greater deference to rationality and expertise, and this typically gives rise to the modern state and widespread social services. The secularizing trend typically occurs from the pre-industrial through the industrializing phase of modernization. During this transition, traditional units restrictive of women's development such as the family and the church lose their authority as individuals place greater emphasis on rationality and individualism. Scholars working with the World Values Survey have developed a value dimension for capturing this transition to secular, rational values. Studies find positive relationships between this and measures of women's empowerment (Inglehart & Norris 2003; Inglehart & Welzel 2005).

In addition to religion, path dependent processes with respect to women's suffrage policy may affect the potential to increase gender equality in particular societies. Suffragist policy represents instances when elites and dominant political groups open the system of political representation to former, politically constructed out-groups. Countries with earlier suffragist policies for reforming women's formal political exclusion are likely to have a stronger institutional legacy of women's formal political inclusion. Several studies hypothesize and establish a positive link between earlier suffragist policy and women's empowerment in parliament (Kenworthy & Malami 1999; Moore & Shackman 1996; Ramirez, Soysal & Shanahan 1997; Rule 1981).

Welfare policy is a final path dependent policy that research on gender equality highlights as central to societies' progress. Much research confirms that a key barrier to women's full social inclusion and autonomy has been and continues to be institutional arrangements that restrict the state's role in caretaking and domestic responsibilities

(Hirschmann 2001; Liebert 1999; Sainsbury 1996; Tronto 2001). Welfare policy is capable of alleviating these barriers by expanding the scope of the state's involvement in these everyday household necessities through, for instance, state supported childcare.

Others scholars focus on the degree of exclusivity between state welfare investments and military investments in explaining the positive role welfare policy plays in women's lives (Inglehart & Welzel 2005). This trade-off in state policy with respect to welfare verses power orientations is additionally relevant for gender equality. Investments into coercive state power are investments into activities that are largely male-dominated (working against female empowerment) while investments into social welfare favor activities in which women play a more prominent role (Inglehart & Welzel 2005). Thus, state legacies with respect to welfare policies are an additional form of historical institutionalism that could potentially offset the empowerment modernization brings to women.

In summary, there are few studies that systematically, comparatively test the role of these path dependent processes next to other competing explanations of women's empowerment. It is therefore difficult to hypothesize what role these factors will play and when in women's increasing empowerment. While it is not clear how these processes will perform relative to other explanations or at what stage in women's empowerment factors will become more or less relevant, research does tell us that Protestant or secular societies should positively associate with measures of women's empowerment, societies with a longer history of women's formal political representation should positively associate with the three stages of women's empowerment, and greater welfarism should positively correlate with women's empowerment.

The Institutional Perspective

While theories of modernization emphasize the impact of economic resources and values on women's empowerment in society and economy and historical institutionalism emphasizes the impact of cultural and historical legacies, researchers typically stress other factors to explain the representation of women in government. These researchers highlight the relevancy of the characteristics of political institutions and elites as causal factors.

This literature holds that variation in institutional and elite characteristics mediates mass support for women's empowerment and the pool of women eligible for political office in ways that either enable or constrain women's attainment of political leadership. Three aspects of the political system find support in this literature: political parties, the electoral system and gender electoral quota systems. Through their role as gatekeepers, political parties act as mediators of women's potential to seek and win elective office (Caul 1999; Kunovich 2003; Kunovich & Paxton 2005; Norris & Lovenduski 1993; Sanbonmatsu 2002). Party elites act as gatekeepers via the crucial role they play in the processes of candidate recruitment and selection (Norris 1993, 1996; Norris & Lovenduski 1995; Gallagher & Marsh 1988). In evaluating characteristics of parties that impact the recruitment, selection and support of women political elites, researchers highlight the importance of party ideology and women's involvement in party leadership (Caul 1997, 1999, 2001; Kunovich & Paxton 2005; Studlar & McAllister 1991; Welch & Studlar 1996). Scholarship generally shows that leftist parties are more likely to recruit women and to adopt strategies to ensure more women candidates, which increases women in party leadership positions (Caul 1997, 1999, 2001; Matland 1993). Other scholars show that more women in party leadership positions associates with the adoption of more strategies to empower women within the party and the election process (Kunovich & Paxton 2005).

While parties mediate women's social opportunity to achieve parliamentary office through gatekeeping, electoral systems affect women's paths to parliament by structuring party elites' incentive or disincentive to run women candidates. In this line of research, the most persistent finding is the consistent, positive impact of proportional representation systems (PR) on the percentage of women in parliament (Castles 1981; Darcy et al. 1994; Duverger 1955; Kenworthy & Malami 1999; Lakeman 1994; Norris 1985; Paxton 1997; Rule 1994, 1987, 1981).

Studies hypothesize that PR systems positively affect the percentage of women in parliament because these electoral systems have a higher number of seats per district and offer parties a greater chance of winning more than one seat per district. This results in greater turnover of officeholders and reduces the costs of increasing women's elite status by sacrificing the seat of an incumbent male (Rule 1994). The result is parties that are more likely to concern themselves with a ticket balanced according to gender. In addition, through greater district magnitude and party magnitude, parties are more likely to choose candidates down the party list, who are typically women (Matland 1993; Rule 1994).

The positive impact that PR electoral systems make on women's recruitment is crucial. Due to differences in socioeconomic status, occupational choice and family responsibilities, in comparison to men, women candidates are likely to have greater difficulties in becoming eligible and aspiring political candidates (Darcy, Welch & Clark 1994; Kenworthy & Malami 1999; Norris & Inglehart 2003). In this case, women are less likely to pursue political office and are likely to be lower on candidate lists if they choose to run. Thus, because PR electoral systems increase women's chances of recruitment and electability despite lower placement on candidate lists, these electoral systems provide greater opportunity for the election of women.

