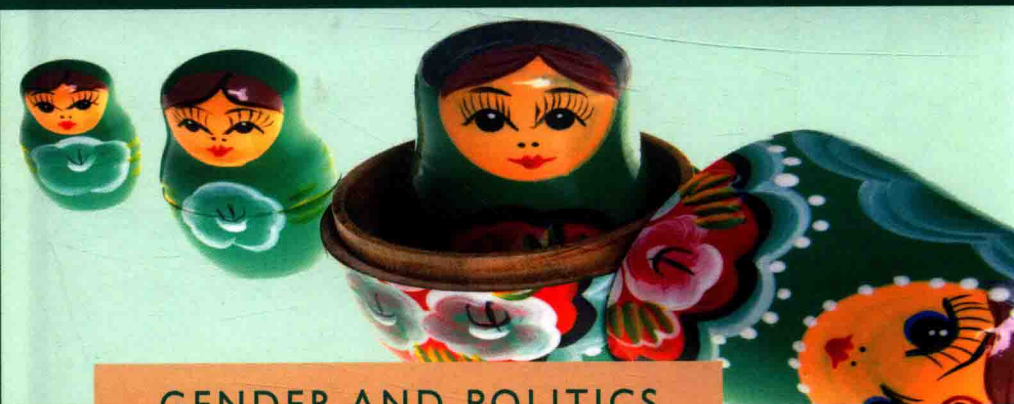


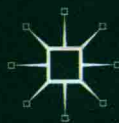
# Democracy, Gender, and Social Policy in Russia

A Wayward Society



GENDER AND POLITICS

Andrea Chandler



# Democracy, Gender, and Social Policy in Russia

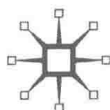
## A Wayward Society

Andrea Chandler

*Professor, Department of Political Science,  
Carleton University*

palgrave  
macmillan

---



© Andrea Chandler 2013

All rights reserved. No reproduction, copy or transmission of this publication may be made without written permission.

No portion of this publication may be reproduced, copied or transmitted save with written permission or in accordance with the provisions of the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988, or under the terms of any licence permitting limited copying issued by the Copyright Licensing Agency, Saffron House, 6–10 Kirby Street, London EC1N 8TS.

Any person who does any unauthorized act in relation to this publication may be liable to criminal prosecution and civil claims for damages.

The author has asserted her right to be identified as the author of this work in accordance with the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988.

First published 2013 by  
PALGRAVE MACMILLAN

Palgrave Macmillan in the UK is an imprint of Macmillan Publishers Limited, registered in England, company number 785998, of Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire RG21 6XS.

Palgrave Macmillan in the US is a division of St Martin's Press LLC, 175 Fifth Avenue, New York, NY 10010.

Palgrave Macmillan is the global academic imprint of the above companies and has companies and representatives throughout the world.

Palgrave® and Macmillan® are registered trademarks in the United States, the United Kingdom, Europe and other countries

ISBN: 978–1–137–34320–8

This book is printed on paper suitable for recycling and made from fully managed and sustained forest sources. Logging, pulping and manufacturing processes are expected to conform to the environmental regulations of the country of origin.

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

A catalog record for this book is available from the Library of Congress.

## *Gender and Politics series*

**Series editors:** Johanna Kantola, University of Helsinki, Finland and Judith Squires, University of Bristol, UK

This timely new series publishes leading monographs and edited collections from scholars working in the disciplinary areas of politics, international relations and public policy with specific reference to questions of gender. The series showcases cutting-edge research in Gender and Politics, publishing topical and innovative approaches to gender politics. It will include exciting work from new authors and well-known academics and will also publish high-impact writings by practitioners working in issues relating to gender and politics.

The series covers politics, international relations and public policy, including gendered engagement with mainstream political science issues, such as political systems and policymaking, representation and participation, citizenship and identity, equality, and women's movements; gender and international relations, including feminist approaches to international institutions, political economy and global politics; and interdisciplinary and emergent areas of study, such as masculinities studies, gender and multiculturalism, and intersectionality.

