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## GENDER DIFFERENCES IN SUPPORT FOR DEMOCRACY\*

Initial studies of mass attitudes in democratizing states have produced striking findings regarding support for democracy. Contrary to traditional theories, which suggest that years of democratic experience are required before citizens begin to embrace democratic norms and values, recent studies find remarkably high levels of support for democratic principles in Nicaragua, Costa Rica (Weil 1993), East Germany (Dalton 1994), the former Soviet Union (Gibson, Duch, and Tedin 1992; Reisinger et al. 1994), and many of the East Central European states (Rose and Mishler 1994). Scholars attempting to account for the high levels of mass support for democracy in these countries examine the influence of educational attainment, evaluations of the previous nondemocratic regime, the state of the economy under the new system, and satisfaction with the performance of the current government on attitudes toward democratic principles. Despite the extensive literature on the origins of mass support for democratic principles in democratizing states, however, few scholars have systematically examined or even controlled for the role of gender in shaping attitudes toward democratic norms and values. Empirical studies of support for democratic principles in East Central European and former-Soviet states that have included gender as a control variable consistently produce surprising results: there is a profound gender

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gap in attitudes toward democratic principles in every former communist country (Kellerman, Kohut, and Bowman 1992). Specifically, women on average are systematically less supportive of democratic principles, values, and norms than are men.

In a study of Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Poland, Russia, Ukraine, and Lithuania, Pamela Waldron-Moore (1999: 49) finds that, in each country, women are less supportive of democratic principles than are men. Moreover, in Hungary, Poland, Russia, and Ukraine, gender's influence on support for democratic values and norms is statistically significant, even when controlling for level of educational attainment, urbanization, close-mindedness, trust in fellow citizens, approval of the political and economic changes that have occurred, and retrospective evaluation of the national economy. Similarly, in a survey of Russians in the Moscow region, Gibson, Duch, and Tedin (1992: 359) find that "women tend to be significantly less supportive of democratic values" and note that "this difference is independent of the other variables under consideration," including level of education, membership in the communist party, social class, and age. Indeed, gender is often one of the strongest predictors of support for democratic principles in the democratizing states of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. One study of attitudes toward democratic principles in Poland, for example, reports that gender, after education, is the strongest predictor of support for democracy, and women are significantly less supportive than men (chapter 8 in this volume). Interestingly, the presence of a significant gender gap in support for democratic norms and values appears to be largely unique to these democratizing states. While women in the mature democracies of Western Europe are less likely to support democratic principles, the relationship is noticeably weaker than in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union (Kellerman, Kohut, and Bowman 1992; Anderson and Guillory 1997).

The weak relationship between gender and support for democratic principles in the mature democracies of Western Europe coupled with the consistently strong relationship between gender and support for democracy in East Central Europe and the former Soviet Union suggests that there is something about the context of the post-communist states that causes women to be significantly less supportive of democratic norms, principles, and values than men are. This is clearly an empirical finding that begs for an explanation. Moreover, to the extent that mass attitudes toward democratic norms and principles influence the prospects for democratic stability (namely, the survival of a democratic system of government), the systematic lack of support for democratic norms and values among women

in these states deserves attention.<sup>1</sup> The aim of this chapter, therefore, is to generate and test several hypotheses that may account for the difference in attitudes toward democracy between men and women, focusing, in particular, on the case of Poland, a country in which the gender gap is especially wide.

## **The Dependent Variable: Support for Democratic Principles**

Considerable research has been conducted on the development of mass democratic attitudes during the process of democratization; scholars have sought to measure and explain levels of support for the incumbent government, of satisfaction with the performance of a country's democratic institutions, of normative commitment to the democratic system, and, finally, of support for democratic norms, principles, and values. The present study employs a broad conception of liberal democracy and identifies the following as key principles of democratic government: majority rule, the protection of minority rights, the necessity of elections, constitutionalism, universal suffrage, the inclusive right to run for office, rule of law, the peaceful resolution of conflicts through negotiations and compromise, freedom of the press and mass media, the representation of group interests, and the right to protest (for an extensive discussion of the theoretical basis of this concept, see chapter 8 in this volume). Adopting this conceptually rich definition, allows more accurate measurement of mass attitudes toward democratic principles.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Christopher Anderson and Christine Guillory's study of satisfaction with democracy in Western Europe finds an inconsistent relationship between gender and satisfaction with democracy (1997: 74). That is, in Belgium, Denmark, the Netherlands, and West Germany, women are actually more satisfied with democracy than men are. Moreover, of the cases where women are less satisfied than men, gender's effect on satisfaction with democracy reaches statistical significance in only two cases: Ireland and Portugal.