Finally, with PR electoral systems, the greater incentive to balance tickets gives parties greater opportunity to promote gender as an option for challenging other parties. This typically results in a contagion of promotion of women's inclusion across parties as elites attempt to equalize the playing field by avoiding the appearance of their party's marginalization of women voters (Matland & Studlar 1996).

In addition to the role of electoral rules and elites, gender electoral quota systems are institutional mechanisms that consistently, positively mediate the conditions and attitudes that structure women's leadership potential. Indeed, researchers studying the recent proliferation of quota systems throughout the world have referred to quota systems as "the fast track" to the equal political representation of women (Dahlerup & Freidenvall 2003). Beginning with Norway, over the last three decades, several societies have witnessed the introduction of some form of a gender electoral quota system in their political bodies for improving the status of women. These quota systems take the form of a constitutional amendment, electoral law or party policy. Scholars generally find that the stronger the gender electoral quota system the greater the level of women's percentages in political office (Dahlerup 1998; Dahlerup & Freidenvall 2003; Caul 1999, 2001; Kolinsky 1991; Matland 1993; Studlar & Macalister 1998).

The attributes of party elites, electoral systems and the degree to which countries adopt gender electoral quota systems are the aspects of political systems supported in the literature that enhance our understanding of institutional designs that improve or hinder women's presence in political office. Scholars generally describe the role of institutional actors as a mediating role whereby variations in these aspects of political systems structure support for women's political empowerment and the actual empowerment of women in other areas of society in ways that facilitate or restrict women's proportions in political office. To date, however, no studies have employed a comparative design that assesses the impact of the same cultural and political

predictors on different aspects of women's empowerment to confirm the relative degree to which the political environment matters with respect to women's attainment of positions of political leadership. Employing such a design, I hypothesize that the political environment mediates women's broader social opportunity to lead. As the explanation shifts from the Gender Empowerment Index to the percentage of women in parliament, political institutions will take on greater explanatory weight.

The Strength of Women's Civil Society

The final component that improves women's empowerment is women's civil societal status. Researchers concerned with the strength of women's civil society also stress the vital role of political institutions and elites with respect to women's empowerment. Here scholarship stresses the role that political actors and institutions play in social movement emergence and success (Banaszak, Beckwith & Rucht 2003; Costain 1992). Like scholars concerned with processes that enhance women's formal representation, these researchers often describe attributes of the political system as mediators of the potential of women's movements to affect positive change in women's lives. Although these researchers note that the political environment can diminish the potential of a vibrant women's civil society, many studies find that women's movements matter; these movements improve women's social and political power (Banaszak, Beckwith & Rucht 2003; Bystydzienski 1992; Bystydzienski & Sekhon 1999; Howell & Mulligan 2005; Norris & Lovenduski 1993; Weldon 2002).

For instance, Howell (2005) credits the All-China Women's Federation (ACWF), a key national women's organization in China, with important improvements in gender related policies, women's issue awareness and women's local representation. In Africa, the rise of women's groups eventually led to emphases on women's political participation, with women's organizations forming to improve leadership skills and lobby for women's political leadership (Tripp 2005). In Spain, feminists lobbied within left-wing parties to increase the proportion of women in political bodies and won real gains when some parties adopted quotas (Valiente 2003). Studies of Western Europe and the United States show that women's activism within parties and between party organizations and civil society increased women's leadership percentages in political parties and political offices (Beckwith 2003; Norris and Lovenduski 1993).

Based on the literature, I expect measures of women's civil society to impact all measures of women's empowerment positively. However, similar to economic modernity and cultural modernity factors, I suspect that relative to the other measures of women's empowerment, the impact of women's civil society will have a diminished effect when associating with the percentage of women in parliament. The mediating role of the political environment will affect the consistent, positive relationship generally characteristic of the relationship between the strength of women's civil society and other facets of women's empowerment.

In summary, taking the literature as a whole, increases in economic modernity, cultural modernity, institutional and cultural path dependencies, institutional design and women's civil society are the likely correlates of women's social and political empowerment. What is less clear is the degree to which these five forces uniquely influence different aspects of women's empowerment. To move forward, it is therefore useful to ask whether the causal story changes as we move from analysis of lower to higher stages of women's empowerment. Do the type and influence of correlates shift, increase or diminish? Is it the case that conditions in the political

environment become more important when accounting for variation in the percentage of women in parliament?

Data and Methods

To assess the degree to which economic modernity, cultural modernity, cultural and institutional legacies, institutional design, and women's civil society uniquely influence different aspects of women's empowerment, the first step was to identify the nations for analyses. Freedom House designates approximately 120 countries as electoral democracies. Confining my investigation to countries considered minimally democratic ensured that I could reasonably compare political systems and parliamentary representation across nations while at the same preserving substantial variation between countries with respect to the strength of democracy.