Potential contributors are encouraged to contact the series editors: Johanna Kantola (johanna.kantola@helsinki.fi) and Judith Squires (judith.squires@bristol.ac.uk)

### *Series Advisory Board:*

Louise Chappell, University of New South Wales, Australia

Joni Lovenduski, Birkbeck College, University of London, UK

Amy Mazur, Washington State University, USA

Jacqui True, University of Auckland, New Zealand

Mieke Verloo, Radboud University Nijmegen, the Netherlands

Laurel Weldon, Purdue University, USA

### *Titles include:*

Gabriele Abels and Joyce Marie Mushaben (*editors*)

GENDERING THE EUROPEAN UNION

New Approaches to Old Democratic Deficits

Elin Bjarnegård

GENDER, INFORMAL INSTITUTIONS AND POLITICAL RECRUITMENT

Explaining Male Dominance in Parliamentary Representation

Andrea Chandler

DEMOCRACY, GENDER, AND SOCIAL POLICY IN RUSSIA

A Wayward Society

Sarah Childs and Paul Webb

SEX, GENDER AND THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY

From Iron Lady to Kitten Heels

Jonathan Dean

RETHINKING CONTEMPORARY FEMINIST POLITICS

Meryl Kenny

GENDER AND POLITICAL RECRUITMENT

Theorising Institutional change

Andrea Krizsan, Hege Skjeie and Judith Squires (*editors*)

INSTITUTIONALIZING INTERSECTIONALITY

The Changing Nature of European Equality Regimes

Mona Lena Krook and Fiona Mackay (*editors*)

GENDER, POLITICS AND INSTITUTIONS

Towards a Feminist Institutionalism

Emanuela Lombardo and Maxime Forest (*editors*)

THE EUROPEANIZATION OF GENDER EQUALITY POLICIES

A Discursive-Sociological Approach

Birte Siim and Monika Mokre (*editors*)

NEGOTIATING GENDER AND DIVERSITY IN AN EMERGENT EUROPEAN PUBLIC  
SPHERE

Polly Wilding

NEGOTIATING BOUNDARIES

Gender, Violence and Transformation in Brazil

---

**Gender and Politics Series**

**Series Standing Order ISBNs** 978-0-230-23917-3 (hardback) and  
978-0-230-23918-0 (paperback)

You can receive future titles in this series as they are published by placing a standing order. Please contact your bookseller or, in case of difficulty, write to us at the address below with your name and address, the title of the series and the ISBN quoted above.

Customer Services Department, Macmillan Distribution Ltd, Houndmills, Basingstoke,  
Hampshire RG21 6XS, England

---

*To Derek, Frederick, and Stuart*

# Preface and Acknowledgements

The starting point of the research came from two observations: first, I noted that under President Vladimir Putin, social welfare reforms that had faltered under the previous presidency of Boris Yeltsin were passing fairly smoothly through the legislature, even though the third Duma (2000–2003) still had a strong opposition presence. Second, I was surprised to learn that in 2003 the government passed substantial restrictions on second-trimester abortions, in a sudden policy move. These two outcomes suggested that social welfare policy had become politicized in a new way. The validity of this assumption was confirmed in 2005, when the political crisis accompanying the introduction of a major welfare reform, the monetization of social benefits, constituted a further challenge to a government already severely tested by the tragic September 2004 hostage crisis of Beslan. Previous research on the Russian old age pension system had alerted me to the pivotal role of political discourse in influencing the success or failure of reform in Russia, and I was curious to explore its role.

I would like to acknowledge the financial support of the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada for funding this research through Standard Research Grant no. 410–2006–0903.

I presented portions of the research upon which this book is based at the following scholarly conferences or presentations:

Seminar at the Contemporary Europe Research Centre, University of Melbourne, Australia, 9 November 2006.

12th World Convention of the Association for the Study of Nationalities, New York, 14 April 2007.