<sup>2</sup> For a discussion of the key values and beliefs necessary for successful democratic rule, see E. Griffith, J. Plamenatz, and J.R. Pennock (1956) and J. Prothro and C. Grigg (1960). There is, however, intense disagreement regarding whether the success of a democracy depends on a majority of the mass public agreeing with fundamental democratic principles. More specifically, the question is whether elite or mass-level attitudes toward key democratic principles are more important for the functioning of a democracy. For a review of the debate, see Finkel, Sigelman, Humphries (1999).

## Hypotheses on Gender and Support for Democracy

Few studies of support for democratic principles that document a disparity in such support between men and women in East Central European and former Soviet states attempt to explain this finding. When they do offer explanations, the gender gap is attributed to the idea that women are simply “more traditional in orientation” or more risk-averse and “unwilling to risk the social upheaval that democratization will inevitably bring” (Gibson, Duch, and Tedin 1992: 359–360; Waldron-Moore 1999: 37; Bahry 1987). While plausible, these explanations are certainly not exhaustive. They have overlooked, for example, how democratization has affected women’s economic well-being, the degree to which women may support the values associated with the former-socialist system, or how varying levels of satisfaction with the performance of the new democratic system may affect support for democratic norms and values. The aim of the remainder of this chapter, therefore, is to propose and then test a number of hypotheses that might shed light on what the source(s) of the gender gap in attitudes toward democracy might be.

### *Economic Explanations*

*Material well-being:* The process of democratization and the transition to a market economy in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union has been accompanied by considerable economic hardship, particularly among women. Under communism, employment was virtually guaranteed (even if women were restricted to certain types of occupations) and men and women worked in almost equal numbers (Hauser, Heyns, and Mansbridge 1993: 259–261; Rueschemeyer 1994: xi–xiii). Since the transition to democracy, the percentage of unemployed women has increased. In Poland, according to one estimate, 60 percent of the unemployed are women (Funk 1993: 7). Likewise, in Ukraine, “women constitute seventy percent of the unemployed, and the trend is sharply worsening” (Hunt 1997: 3). It is possible, therefore, that women in the infant democracies of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union are less supportive of democratic principles than are men because they have not benefited economically under the new political and economic systems; consequently, a disproportionately high percentage of women have come to reject the norms and values on which democracy is based.

Indeed, such a response is predicted by the extant literature on the role of economic discontent in shaping attitudes toward democratic principles. Some

scholars contend that “the public’s perceptions of their own and their country’s economic situation must be seen as key predictors of democratic support” (Evans and Whitefield 1995: 487; see also Kitschelt 1992). In other words, dissatisfaction with the state of the economy directly “translates into rejection of the guiding political philosophy” of the political system (Waldron-Moore 1999: 39; see also Mishler and Rose 1993). According to this logic, therefore, gender is a spurious cause of observed differences in attitudes to democratic principles: the real cause of divergent views is unemployment.

Hypothesis 1: Women more than men feel that their economic situation has worsened significantly since the transition to democracy, and, therefore, are less supportive of democratic principles, norms, and values.

*Support for state paternalism:* Another possible and related economic explanation for the disparity in men’s and women’s attitudes toward democracy is that women benefited economically from and therefore prefer a paternalistic state, that is, a government that assumes responsibility for their economic well-being. The state as it existed under communism often “encouraged the education of women, their political training, ... their participation in the work force” (Rueschemeyer 1994: xiii). While democracies in Western Europe have assumed responsibility for the provision of its citizens’ social welfare, democratization in Eastern Europe coincided with a dismantling of the social welfare system. When the paternalist state was replaced by a state more consistent with democratic principles and a free market economy, many of the economic and social supports provided by the communist state, which benefited women, were reduced or eliminated.

Hypothesis 2: Because women benefited from an activist state, they are more supportive of state paternalism and less supportive of democratic principles, norms, and values than are men.