Our analyses focus on women's empowerment in three areas. The first measure is the Gender Development Index compiled by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). This index captures early gains in women's empowerment, accounting for inequalities between women and men with regard to life expectancy, literacy rates, educational attainment and standard of living. The second stage of women's empowerment, the Gender Empowerment Index, captures the degree of gender equality in government, management and salaries.³ The third measure of women's empowerment accounts for women's representation in the national parliament.⁴

Table 1 positions all countries in my dataset according to the levels of empowerment for each of the three indicators. There are many shifts in country positioning between stages of women's empowerment. For instance, Honduras, South Africa and Mozambique show scores below the 25th percentile on the Gender Development Index and the Gender Empowerment Index, but their percentages of women parliamentarians are above the 75th percentile. On the other hand, Great Britain and the United States position in the 90th percentile in their scores for gender development and above the 75th percentile for gender empowerment, but they score nearer to the 50th percentile in their percentages of women in parliament. Japan and France also score in the 90th percentile on the Gender Development Index and yet Japan scores in the 25th percentile for the percentage of women in parliament and France just above this. Peru scores just below the 25th percentile on the Gender Empowerment Index and below the 50th percentile on the Gender Development Index but scores around the 80th percentile with respect to the percentage of women in parliament.

The table also shows important consistencies by country scores and the stages of women's empowerment. For the most part, nearly all of the Protestant European and English-Speaking Democracies score above the 75th percentile on all three measures of women's empowerment. Furthermore, Nigeria, Mongolia and India consistently score below the 25th percentile on all measures of women's empowerment while Croatia, Greece, the Philippines, Latvia and Uruguay (among others) consistently occupy positions in the middle chunk of the distributions. It is therefore not surprising to note that each of the dependent measures positively, significantly correlate with each other. As one might expect, the broad social measures of women's empowerment, the Gender Development Index and the Gender Empowerment Index, show the strongest correlation at .79. The relationship between the Gender Empowerment Index and the percentage of women in parliament follows at .73.

Table 1
Country Positions by Level and Stage of Women's Empowerment

Percentiles	Gender Development Index (2002)	Gender Empowerment Index (2002 & 2004)	Percent Women in Parliament (lower house, latest election)
Min. – 25 th	.28 - .66 Ghana, Guatemala, Honduras, India, Kenya, Madagascar Malawi, Mali, Mongolia Mozambique, Namibia, Nicaragua, Niger, Nigeria Papua New Guinea Senegal, South Africa	.18 - .48 Bangladesh, Brazil, Chile, El Salvador, Georgia, Ghana, Honduras, India, South Korea, Mauritius, Mongolia, Nigeria, Paraguay, Sri Lanka, Suriname, Thailand, Turkey, Ukraine, Venezuela	0 – 9% Albania, Belize, Benin, Brazil, Comoros, Guatemala, India, Japan, Kenya, Kiribati, Madagascar, Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Mongolia, Nauru, Nigeria, Palau Islands, Saint Lucia, Samoa, San Tome, Serbia, Solomon, Sri Lanka, Tuvalu, Ukraine, Vanuatu
25 th -75 th	.67 - .90 Argentina, Bahamas Barbados, Belize Bolivia, Brazil Bulgaria, Chile Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia Cyprus, Czech. Republic, Ecuador El Salvador, Estonia, Greece Guyana, Hungary Indonesia, Jamaica South Korea, Latvia, Lithuania Malta, Mauritius Mexico, Moldova Panama, Paraguay Peru, Philippines Poland, Portugal Romania, Slovakia Slovenia, Sri Lanka Thailand, Trinidad-Tobago, Turkey, Ukraine, Uruguay Venezuela	.49 - .67 Argentina, Barbados, Bolivia, Botswana, Bulgaria, Colombia, Costa Rica, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech. Republic, Dominica, Estonia, France, Greece, Hungary, Israel, Italy, Japan, Latvia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Malta, Mexico, Moldova, Namibia, Panama, Peru, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Slovakia, Slovenia, South Africa, Trinidad-Tobago, Uruguay,	9.1 – 22.1 Antigua, Bahamas, Bangladesh, Barbados, Bolivia, Botswana, Bulgaria, Central African Republic, Chile, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech. Republic, Dominica, Ecuador, El Salvador, Estonia, France, Georgia, Ghana, Greece, Indonesia, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, South Korea, Latvia, Lesotho, Liberia, Lithuania, Macedonia, Malawi, Mali, Malta, Mauritius, Moldova, Monaco, Nicaragua, Niger, Panama, Paraguay, Philippines, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Saint Marin, Saint Vince, Senegal, Sierra Leone, Slovakia, Slovenia, Trinidad-Tobago, Great Britain, United States, Uruguay, Venezuela
75 th – Max.	.91 - .96 Australia, Austria, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Luxembourg, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Spain, Sweden Switzerland, Great Britain, United States	.68 - .93 Australia, Austria, Bahamas, Belgium, Canada, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Great Britain, United States.	22.2 – 45.30 Andorra, Argentina, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Burundi, Costa Rica, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Grenada, Guyana, Honduras, Iceland, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Mexico, Mozambique, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Peru, Seychelles, South Africa, Spain, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland
Mean	.75	.57	16.70
N	89	75	115

The final relationship between the Gender Development Index and the percentage of women in parliament lessens dramatically, although these variables continue to significantly, moderately correlate at .38. Thus, while both of the broad measures of women's empowerment exert some influence on the percentage of women in parliament, the Gender Empowerment Index appears to be the best predictor, at least at the bivariate stage.

Looking at women's empowerment broadly, we see then that these aspects of women's empowerment, each important in their own right, also build on each other to improve women's social status. Women who share greater equality with men with regard to literacy rates and life expectancy have a greater chance of being equal with respect to management positions in society. And, in societies where women and men share greater equality in management positions and salaries, they are more likely to share greater equality in national parliament. It is therefore crucial to ask what explains these stages. Are the different aspects of women's empowerment derivative of the same influences? Is it possible to engineer accelerated achievement of the third stage institutionally?