Workshop on Gender and Social Politics in an Era of Globalization, Carleton University, Ottawa, Ontario, 28 April 2007.

Workshop on Public Policy Failure, Annual Meeting of the Canadian Political Science Association, Saskatoon, Saskatchewan, 30 May 2007.

'Women-Friendly Democracy: A Conference in Honour of Jill Vickers', Carleton University, Ottawa, Ontario, 9 November 2007.

Annual Conference of the Canadian Association of Slavists, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, BC, 2 June 2008.

40th National Convention of the American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies, Philadelphia, PA, 23 November 2008.

8th Annual Aleksanteri conference, 'Welfare, Gender and Agency in Russia and Eastern Europe', Helsinki, Finland, 11 December 2008.

Conference on 'Challenges, Dynamics and Implications of Welfare Regime Change in Comparative Perspective: A Dialogue between Post-Soviet and East Asian Scholars', Munk Centre, University of Toronto, Toronto, Ontario 6 February 2009.

Research talk at the Institute of European, Russian and Eurasian Studies, Carleton University, 11 February 2011.

I would like to thank all the participants in these conferences, and those present at presentations, who asked me helpful questions.

Finally, I would like to thank my very capable research assistants for this project: Natasha Akhmetgalieva, Dmitry Lysenko, Alex Frost, Rachel Perusse and one other excellent graduate student who has not as of this writing given permission to be acknowledged, but whose outstanding work I very much appreciate.

I would like to thank Amber Stone-Galilee and Andrew Baird from Palgrave Macmillan, as well as those who participated in the anonymous peer review process, for their comments and suggestions.

Transliteration from the Russian language generally follows the Library of Congress system, with exceptions made for commonly used transliterations (such as Yeltsin).

Regarding quotations: when an English-language quotation appears in the work, and the reference indicates that the quotation is from a Russian-language source, the English translation is the author's, unless otherwise specified. Where an English-language quotation appears from a translation, the reference provided indicates the translator's name. If no translator was credited in the source, I have indicated so in the relevant footnote.

Any errors and omissions in the work are the author's responsibility alone.



# Contents

<i>Preface and Acknowledgements</i>	viii
Introduction: Democracy, Gender and Citizenship in Post-communist Russia	1
 <b>Part I Discourses of the Early Transition: Liberalism, Feminism, and the Market in the 1990s</b>	
1 Welfare and Social Justice in the USSR's Final Years	21
2 Liberalism and Social Reform in the Early Transition	34
3 Gender Equality, Individual Empowerment, and Pluralism	47
 <b>Part II Opposition Politics, Nationalism, and the Search for Authenticity, 1995–2004</b>	
4 Social Welfare in the Mid-Transition, 1995–2000	65
5 The Debate on Public Morality	75
6 The Rediscovery of the Child	87
 <b>Part III Statism and Democratic Reversal under Putin: Policies for a Wayward Society, 2000–2008</b>	
Introduction to Part III	105
7 Pronatalism and Family Politics under Putin's Presidency	107
8 Gender and the State in Debates on Conscription	133
 <b>Part IV Steps towards a Post-Putin Social Contract</b>	
Introduction to Part IV: The Wayward Society Reaches Maturity	147
9 Social Justice and Social Inclusion, 2005–2011	151
Conclusion	169
Notes	174
Bibliography	228
Index	249

# Introduction: Democracy, Gender and Citizenship in Post-communist Russia

One of the great innovations of the twentieth century was the expansion of the modern welfare state. Social welfare policies may include the provision of old-age pensions, unemployment benefits, universal education, and child care support. While states varied a great deal in the kinds of programmes that they established, the notion of the provider state was associated with the peace and prosperity of the post-World War II era. Historically, the expansion of the welfare state was closely linked to the notion of increased democratic participation.<sup>1</sup> In the West, political inclusion of citizens led to demands for state measures to promote social equality.<sup>2</sup> In the twenty-first century, citizen groups increasingly demand not just a 'safety net' to tide them over in times of hardship, but also proactive forms of social inclusion. These supports include assistance for the integration of ethnic and religious minorities, equal access for gays and lesbians, and accommodation for people with disabilities.<sup>3</sup>