*Women as primary caregivers in the home:* Women in the East European and former Soviet states may also be less supportive of democracy because of the effects democratization has had on the provision of social services that enabled women to participate in the labor force and provide for their children. The communist state, which officially encouraged equality between men and women, provided day care and other institutions to enable women to work outside the home. In the new democracies of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union, such provisions have not been a priority, and numerous kindergartens and infant nurseries have been closed. In one East European state, for example, 40–60 percent of nursery schools and other forms of day care were shut down nationwide within two years of the transition to

democracy (Titkow 1993: 255). To the extent that women feel a greater responsibility for the daily care of their children than do men, the reduction of social provisions could account for women's negative attitudes toward democratic principles.

Hypothesis 3: Because the new democracies reduced the social provisions enabling women to participate in the labor force and care for their children, women are less supportive of democratic principles, norms, and values than are men.

### *Political Explanations*

*Retrospective evaluation of the communist system:* Many scholars believe that the degree to which citizens in Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union support democratic principles, values, and norms depends heavily on how they evaluate the performance of the old socialist system. Mishler and Rose argue, for example, that "democratic orientations are adopted in part in reaction to an earlier unpopular regime" (1993: 37; see also Rose and Mishler 1994). Similarly, it has been argued that citizens support democratic values such as freedom of speech only "strategically" to enable them to overthrow an unwanted government (Mishler and Rose 1993: 37; Seligson and Booth 1993). The opposite, however, is also plausible: people who positively evaluate the political performance of the previous governing system are less likely to support the new system and the norms and principles associated with it.

Although it would be inaccurate to say that the communist systems of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union were responsive to women's political interests, they did ensure that women had some political representation, even if women holding political offices had little real influence. Georgina Waylen notes that, in Poland, the "quota systems that gave women considerable numerical representation were often important for symbolic purposes only . . . there were very few women in the top decision-making ranks of the [communist] party" (1994: 345). Nevertheless, as discussed above, there were a number of economic benefits for women under communism. Since the process of democratization began, the availability of these economic and social provisions was reduced. Moreover, the transition to democracy brought an end to many of the quota systems; and even fewer women have held positions of political power since the transition to democracy (Janova and Sineau 1992: 123–126). Women, therefore, may evaluate the previous political system favorably, and, as a result, be less supportive of democratic principles.

Hypothesis 4: Women, more than men, positively evaluate the performance of the previous communist regime, and, consequently, are less supportive of democratic principles.

*Satisfaction with the performance of the democratic system:* Alternatively, it can be argued that women's attitudes are shaped less by their retrospective evaluations of the socialist system than by their evaluations of the performance of the current (democratic) system. In other words, how responsive the government is perceived to be and whether people feel they can influence the decisions made by the government affect their perceptions of the principles and values that underpin the political system. If there is a significant disparity between the values and norms promoted by the political system and the actual performance of the system, citizens may begin to doubt the worth of the underlying principles. The lack of women in higher political offices since democratization, therefore, may cause women to feel alienated from the new democratic political system and to form more negative attitudes toward democratic principles.

Hypothesis 5: Women more than men negatively evaluate the performance of the democratic political system, and, therefore, are less supportive of the underlying democratic norms, values, and principles.

### ***Social-Psychological Explanations***

*Perceptions of political change:* In their analysis of the sources of support for democratic and capitalist values, Dennis Chong, Herbert McClosky, and John Zaller contend that:

It is plain from historical evidence and intuitive observation that a strong attachment to social order and the status quo (as against receptivity to change and reform) is inversely related to support for democratic values. This negative association may be as old as the democratic tradition itself. Now, as in the past, the advocates of democracy champion broader popular control of government, greater freedom of expression, and more social and economic equality – none of which endears democracy to those who fear that large scale reforms may lead to disorder and instability. (Chong et al. 1983: 417–418)

This logic suggests that women's negative attitudes toward democratic principles can be attributed to their being more risk-averse or less receptive to change than men are. In other words, women are more threatened than men are by the instability that accompanies significant political and economic change, in particular, the transition to democracy,

which allows for greater public participation in politics and reduces the role of the government in society.

Why women might be more risk-averse than men remains unclear, however. It is possible that women are inherently wary of destabilizing events; or, perhaps, women, often the primary caregivers in the home, are more sensitive than men to changes that might undermine their ability to provide for their children. According to Waldron-Moore, women are averse to change because they “accept traditional roles” (1999: 37). Nevertheless, the transition to democracy and a free market economy in the East European and former-Soviet states has led to considerable instability, suggesting the following hypothesis.