Table 2 introduces the independent variables I draw on to measure explanations of women's empowerment. The table presents the distribution of scores per variable for my sample of countries. In addition, to offer some perspective with regard to each of these scores, under each value, the table lists a country in my sample that approximates each score.

To measure economic modernity, I compiled data per country on the percentage of internet hosts per 1,000 inhabitants, and the per capita gross domestic product. Per capita gross domestic product (GDP) is the measure studies use most frequently to measure levels of development. However, while increases in per capita GDP broadly measure changes in levels of development, measures of technological advances, such as higher levels of internet access, capture conditions particularly favorable to the transition from industrial to postindustrial societies. It is in this transition, where there is greater emphasis on service and knowledge industries, that attitudinal support and conditions hospitable to women's empowerment tend to accelerate (Inglehart & Welzel 2005).

Variation in cultural modernity is measured in several ways. In the broadest terms, recent research on democratization and cultural change highlights two value dimensions particularly sensitive to the level of democratic values in societies throughout the world: self-expression values and secular/rational values (Inglehart & Welzel 2005). Derived from responses to questions asked in the World Values Survey, the measure of self-expression values is a one factor solution composed of measures that capture values that are emancipative, emphasizing human autonomy and choice.⁵ The measure of secular-rational values is also a one-factor solution based on attitudes measured through the World Values Survey.⁶ Values scored higher on these dimensions represent greater respect for self-expression, human autonomy, secularization, and rationality and the variables should therefore positively relate to the measures of women's empowerment.

A more specific cultural variable is attitudes toward gender equality (Inglehart & Norris 2003). The gender equality scale is a close replication of the scale used by Inglehart & Norris. This scale represents a factor analysis ran over four component variables measuring attitudes supportive of gender equality in the World Values Survey.⁷

Table 2

Cross-National Descriptives Measuring Cultural, Political and Associational Factors

Independent Variables	Min Value	25 th Percentile	Mean Value	75 th Percentile	Max Value	N
Internet Access	.00 (Burundi)	.70 (Sri Lanka)	11.74 (Namibia)	109.78 (Czech. Rep.)	1218.42 (Finland)	83
Per Capita GDP (1998)	458.00 (Sierra Leone)	2765.8 (Indonesia)	9042.18 (Antigua)	14373.3 (Slovenia)	33505.00 (Luxembourg)	119
Gender Equality Scale	-.31 (Nigeria)	-.01 (Japan)	.20 (Croatia)	.38 (France)	.89 (Iceland)	60
Self-Expression Values (World Values Survey)	.18 (Serbia)	.37 (Taiwan)	.48 (Malta)	.59 (Belgium)	.74 (Sweden)	63
Secular/Rational Values (World Values Survey)	.18 (Ghana)	.32 (Ireland)	.44 (Albania)	.53 (Luxembourg)	.78 (Japan)	62
% Protestants minus Muslims	-99.80 (Turkey)	.00 (Mongolia)	15.49 (Latvia)	39.78 (N. Zealand)	99.00 (Tuvalu)	114
Years Female Suffrage	28.00 (Portugal)	48.00 (Benin)	60.66 (Indonesia)	73.75 (Spain)	111.00 (N. Zealand)	80
Welfare Orientation	-1.58 (Bangladesh)	-.57 (Mexico)	.18 (Brazil)	.85 (Austria)	1.83 (Sweden)	45
Strength of Democracy (Freedom House 1998)	-.96 (Serbia)	8.0 (Moldova)	9.28 (Venezuela)	11.00 (Great Britain)	12.00 (Switzerland)	120
Average District Magnitude	-	1.0 (U.S.A)	8.72 (South Korea)	11.20 (Poland)	44.40 (South Africa)	91
Gender Electoral Quota System (IDEA)	-	.00 (Finland)	.41 (India)	.81 (Norway)	1.00 (Costa Rica)	118
Years Left Party Control (1975-2004)	-	.00 (Nigeria)	10.27 (Moldova)	16.75 (Costa Rica)	28.00 (Poland)	92
% Female Participation in Petitions, Boycotts and Demonstrations	.03 (Philippines)	.06 (Poland)	.13 (Finland)	.21 (Switzerland)	.33 (Sweden)	45

There are also several measures of institutional and cultural path dependencies. My measure of religious heritage calculates the percentage of Protestants minus the percentage of Muslims in countries in my sample. Since research shows that Protestantism is most conducive to women's empowerment and Islam most patriarchal, this measure offers a precise description of societies' religious legacy relative to women's potential.

I measure women's suffragist policy by drawing on a study by Ramirez, Soysal & Shanahan (1997). Ramirez et al. determined the timing of women's suffrage in a cross-national study of 80 nations. I draw on this research to construct my measure.

To capture societies' legacy with respect to welfarism, I turn to a measure that captures elites' welfare verses power orientations. Following Inglehart & Welzel (2005), this is measured through the level of public welfare investment minus military investment.⁸ This measure is indicative of the elites' welfare vs. power orientation such that the social welfare orientation is stronger the more welfare investments are pursued at the expense of military investments while the state power orientation is stronger the more it is the other way round.

To measure institutional design, I compiled data on the strength of democracy, type of electoral system, type of gender electoral quota system and strength of left party control over time. I determined the responsiveness of democracy per country based on measures provided by Freedom House. Values scored higher represent higher levels of democratic quality. I recorded data on average district magnitude to capture differences in countries' electoral system. Based on the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance's (IDEA) website, I measured countries' level of gender quotas.⁹ My final measure of the political environment assesses the strength of countries' leftist parties over time.¹⁰

I compiled data on one measure of the strength of women's civil society. Based on questions asked in the World Values Survey, I calculated the average percentage of women who said they participated in a petition, boycott or demonstration per country.