The legitimacy of a regime, and the survival of leaders, may depend on the adequacy of the programmes that it provides to serve citizens' needs. Today, a crisis of social welfare can cause mass social protest, can destabilize a regime, topple a ruling government, or lead to a constitutional challenge. Following the financial crisis of 2008, countries such as Ireland and Greece experienced political crises when they adopted strict financial austerity programs, under pressure from the European Union and the International Monetary Fund. The protests against the stabilization packages focussed primarily on the negative impact that spending cuts would have on existing welfare state programmes.<sup>4</sup> In January 2011, the Egyptian president fell when citizens went to the streets to hold the regime responsible for unchecked inflation. Subsequent to the Egyptian events, a wave of unrest in the Middle East and North Africa has renewed the debate, raised by Samuel Huntington in the 1960s,<sup>5</sup>

about the political risks that a state incurs when low living standards, increasing education, and unemployment coincide.<sup>6</sup> Social welfare measures sometimes follow outbreaks of riots, when governments seek to pacify populations by improving living standards.<sup>7</sup> A major social policy change (such as U.S. President Barack Obama's health care initiative) can evoke discontent in some members of society. In the United States, backlash against the health care reform arguably contributed to the growth of the extreme right 'Tea Party' movement.<sup>8</sup> On the other hand, major expansions of social welfare programs can greatly increase a government's popularity. President Lula de Silva in Brazil became known as one of the most successful politicians in Brazil's history after achieving a reform which substantially increased social benefits for low-income citizens.<sup>9</sup>

Conversely, the *absence* of social welfare reform can be politically costly, if citizens hold governments responsible for a failure to act. In 2003, China came under international scrutiny when the unusually contagious severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) virus began to spread around the globe; critics questioned whether China's closed political system had affected its ability to share information about the disease in a timely way.<sup>10</sup> In France in 2003, when a large number of senior citizens died during a summer heat wave, the ensuing public debate prompted an official inquiry in the French parliament.<sup>11</sup> Forty years ago, Ted Robert Gurr argued that when citizens perceive 'relative deprivation' – if they fear that their standard of living is declining while other groups are doing well – then the likelihood of revolution increases.<sup>12</sup> Yet although considerable research has been done on the impact of democracy on social welfare systems (as will be discussed below), we still have a great deal to learn about the impact of social welfare crises on democratic consolidation.

Russia provides an excellent case for an examination of the causal links between social welfare, social discontent, and regime change. Russia was the centre of the twentieth century's most influential social revolution, in 1917. V.I. Lenin's Bolshevik Party rose to power on the crest of mass discontent with the autocratic Tsarist regime, under which most Russians lived in dire poverty. Lenin's new Soviet order promised a more equitable and humane state social welfare system, although it took many decades for it to even begin to deliver on its promises. From 1987 to 1999, Russia experienced 12 years of democratization, initiated by Mikhail Gorbachev, the General Secretary of Communist Party of the Soviet Union. In the late 1980s, Gorbachev's perestroika reforms faltered, in part because of worsening living standards and subnational

republics' demands for greater autonomy, including the ability to social welfare measures suited to their own particular needs.<sup>13</sup>

After the collapse of Soviet Union in 1991, Russia's post-communist market reform process proved to be shaky, but the basic principles of liberal democracy were generally upheld during President Boris Yeltsin's presidency. The country's social welfare system, already weakened in the Soviet Union's final years, emerged as a casualty of the country's economic crisis and the intensifying political polarization of the 1990s. Yet few experts have pointed to social welfare as an issue directly contributing to Russia's democratic reversal. In 2000, Vladimir Putin coasted to victory as post-communist Russia's second elected president, owing his electoral success in part to the claim to have restored the predictable delivery and regular indexation of social benefits and pensions. The political system became more restrictive under Putin's presidency (2000–2008). However, in 2005, Putin found confidence in his own regime shaken when thousands of Russians took to the streets to protest an unpopular 'monetization' reform, which replaced many service-based social benefits with cash payments. In 2006, Putin introduced a costly pronatalist policy reform, which shifted the emphasis of social policy from individualism to promoting a patriotic ideal of motherhood, a policy innovation which had profound implications for the politics of gender relations.