Hypothesis 6: Women are more risk-averse or threatened by uncertainty than men, and, because the transition to a democracy might increase or has already increased the level of disorder and instability in society, women are less supportive of democratic principles.

*Religiosity:* Another explanation for the gender gap in attitudes toward democracy is that women are more religious than men, and the church discourages support for the principles and norms associated with democracy. This is because democratic values are viewed as a threat to the values and beliefs supported by the church or even to the authority of the church itself.

Hypothesis 7: Women are more religious than men, and, therefore, are less supportive of democratic principles, norms, and values.

It is important to recognize that the role of the church varies considerably across the countries of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. Given this variation, explanations for women’s attitudes toward democracy that emphasize the effects of religiosity may apply to some states more than others. In Poland, for example, the Catholic Church has historically been a powerful and influential force in society; most recently, it played an important role in undermining the communist system. Despite its previous efforts to overthrow communism, however, the advent of democratization and its consequences for the Church’s influence over society caused the Church to adopt a more antagonistic position toward the new democratic system. As Jacqueline Heinen comments: “the democratization of political life has meant that the Church has lost its position as [the] principle force of mobilization against the Communist regime, thus undermining its own power base” (1992: 133). The Church has also clashed with the new democratic government over the content of the country’s abortion laws, the legality of school prayer, and the role of religious instruction. This could explain why the Catholic Church in Poland might discourage its supporters (women in a greater proportion than men) from embracing the values of the new



democratic political system, and why (religious) Polish women may be less supportive of democratic principles, norms, and values.

## Measuring Support for Democratic Principles

The dependent variable is a factor scale derived from responses to thirteen questions included in the 1998 panel study and is borrowed from Slomczynski and Shabad's recent study on the relationship between education and support for democratic norms. In chapter 8 of this volume, these authors employ the same measure of support for democratic principles and describe its construction. The measure contains thirteen items, including questions designed to measure support for majority rule, the protection of minority rights, the necessity of elections and a multiparty system, and other features of a democratic system. Responses to the items were dichotomized. For all but one question, "strongly agree" or "agree" were collapsed into a single category that indicates an affirmative response to the question. Likewise, "strongly disagree" or "disagree" were coded as a negative response to the question. These responses were then identified as "pro-democratic" or "anti-democratic," depending on the way the question was worded; the response considered "pro-democratic" is noted next to the description of the item.

## Measuring the Independent Variables

Two indicators were used to measure respondents' well-being. The first, an objective measure, was their employment status in 1998, expressed in terms of the dichotomy: employed and unemployed. The second indicator, a subjective measure, is a scale comprised of responses to the following three questions asked in 1993: (1) *In your opinion, for people like yourself, is life in Poland better now, or will it be better in five years?* (2) *Many people expect that the present opportunities will allow them to realize their plans. Are you one of those people?* (3) *Within the past five years, have your living conditions significantly improved, improved a little, remained unchanged, worsened slightly, or significantly worsened?* It is anticipated that those who are employed and positively evaluate their material well-being will be more supportive of democratic principles.

The measure used to gauge support for state paternalism is the respondent's answer, in 1993, to a question regarding whether they thought

that, in order for the country to avoid economic difficulties, the state should exercise its authority over society or society should not lose control over the state. Respondents who viewed the state as having a greater responsibility than society for the country's economic welfare were considered to be supportive of state paternalism. Conversely, respondents who believed that the economy is the responsibility of society were not supportive of state paternalism. Although not a perfect measure of support for state paternalism, the question elicits the respondent's views on the degree of authority that should be granted to either the state or society over economic issues. It is hypothesized that those who are supportive of state paternalism will be less supportive of democratic principles.

Each respondent was asked a series of questions regarding the members of their household and their relationships to the respondent. Using this information, the number of children currently living with the respondent was calculated. The minimum number of children was zero and the maximum was six. It is anticipated that the greater the number of children for whom the respondent is responsible, the less supportive he or she will be of democratic values and norms.