Correlates of Empowerment

I hypothesize that modernization theory will explain women's early empowerment in literacy rates and standard of living and the transition from this stage to the stage that captures gender equality in management, government and salaries. I expect that cultural modernity will be the central predictor of this higher stage of women's broad empowerment throughout society. I also expect that institutional design factors will take on greater explanatory weight as prediction shifts from broader measures of women's empowerment to the measure of women's presence in parliament. Table 3 presents correlational results, giving us a first assessment of these hypotheses based on the simple bivariate correlation between predictors and the empowerment measures.

Looking first at correlates of women's empowerment broadly across the dependent variables, measures that fall under modernization, historical institutionalism and women's civil society consistently correlate positively and significantly. The measures of institutional design, however, are the exceptions; these measures consistently correlate positively and significantly *only* with women's empowerment in parliament. This supports my hypothesis that measures of the political environment will take on greater explanatory weight as prediction shifts from broader measures of women's empowerment to the measure of women's presence in parliament.

Table 3
Correlates of Women's Empowerment

IVs	Gender Development Index	Gender Empowerment Index	Percent Women in Parliament
Economic Modernity Factors			
Internet Access	.53***	.73***	.59***
Per Capita GDP	.78***	.80***	.46***
Cultural Modernity Factors			
Gender Equality Scale	.62***	.77***	.63***
Self-Expression Values	.77***	.81***	.64***
Secular/Rational Values	.62***	.59***	.36**
Cultural/Institutional Legacy Factors			
% Protestants minus Muslims	.40***	.51***	.10
Years Female Suffrage	.55***	.55***	.42***
Welfare Orientation	.64***	.77***	.52***
Institutional Factors			
Strength of Democracy (Freedom House 1998)	.71***	.69***	.20*
Average District Magnitude	-.02	.18	.44***
Dummy PR	.20	.20	.42***
Gender Electoral Quota System	.10	.02	.29**
Years Left Party had Control	.14	.33**	.30**
Women's Civil Society			
% Women Participated in Petitions, Boycotts and Demonstrations	.65***	.66***	.45***

Note: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$.

From Gender Development to Gender Empowerment

We also observe differences in hypothesized influences between each of the stages of women's empowerment. Beginning with the first two stages, the Gender Development Index and the Gender Empowerment Index, the results support my hypothesis that emancipative values will shift in strength positively when comparing correlates of the Gender Development Index to the Gender Empowerment Index. Correlations between nearly all of the cultural modernity measures are stronger when associating with the Gender Empowerment Index. Also relevant to this point, the economic modernity measures have stronger correlations and the measure of the strength of democracy is slightly *weaker*. This suggests that in order for the status of women's empowerment to rise in societies from greater gender equality in activities such as reading, writing, and education to greater gender equality in management positions and salaries, higher levels of economic development and stronger democratic values must match the presence of effective democratic institutions. In line with the developmental perspective, this suggests that beyond the basic responsiveness of democratic systems, modernization, particularly in the form of emancipative value change, becomes crucial for higher levels of women's empowerment throughout society.

Further indicative of this explanation, while the strength of association between self-expression values rises when analysis moves from the measure of gender development to the measure of gender empowerment, the strength of association between these two dependent variables and the measure of secular/rational values actually decreases in the transition. This also resonates with the human development perspective. Recall, the secular/rational value dimension corresponds to changes taking place earlier in modernization when countries are industrializing while the self-expression value dimension captures value transition most acute when societies are transitioning from industrial to postindustrial status.

The cultural and institutional legacy factors and the civil societal factor also correlate with both the Gender Development Index and the Gender Empowerment Index. In addition, similar to the measures of economic and cultural modernity, nearly all of these increase in correlational strength with the Gender Empowerment Index. This suggests that these factors are even more important in the transition to the higher stage of women's empowerment.

From Gender Empowerment to Women's Formal Representation

A first look across correlates shows that the institutional design measures consistently correlate positively and significantly *only* with women's empowerment in parliament. Furthermore, while nearly all other measures consistently culminate in associational strength with the Gender Empowerment Index, across the board, these associations diminish in strength with transition to the measure of women's presence in parliament. Also important, the measure of the strength of democracy diminishes in association dramatically (from .69 to .20) when correlating with the percentage of women in parliament showing that rather than the quality of the response between the democratic system and society, the particular way in which democracies are designed influences this stage of women's empowerment.

These results support my hypotheses. Beyond increases in societal conditions from cultural modernity to the strength of women's civil society, particular aspects of the political environment matter with respect to the level of women's presence in positions of political leadership; societies' electoral systems, party systems and implementation of quota systems structure women's opportunity to lead.

Multivariate Analyses

While these correlational results are encouraging, they are not fully conclusive. Several of these variables overlap with others; for instance, GDP per capita is linked to the development of self-expressive values, and elements of culture may overlap with women in civil society. What happens when we partition the variance among variables, controlling for competing hypotheses?