Why did democracy falter in Russia from 2000 onwards after over ten years of pluralism? Why did Russia's social welfare reforms veer abruptly from neo-liberalism to state-imposed nationalism? How did these shifts affect the gender equality once claimed by socialism? These three questions are intricately related: the question of post-communist social welfare is at the forefront of our understanding of democracy. This study examines the role of social welfare in the Russian political discourse on democratization, from 1990 to the present. Social welfare and democratization are sequentially linked; the social welfare crisis preceded the decline of liberal, electoral democracy. It will be hypothesized that debate on social welfare actually contributed to the unravelling of democracy, revealing the limitations of liberalism and the failures of the state.

## **Russian democratization**

Western scholars have pondered the setbacks that have occurred in Russian democracy since the accession of Vladimir Putin to power in 1999–2000. Experts present various reasons for the democratic reversal, among them Putin's personal lack of sympathy for liberalism;<sup>14</sup> a natural

resource-based economy with a narrow economic elite;<sup>15</sup> and a broad-based disenchantment with the West.<sup>16</sup> Some analysts have pointed to the mistakes and divisions in the democratic camp as forces fragmenting democracy.<sup>17</sup> Others argue that democracy is poorly suited to a weak state under conditions of economic decline; Vladimir Popov, for example, argued that a strengthened Russian state enabled a degree of economic recovery to take place.<sup>18</sup> One prominent argument posited that Putin, and the political party United Russia, sought to legitimize increased authoritarianism by claiming that a more controlled state would improve living standards.<sup>19</sup> Did Putin's methods create a stronger state, better able to rule in the interests of citizens? The question provoked a strong debate.

Russia can be described as a 'hybrid regime', somewhere between democracy and authoritarianism. Hybrid regimes have recently been recognized as a political category in their own right.<sup>20</sup> These hybrid regimes may be described as sites of incomplete democratization.<sup>21</sup> Yet we still have much to learn about why hybrid regimes are so varied, and why an individual hybrid regime adopts the particular configuration that it does. Furthermore, although it is quite widely accepted that Putin successfully harnessed popular disillusionment with the post-communist transition,<sup>22</sup> we still know very little about how this process unfolded over time.

This study will examine political discourse on social welfare in order to reveal the way in which the post-communist political arena gradually came to downplay liberal ideals and embrace nationalist ones. Social welfare policies, insofar as they redistribute resources and provide basic services to all citizens, require a strong state. Therefore, social welfare can reveal a great deal about a state's ability to respond to change. Although a substantial body of scholarly work has pointed to the institutional weaknesses of the Russian post-communist state,<sup>23</sup> democratization and state failure tend to be examined as separate subjects. As Martin Horak argued, the literature on democratic transition has not sufficiently linked democratization with the quality of post-communist reforms. Horak asserted that we should include effective and inclusive policymaking among our criteria for successful democratic consolidation.<sup>24</sup> Social welfare is an appropriate choice of focus for examining the relationship between these variables, because social welfare connects notions of citizenship and policy outcomes.

## **Citizens, social welfare, and the state**

States vary substantially in the degree and type of welfare programs that they provide.<sup>25</sup> Welfare states have been a key subject of feminist

research. Policies that take women's needs into account, such as affordable day care and generous maternity leaves, enable women to participate in society as full citizens. On the other hand, when policies are oriented towards a single full-time wage earner (who is assumed to be a male supporting his family), women can be left at a disadvantage.<sup>26</sup> As Mary Daly and Katherine Rake argue, when evaluating social welfare systems, we should look for not just how reforms have affected women, but whether reforms change relationships between men and women, and the degree of leverage that women have in spousal relationships.<sup>27</sup> Despite the variation in states' abilities to realize gender equality, the postwar order in the West enabled the formation of a rough consensus that universal social welfare benefits can promote equal opportunity, can provide security in hard times, and can create a more productive workforce.