Measures of well-being, state paternalism, and the household composition pertain to economic explanations as these constructs appear in Hypotheses 1–3. Hypotheses 4 and 5 require measuring retrospective evaluation of the communist system against satisfaction with the performance of the democratic system. In the 1993 wave of the survey respondents were asked to indicate whether the socialist system brought Poland more gains than losses, more losses than gains, or equally both. A factor scale comprised of the following three questions, each of which was asked in 1998, was used to measure satisfaction with the democratic system: (1) *Which statement reflects your opinion – the political system in Poland is basically good and needs no changes, it is good but some minor changes are needed, it has a lot of deficiencies and needs substantial changes, the entire system should be replaced by a different one?* (2) *Do you agree or disagree that Poland is a country where politicians are not concerned with citizens' good?* and (3) *Do you agree or disagree that Poland is a country where citizens have enough influence on government's policies?* Those who negatively assess communism and are satisfied with the performance of the democratic system should be likely to express support for democratic norms and values (See chapter 8).

Respondents' perceptions of, or receptivity to, political change was measured using responses to the following question, which was asked in 1993: *The changes in our country bring with them both opportunities and*

*threats. For people like you, do the changes bring more opportunities or more threats?* If the respondent stated that political change brought more threats than opportunities, this was considered an indication that they were risk-averse and preferred order to instability. If the respondent said, however, that political change brings more opportunities than threats, they were considered risk-acceptant and willing to experience political and economic changes, even if they might lead to social disorder. Those who see political change as threatening, it is hypothesized, will be less supportive of democratic principles.

Finally, respondents' religiosity was measured by how often they attended church. Possible responses ranged from never to frequently. The expectation is that the more religious the respondent, the less supportive he or she will be of democratic norms and principles.

## Basic Gender Differences in Support for Democracy

Before conducting the regression analyses, it was necessary to determine whether the data from the POLPAN survey confirm the presence of a gender gap in attitudes toward democracy in Poland. As expected, the disparity is unmistakable. There is a consistent and sizable difference in men's and women's attitudes toward democratic principles in Poland. Table 9.1 shows that women's mean score ( $-0.213$ ) on the support for democracy scale is well below that of men ( $0.226$ ). The Pearson correlation coefficient for gender and the dependent variable is negative and statistically significant ( $-0.219$ ).

Moreover, as Table 9.1 indicates, the proportion of women expressing pro-democratic responses is lower than that of men on each item, without exception. Polish women are less supportive of protecting minority rights, less likely to recognize the need for regular elections, and more likely to support laws that prevent some groups from voting. These findings are consistent with those of other studies, mentioned in the introductory part of this chapter.

## Regression Results

Four models were constructed in order to determine whether the observed relationship between gender and support for democracy would diminish in strength (or even disappear) with the addition of the independent variables

**Table 9.1.** Dimensions of Support for Democracy, Questionnaire Items, Proportions of Men and Women Whose Responses Were Pro-Democratic in 1998, and the Mean Values on the Scale

	Men	Women
<b>I. Questionnaire items<sup>a</sup></b>		
A. <i>Majority rule</i> Democracy means that after elections the minority must yield to the majority (SA)	0.689	0.576
B. <i>Minority rights</i> In politics the minority should have an unlimited right to criticize decisions made by the majority (SA+A)	0.766	0.684
C. <i>Necessity of elections</i> Elections are not necessary if political leaders well represent the interests of citizens (SD+D)	0.445	0.248
D. <i>Constitutional power</i> If a good person actually governs, he or she need not obey the law (SD+D)	0.836	0.728
E. <i>Universal voting rights</i> Some groups of people should be stripped of their voting rights (SD+D)	0.441	0.375
F. <i>Voters' competence</i> Most people do not understand politics well enough to make a reasonable choice in electing deputies of the Sejm (Parliament) (SD+D)	0.131	0.092
G. <i>Inclusive right to run for office</i> Former communists should not be allowed to be named candidates for various elected high offices (SD+D)	0.467	0.418
H. <i>Rule of law</i> One need not obey laws with which the majority has ceased to agree (SD+D)	0.491	0.405
I. <i>Principle of negotiation and compromise</i> In politics, mutual concessions are the best way of making difficult decisions (SA+A)	0.838	0.775
J. <i>Freedom of press / mass media</i> Those TV programs that are not liked by most of society should be banned (SD+D)	0.373	0.262
K. <i>The right to protest</i> The authorities should not allow every group or lobby to demand its rights (SD+D)	0.635	0.557
L. <i>The promotion of group interests</i> Those who represent only the interests of their own voters should not be involved in politics (SD+D)	0.244	0.158

	Men	Women
M. <i>Multiparty system</i>	0.578	0.411
In Poland, one good political party would be enough and then other parties would not be needed (SD+D)		
<b>II. Scale values<sup>b</sup></b>		
Mean	0.226	-0.213
Standard deviation	0.970	0.980
N	842	895

<sup>a</sup>Responses, which were originally on a five-point scale, were dichotomized; Nondemocratic responses were coded 0, and democratic responses were coded 1. The response identified as democratic is noted in parentheses following each question, either strongly agree or strongly disagree, depending on the question asked.