I relied on the correlational results and theoretical distinction between variables to select a subset of variables for multivariate analysis. I chose one measure from the economic modernity and cultural modernity categories: per capita GDP and the gender equality scale. I selected per capita GDP given the strength of the correlations between this and the dependent variables relative to the other measures of development. I chose the gender equality scale as my measure of cultural modernity because this measure is most theoretically congruent with women's empowerment. Moreover, relative to the measure of self-expression values, this measure of cultural values is more theoretically distinct from measures of economic modernity and democracy.¹¹ However, although this is a more specific measure of the strength of democratic

values, narrow in the sense that this is measured in reference specifically to gender equality attitudes, I want to stress that attitudes more emancipative on this value dimension derive from an expressive, democratically oriented value system. A positive result with respect to this variable is indicative of the broad emancipative value transitions that underlie greater respect for equality between genders.¹² This measure therefore continues to provide a test for the degree to which cultural modernity explains women's empowerment.

For the most part, the cultural and institutional legacy factors significantly correlated with all of the dependent variables. I therefore include all three of these measures in the multivariate analyses.

With regard to my measures of the political environment, I include all variables except for the dummy variable for PR electoral system. This measure associated weaker with the percentage of women in parliament relative to average district magnitude. The other measures are included because they represent distinct aspects of the political environment.¹³

Finally, I include the civil societal factor: the average percentage of women who have participated in a petition, boycott or demonstration. This variable positively, significantly correlates with each of the dependent measures.

Table 4 presents the separate regression analyses for the three dependent variables as well as depicts analysis of a fourth variable that was modeled to capture the determinants of the portion of the variance in women's parliamentary empowerment unexplained by the Gender Empowerment Index. I add this fourth dependent variable to the analysis to establish with even greater precision the degree to which institutional design mediates the broader social climate with respect to women's empowerment in parliament.

Explaining Gender Development

While many of the explanatory factors looked like promising predictors of women's empowerment in bivariate analysis, this changes dramatically in the multivariate results. Beginning with analysis of the first stage of women's empowerment, the Gender Development Index, only two predictor statistics reach significance: the measure of per capita GDP and the Freedom House measure of democratic responsiveness. Thus, as hypothesized, increases in per capita GDP increase gender equality in skills and living conditions. However, somewhat unexpected, democratic responsiveness also explains these initial societal gains. Furthermore, as hypothesized, the measure that captures cultural modernity, mass values conducive to gender equality, fails to predict variation in the Gender Development Index. In this case, because the economic modernity measure is significant without the cultural modernity measure, changes in economic resources that follow the transition from agrarian to industrial society, rather than industrial to postindustrial society, is the kind of economic transition that stimulates societal gains in this early stage. Moreover, since cultural modernity is not a significant predictor, the existence of a democratic system that protects basic rights and liberties as opposed to one that is actively responding to more robust forms of inclusion likely explains societal gains in this stage of women's empowerment.

Table 4: *Determinants of Women's Empowerment (OLS Regressions)*

	Gender Development Index				Gender Empowerment Index				Percent Women in Parliament				Female Parliamentary Empowerment <i>Unexplained</i> by the Gender Empowerment Index			
	B	S.E.	Beta	N	B	S.E.	Beta	N	B	S.E.	Beta	N	B	S.E.	Beta	N
Per Capita GDP (1998)	8.5E-06	.00	.39*	108	1.1E-05	.00	.55***	108	.00	.00	-.10	108	.00	.00	-.48	108
Gender Equality Scale	.09	.10	.13	60	.20	.07	.32***	60	21.0	5.6	.52***	60	8.7	5.5	.33	60
% Protestants minus Muslims	-5.4E-05	.00	-.01	114	.00	.00	.19*	114	-	-	-	- ¹⁴	.04	.03	.24	114
Years Female Suffrage	.00	.00	.10	80	-.00	.00	-.07	80	.07	.09	.12	80	.04	.07	.11	80
Welfare Orientation	-.01	.04	-.06	49	.01	.03	.08	49	1.5	2.3	.13	49	-2.40	2.01	-.32	49
Strength Democracy (freedom house 1998)	.03	.01	.38**	120	.01	.01	.17	120	-.80	.59	-.21	120	-.28	.54	-.11	120
District Magnitude	-.00	.00	-.04	90	.00	.00	.14	90	.34	.15	.28**	90	.33	.13	.42**	90
Gender Electoral Quota System	.05	.05	.11	118	-.00	.03	-.01	118	7.6	2.9	.30**	118	4.6	2.6	.28*	118
Years Left Party Control (1975-2004)	-5.7E-05	.00	-.00	92	.00	.00	.13	92	.08	.14	.07	92	.04	.12	.05	92
Female Participation in Petitions, Boycotts and Demonstrations	.12	.39	.05	56	-.43	.27	-.21	56	23.2	23.1	.13	56	12.5	21.2	.15	56
Constant	.34**	.13	-	-	.37***	.09	-	-	6.9	7.8	-	-	-2.5	6.9	-	-
Adjusted R ²	.63***	-	-	-	.80***	-	-	-	.58***	-	-	-	.24**	-	-	-

Note: * p < .10, ** p < .05, *** p < .01

In addition to this, none of the measures of cultural and institutional path dependencies, institutional design or women's civil society reaches significance. Again this suggests that changes in economic development and the achievement of basic democratic responsiveness are what matter for this stage of women's empowerment; cultural modernity, cultural and institutional legacies, particular variations in the institutional design of the political environment and a vibrant women's civil society are not as crucial to the achievement of the lower stage.