Yet just as the welfare state gained legitimacy in the West, capitalism undermined its assumptions. Globalization, and the influence of free-market liberal ideas, have created strong pressures on states to limit spending, including on social welfare. Recent social welfare reforms may involve spending cuts designed to enhance international competitiveness and to promote a neo-conservative ideological agenda.<sup>28</sup> In the 1990s, the International Monetary Fund and World Bank promoted the 'Washington consensus' model of a state with fewer commitments to social welfare.<sup>29</sup> However, neo-liberal reforms cannot be reduced to simple economics; their success depends on consensus-building and inclusive processes.<sup>30</sup> As Paul Pierson argues, historically the expansion of social welfare programs were presented as advances in human rights. Therefore, social welfare cutbacks tend to provoke a strong backlash from civil society.<sup>31</sup>

As post-communist countries embraced liberal market reforms and gained funding from international institutions, they faced the pressure to cut back communist-era programs that were considered excessively costly.<sup>32</sup> As early as 1991, Adam Przeworski argued that social welfare was a potential stumbling block for transitional regimes, as the hardships associated with market reform could provoke discontent with democratic leadership.<sup>33</sup> There was a move to reduce universal, inclusive programs and replace them with means-tested programmes available only to the poorest people. Cutbacks in parental leave benefits and child care support often particularly affected working women.<sup>34</sup> Socially conservative governments, in countries such as Poland and Hungary, pursued policies based on a traditional view of the family, where men would earn income and women stay at home. In some countries, the renewed authority of religious institutions (such as the Catholic Church

in Poland) contributed to dramatic reversals of abortion rights.<sup>35</sup> Reformers' policies were not necessarily well received by the population. Some scholars argued that citizen discontent with declining living standards contributed to the electoral decline of market reformers in some countries.<sup>36</sup>

Like the East European countries, Russia inherited a cumbersome and strained social welfare system, and faced financial pressures to cut social welfare spending.<sup>37</sup> Linda Cook's 2007 study of Russian social welfare reform argued that contending political interests inhibited the adoption of cohesive reforms. Another scholar, Michele Rivkin-Fish, explored the way in which politics have affected reproductive rights in Russia.<sup>38</sup> But relatively little scholarly work has examined how the *details* of particular social welfare situations influenced the *content* of ideas about democracy as a whole. Mitchell Orenstein's work on comparative pension reform posited that the global diffusion of ideas had an impact on social welfare reform outcomes. His study was innovative in linking social welfare to norms and principles.<sup>39</sup> Still, much of the literature treats social welfare as a dependent variable influenced by institutional processes. By contrast, this study argues that social welfare policies can serve as an independent variable that influences not just electoral outcomes or institutions, but the very ways in which democracy is perceived and discussed. Russia's post-communist welfare state did not show a clear pattern of contraction. It embraced some aspects of international social welfare reform models, but has overall asserted the need for a uniquely Russian social safety net.<sup>40</sup> This search for authenticity rejects Western influences on policy, and assigns a key role to women and the family in restoring the power of the Russian nation.

## **Gender and social welfare under capitalism and socialism**

As feminist international relations scholars have documented, globalization is a double-edged sword for women. On the one hand, it can enable women's movements to form supportive networks of activists and can provide opportunities to participate in international institutions that promote gender equality. On the other hand, the increased competitiveness of capitalism can create pressures to cut social spending, and the opening of borders can facilitate forms of exploitation such as human trafficking.<sup>41</sup> For post-communist countries, the tensions between these opposing forces can be particularly acute. Communist systems insulated themselves from Western influences, but with the collapse of communism, these societies suddenly were opened to international contact at a

time of severe economic crisis. As Jacqui True argues, women's interests in some post-communist states were adversely affected when the expansion of global capitalism occurred simultaneously with a conservative backlash against the gender equality of the communist period.<sup>42</sup>