<sup>b</sup>In standardized units  $N(0,1)$ . Correlation between gender and the scale:  $r = -0.219$

included in the main hypotheses (see Table 9.2). The variables – economic, political, and social-psychological – were introduced in stages, so that the models became progressively more complex. Model I includes only the control variables: gender, education, and age. It serves as a reference for comparison. Subsequent models include the control variables, the economic variables, the political variables, and the social-psychological variables. Each model allows us to estimate to what degree a group of variables is responsible for reducing the initial explanatory power of gender.

The more education people receive, the more likely they are to support democratic values, a finding consistent with the existing literature. Education is one of the strongest predictors of support for democracy, regardless of which other independent variables were added to the models; it is positively and significantly related to the dependent variable.

The other independent variables significantly related to support for democratic principles are the evaluation of one's material well-being and satisfaction with the performance of the democratic system. The more favorable people's evaluation of their material well-being, the more likely they are to support democratic principles. The effect of this variable on support for democracy is reduced slightly with the introduction of the social-psychological variables. In addition, if one is satisfied with the performance of democracy, he or she is more likely to support democratic principles and norms. Indeed, aside from education, a positive evaluation of the performance of the democratic system is the strongest explanation of support for democracy.

**Table 9.2.** Regression of Support for Democratic Principles on Sociodemographic Variables, Economic Variables, Political Variables, and Social-Psychological Variables

Independent variables	Model I <sup>a</sup>			Model II <sup>b</sup>		
	B	SE	Beta	B	SE	Beta
<i>Sociodemographic variables</i>						
Gender	-0.479	0.043	-0.239***	-0.443	0.043	-0.222***
Age	0.005	0.002	0.064**	0.005	0.002	0.054
Education	0.508	0.028	0.393***	0.458	0.030	0.355***
<i>Economic variables</i>						
Employment status in 1998				-0.087	0.054	-0.043
Evaluation of material well-being				0.067	0.023	0.066**
Support for state paternalism				-0.034	0.014	-0.053**
Number of children				-0.054	0.019	-0.066**
Constant	-0.831	0.098		-0.539	0.140	
	Model III <sup>c</sup>			Model IV <sup>d</sup>		
<i>Sociodemographic variables</i>						
Gender	-0.439	0.043	-0.219***	-0.417	0.045	-0.209***
Age	0.005	0.002	0.058	0.006	0.002	0.074
Education	0.448	0.030	0.347***	0.433	0.031	0.335***
<i>Economic variables</i>						
Employment status in 1998	-0.082	0.054	-0.041	-0.053	0.055	-0.026
Evaluation of material well-being	0.065	0.023	0.064**	0.074	0.033	0.073*
Support for state paternalism	-0.031	0.014	-0.049*	-0.032	0.014	-0.051*
Number of children	-0.053	0.019	-0.065	-0.050	-0.020	-0.061**
<i>Political variables</i>						
Satisfaction with democracy in 1998	0.066	0.022	0.066***	0.063	0.023	0.063**
Retrospective evaluation of socialism	-0.045	0.018	-0.054**	-0.043	0.018	-0.052**
<i>Social-psychological variables</i>						
Perception of political change				0.024	0.080	0.010
Religiosity				-0.052	0.022	-0.054**
Constant	-0.388	0.150		-0.331	0.219	

<sup>a</sup> R = 0.459; Adjusted R<sup>2</sup> = 0.209

<sup>c</sup> R = 0.479; Adjusted R<sup>2</sup> = 0.225

<sup>b</sup> R = 0.472; Adjusted R<sup>2</sup> = 0.219

<sup>d</sup> R = 0.473; Adjusted R<sup>2</sup> = 0.219

One-tailed tests were used to calculate the statistical significance of the parameter estimates

\*\*\*p < 0.001; \*\* p < 0.01; \* p < 0.05

Several of the independent variables reduce support for democratic norms and values as hypothesized. The more one supports state paternalism and positively evaluates the socialist system, the less likely it is that he or she will express support for democratic principles. The more religious a person is and the greater the number of children he or she has, the less likely it is that this person will support democratic norms and principles.