Explaining Gender Empowerment

The story changes when we examine the Gender Empowerment Index. As hypothesized, now, cultural modernity significantly predicts increases in levels of gender equality. The achievement of basic democratic responsiveness is no longer enough; there are significant cultural distinctions within democracies relevant to the attainment of this stage of women's empowerment. Indeed, the measure of formal democratic responsiveness fails to achieve significance in predicting this stage of women's empowerment. This suggests that beyond the achievement of a democratic system, changes in political values are determinant, further confirming the importance of cultural modernity. However, somewhat unanticipated, rather than the measure of cultural modernity, per capita GDP is the strongest predictor of this stage, actually increasing in influence from the model predicting the Gender Development Index to this model. This is somewhat inconsistent with the human development perspective. This result demonstrates that economic resources contribute directly to this stage of women's empowerment suggesting that the classical modernization perspective holds weight along side the newer Human Development approach in explaining women's broad societal empowerment.

In addition to the emerging influence of cultural modernity, the measure of societies' religious legacy also reaches significance, albeit, however, while exerting minimal influence.¹⁵ This result shows some evidence that the degree to which a Protestant religious heritage outweighs a Muslim religious heritage in countries positively influences the extent to which societies will achieve gains in gender equality from those measured by the Gender Development Index to those measured by the Gender Empowerment Index.

Finally, when controlling for the economic, cultural and religious variation throughout societies, the other factors fail to explain women's empowerment in both the lower and higher stages of women's empowerment broadly throughout society. Interestingly, even in explaining the Gender Empowerment Index, where we would expect a hospitable social climate to be particularly important, these correlates fail to achieve significance.

Explaining Women's Formal Representation

With respect to the third model, as hypothesized, the explanation of women's empowerment in national parliament highlights new influences as well as changes in the impact of other variables that remain consistently significant. The measure of economic modernity is no longer significant and democratic responsiveness remains insignificant while increases in values supportive of gender equality, average district magnitude and degree of gender electoral quota system significantly increase the percentage of women in parliament. In this case, like the model that predicts the Gender Empowerment Index, differences within democracies with respect to cultural modernity rather than formal democratic responsiveness explain increases in women's parliamentary presence. Indeed, increasing emancipative value orientation is the type of

modernization central to this stage; per capita GDP no longer explains increases in women's empowerment in parliament.

On the contrary, however, unlike the model predicting the Gender Empowerment Index, variation in institutional design takes emerge as significant predictors. Thus, at this stage in the analyses, I partially confirm my second hypothesis. Unlike models predicting the earlier stages of women's empowerment, institutional design now plays a role in the explanatory story.

However, it is important to note here that institutional design does not tell the entire story. The gender equality scale actually exerts the highest, significant influence on increases in the percentage of women in parliament. This measure's standardized beta coefficient takes on the highest value. This suggests that regardless of type of electoral system or quotas women will still perform moderately well in parliamentary attainment in vibrant democratic societies with higher degrees of mass concern for human autonomy and choice. Thus, democratic cultural change offsets the negative effects that First Past the Post (FPTP) electoral systems and the absence of gender electoral quota systems exert on women's percentages in parliament; emancipative values positively moderate a political environment inhospitable to increases in women's parliamentary presence.

At this point, it is however unclear as to how modernity figures prominently into explanations of women's empowerment in parliament. Is it because of the degree to which this shift in social conditions empowers women broadly throughout society through its influence, for instance, on the Gender Empowerment Index? Or, does modernity figure prominently in predictions of women's parliamentary empowerment due to mass demands for the greater inclusiveness of women in political decision-making, influencing the percentage of women in parliament above and beyond the positive influence on women's empowerment broadly, throughout society?

The fourth model in Table 4 allows me to more fully sort out the influence of cultural modernity on women's percentages in parliament. Here I model what factors explain the variance unaccounted for when one regresses the percentage of women in parliament on the Gender Empowerment Index.

The results show that the gender equality scale is no longer a significant predictor. In this case, cultural modernity figures prominently in predicting women's proportion in parliament because of its positive influence on women's empowerment broadly throughout society; this variable fails to explain the variation in women's percentages in parliament once the variation accounted for by the Gender Empowerment Index is removed. The results therefore do not support the contention that cultural modernity explains women's parliamentary empowerment due to mass demands for greater female inclusion in political decision-making. Instead, emancipative values with respect to gender equality increase women's power broadly throughout society and this broad empowerment of women increases women's presence in parliament.

What the results of this model also show is the new centrality of institutional design factors once the variance accounted for by the Gender Empowerment Index is removed from the explanation of women in parliament. Only institutional design factors significantly predict women's percentages in parliament. In line with my hypothesis, this shows that the institutional designs most hospitable to women's parliamentary empowerment, PR electoral systems and gender electoral quota systems, will continue to increase women's empowerment in parliament *even* in societies with environments hostile to women's broader social empowerment. In this case, contrary to theories like the Human Development perspective that hold that political inclusiveness is not engineered but a function of glacial development trends, my results show

that at least with respect to formal political empowerment we can engineer more inclusive social change.

Conclusion

This paper began with the explanatory promise of a new framework for explaining social change in women's empowerment. Rather than evaluating a range of explanatory approaches from the limited standpoint of one kind of empowerment in women's lives, we tested theories from the vantage of viewing women's empowerment as a process whereby earlier gains precede later gains and correlates potentially emerge or shift in these transitions.

The investigation improves our understanding of societies' gains in gender equality by highlighting emergence and change in the influence of economic modernity, democratic responsiveness, cultural modernity, religious history and institutional design as prediction moved from the Gender Development Index to the Gender Empowerment Index to women's empowerment in parliament.

In the transition to societies whose women are equal with men with respect to literacy rates, education levels, life expectancy, and standard of living, the conditions that matter are those associated with basic democratic responsiveness and, as hypothesized, transitions from agrarian to industrial economic modernity. Societal development of this kind suffices; the more robust political cultural change in emancipative values is not a determinant of women's achievement of this stage of empowerment. Thus, results showed that rather than countries' levels of emancipative values, kinds of historical institutionalism and institutional design, and the strength of women's civil society, the factors determinant of this stage of women's empowerment are economic development and formal rather than more participatory democratization.