We should note that employment status and perception of political change are in the expected direction. However, the effects of these variables are not statistically significant.

The most important finding for this analysis is that, regardless of which variables are added to the model, gender's effect on support for democracy remains virtually constant and statistically significant. Polish women are less supportive of democracy, holding constant education, employment status, evaluation of material well-being, support for state paternalism, satisfaction with democracy, support for socialism, and religiosity. The effect of gender on support for democracy is most diminished by the set of economic variables. The social-psychological variables also reduce the influence of gender slightly, but the political variables have virtually no impact on the explanatory power of gender.

Including interaction terms for gender and each independent variable would allow us to detect to what extent the effect of independent variables with respect to democracy differ for men and women. Because the number of independent variables is large, it is simpler to present the gender-specific regression models. Two models presented in Table 9.3 show which explanatory variables have a greater influence on women's as compared to men's attitudes toward democracy.

Education has the same effect on attitudes toward democracy for men and women – not a surprising result from the standpoint that Polish men and women are indistinguishable in terms of their educational attainment. What is surprising, however, is that none of the other independent variables has the same effect on women as it does on men. For men, their self-evaluation of material well-being and their satisfaction with the performance of the democratic system are the strongest predictors of their support for democracy. For women, these variables are not statistically significant. Rather, women's support for democracy is explained by their levels of support for state paternalism, their religiosity, and the number of children living at home.

These results offer empirical confirmation of several of the proposed hypotheses. Polish women are less supportive of democratic principles because they prefer a more activist state – one that provides child care and

other social services, enabling them to work outside the home. This hypothesis is further confirmed by the finding that the more children Polish women have, the less supportive they are of democratic norms and values. Finally, religious Polish women are less supportive of democratic principles than are religious Polish men. The Pearson correlation coefficient for gender and religion is 0.189.

**Table 9.3.** Regression of Support for Democratic Principles on Sociodemographic Variables, Economic Variables, Political Variables, and Social-Psychological Variables: Men and Women Compared

Independent variables	Men <sup>a</sup>			Women <sup>b</sup>		
	B	SE	beta	B	SE	beta
<i>Sociodemographic variables</i>						
Age	0.008	0.003	0.095**	0.005	0.003	0.058
Education	0.394	0.045	0.314***	0.473	0.043	0.371***
<i>Economic variables</i>						
Employment status in 1998	0.000	0.082	0.000	-0.008	0.075	-0.042
Evaluation of material well-being	0.109	0.049	0.116*	0.040	0.046	0.039
Support for state paternalism	-0.022	0.022	-0.033	-0.039	0.018	-0.067*
Number of children	-0.035	0.026	-0.046	-0.061	0.030	-0.073*
<i>Political variables</i>						
Satisfaction with democracy in 1998	0.068	0.033	0.073**	0.056	0.032	0.056
Retrospective evaluation of socialism	-0.041	0.028	-0.049	-0.043	0.024	-0.054
<i>Social-psychological variables</i>						
Perception of political change	0.103	0.115	0.046	-0.058	0.112	-0.022
Religiosity	-0.031	0.030	-0.035	-0.070	0.031	-0.071*
Constant	-0.619	0.330		-0.492	0.306	

<sup>a</sup> R = 0.391; Adjusted R<sup>2</sup> = 0.142

<sup>b</sup> R = 0.470; Adjusted R<sup>2</sup> = 0.211

One-tailed tests were used to calculate the statistical significance of the parameter estimates. \*\*\*p < 0.001; \*\*p < 0.01; \*p < 0.05

The analysis presented in this chapter allows one to reject the specific hypotheses derived from the theoretical arguments developed in the literature. Contrary to expectations, in comparison with men, women are not



less supportive of democracy because of differences in unemployment; women are not less supportive of democracy because they associate it with a decline in their material well-being; women are not less supportive of democracy because they are less satisfied with the performance of the democratic system; women are not less supportive of democracy because they prefer the previous socialist system; and, women are not less supportive of democracy because they are threatened by political change.

Only 21.1 percent of the variance in women's attitudes toward democracy is explained by the independent variables included in the model. The amount explained by the same variables is even less for men. Thus, the amount of variance that remains to be further explained, for both women and men, is still substantial. Analyses in this chapter show which types of variables are relevant and which are not.