In the transition from this stage to greater levels of gender equality in government positions, management positions and salaries, the influences of the explanatory measures change. As hypothesized, in this stage, a formal democratization is no longer enough; there are significant differences within democracies in terms of the strength of emancipative values that matter with respect to the attainment of women's broad societal empowerment. In this transition, mass values supportive of gender equality, derivative of an expressive, emancipatively oriented value system, are newly important. Unexpectedly, we learned, however, that economic modernity is crucial. This result suggested that economic resources contribute directly to this stage of women's empowerment. This signifies that the classical modernization perspective holds weight a¹⁶long side the newer Human Development approach in explaining women's broad societal empowerment. We also learned that the Protestant religious heritage of societies has a slight positive influence on societies' achievement of this stage.

In the final stage assessed, the explanatory story takes on increasing complexity. Both cultural modernity and institutional design factors drive increases in women's empowerment in parliament. I therefore partially confirm the hypothesis that institutional engineering structures conditions and attitudes determinant of broader social equality between genders in ways that facilitate or restrict women's presence in parliament. Particularly in the fourth regression model, results show that the institutional designs most hospitable to women's parliamentary empowerment, PR electoral systems and gender electoral quota systems, will continue to increase women's empowerment in parliament even in societies with environments hostile to women's broader social empowerment.

Results also showed that regardless of a political environment hostile to women's political empowerment, including FPTP electoral systems and the absence of quotas, increases in emancipative values with respect to gender equality increase the percentage of women in parliament. This suggests that regardless of the type of electoral system or quotas, women will still perform moderately well in parliamentary attainment in vibrant democratic societies. More specifically, in the fourth regression model we determined that cultural modernity offsets the negative effects that FPTP electoral systems and the absence of gender electoral quota systems exert on women's percentages in parliament through the positive influence of emancipative values on women's empowerment broadly throughout society.

As a whole, the results point to the following theory of women's empowerment. Economic development and formal democratization increase women's equality with men in basic skills and living conditions. The transition from this societal gain to gains in the extent to which women share power with men throughout society depends on continuing economic development, the growth of emancipative values and a religious history more hospitable to women's empowerment. The transition from greater gender equality in power sharing throughout society to gender equality in parliament depends, in the case of a hostile institutional design, on the degree to which emancipative values empower women throughout society. Here we learn that we need to pay closer attention to the impact cultural modernity exerts on the elite behavior of former political minorities; the link between greater political inclusion and cultural modernity may operate through this additional relationship. In the cases of an institutional design favorable to women's parliamentary empowerment, we find that empowerment gains are stimulated from above through institutional design. This signals the potential to engineer women's empowerment in this stage regardless of the state of women's broader social empowerment. Thus, facilitating or restricting women's broader social potential to lead, in all cases, institutional design matters for this stage of women's empowerment. With respect to this last stage, we therefore learn that we must pay attention to the institutional designs that structure elite translation of political culture into greater political inclusion. Closer attention to these issues may be the key to accelerating equitable formal representation in the world's societies.

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² This measure is also developed by the UNDP.

³ The UNDP also compiles data for this measure.

⁴ I take percentages of women in parliament from the Inter-Parliamentary Union for the latest election data available on the lower house.

⁵ This value dimension measures priorities with respect to economic and physical security, feelings of satisfaction with one's life, attitudes with respect to homosexuality, and attitudes with respect to trust in other people.

⁶ This measure is composed of the following attitudinal measures: importance of God, strategies for raising and socializing children, and attitudes towards abortion, national pride, and respect for authority.

⁷ 1) "On the whole, men make better political leaders than women do," 2) "When jobs are scarce men should have more right to a job than women do," 3) "A university education is more important for a boy than a girl," 4) "If a woman wants to have a child as a single parent but she doesn't want to have a stable relationship with a man, do you approve or disapprove?"

⁸ Indicators of welfare spending are state expenditures for health and education as percentage of GDP taken from the 1998 Human Development Report. Military expenditures are measured according to state expenditures for the army as a percentage of GDP taken from the 1998 Britannica book of the year.

⁹ This was coded 0 if the country was not listed on the site, .25 if one party instituted quotas, .5 if two parties instituted quotas, .75 if three parties or more instituted quotas, and coded 1 if quota laws were instituted nationwide.

¹⁰ Using the Database of Political Institutions, I measured the years between 1975 and 2004 that a left party was the major party in control of government.

¹¹ The gender equality scale correlates with GDP at .62 while self-expression values correlate at .84 and the gender equality scale correlates with the Freedom House measures of democracy at .50 while self-expression values correlate at .70.

¹² Mass values that reflect democratic ideals underlie greater support for gender equality. The gender equality scale correlates with the self-expression value dimension at .78. This is consistent with findings by Inglehart, Norris and Welzel (2002) that confirm that attitudinal measures of responses to the statement "Men make better political leaders than women" loads at .90 in factor analysis of the self-expression value dimension.

¹³ The highest correlation between these variables is between average district magnitude and left party control at .29.

¹⁴ There were problems of multicollinearity between per capita GDP and Percent Protestants minus Muslims in the model that predicts the percentage of women in parliament. Thus, the variable measuring religion was removed. This variable failed to significantly correlate with the dependent variable and only reduced the variance explained by 3%.

¹⁵ Although the variable is significant, the coefficient scores are especially low.