As the traditional caregivers of the family, women faced particular challenges and obstacles. Soon after the collapse of communism, a growing literature began to document a decline in the status of women in East European and former Soviet countries. Authors variously pointed to declines in female representation, difficulties faced by women in the labour market, and moves away from social supports for working mothers.<sup>43</sup> In varying degrees, since communism collapsed, some of the East European countries have adopted social welfare reforms that have particularly affected women, such as means-tested social assistance programs, changes to maternity and parental leave, and higher pension ages. Institutions such as the World Bank have encouraged post-communist countries to reform their social welfare systems, in ways that affect access to daycares, single mothers' benefits, and parental leaves.<sup>44</sup> In short, neo-liberal economic reforms, crumbling social welfare systems, and the unequal access to new opportunities often left women with more responsibilities at the same time that their access to resources and employment became more precarious.

Experts on post-communist Russia charted similar trends in the early stages of the transition from communism.<sup>45</sup> Within Russia, political leaders and analysts have often noted a correlation between declining women's participation and a deteriorating social safety net.<sup>46</sup> In employment, evidence suggested that women as a whole were facing lower employment and pay rates than men, and that pregnant women and mothers were becoming more vulnerable to job discrimination.<sup>47</sup> At the same time, women's non-governmental organizations (NGOs) became very active in Russia after the USSR's collapse, particularly in the arena of self-help and charitable organizations that filled a need because of the deteriorating social safety net.<sup>48</sup> Women's movements and NGOs provide an avenue for women to improve their position. Some scholars posit that these organizations have helped to advance the position of women, in gradual and modest ways.<sup>49</sup> Other scholars consider them too weak and isolated to be able to challenge prevailing trends. Julie Hemment argued that Russian women's NGOs have focused primarily on self-improvement, rather than on making demands on the state.<sup>50</sup> Similarly, Lisa McIntosh Sundstrom argued that women's NGOs in Russia, while they are in sync with the Western funding organizations on which they depend, have minimal influence on society.<sup>51</sup>



While all of these literatures are valuable in explaining the impact of the transition on women, they have focussed primarily on either political actors or on state policies. In a different tradition, scholars such as Peggy Watson, Jacqui True, and Daina Stukuls attempted to link changing political discourses with negative outcomes for women.<sup>52</sup> One of the most relevant works of scholarly literature on the subject is Susan Gal and Gail Kligman's 2000 monograph, *The Politics of Gender after Socialism*. Gal and Kligman's work played an extremely important role in influencing subsequent scholarly endeavours in two ways: first, their work called for the importance of political factors in determining the influence of policy changes that affected women. Women in post-communist countries did not become disadvantaged simply because of economic changes, but also because of conservative politics. Moreover, the authors pointed out, post-communist countries experiences showed marked diversity and variation of experience.<sup>53</sup> Second, their work opened up debate on the causal roles that gender politics played in influencing the political arena as a whole. Significantly, they observed that discussions about family policies and abortion were often metaphors that politicians used to depict their visions of the future of the nation.<sup>54</sup> This grasp of the significance of temporality is key to the understanding of gendered discourse. In Russia, for example, pronatalist policies were aimed at strengthening and sustaining the nation through increasing the population.

Gal and Kligman's greatest contribution was as a call for a holistic research agenda, calling for empirically based studies which engaged the concept of discourse. In this light they opened the door to allow for an understanding of unique or contrasting cases. This study provides a detailed examination of the case of Russia, but it departs from Gal and Kligman's analysis in a number of ways. In the first place, this monograph outlines a systematic methodology to link discourse programmatically with political outcomes. In the second place, it asserts that while social welfare was related to the political arena in a general sense, it also had a direct impact on the very path of democratization itself. Where Gal and Kligman's work focussed on those Central European states that had a generally Western-oriented gaze, in Russia gender was a prominent theme of an attempt to return to a more autarkic, inward-looking form of politics. Finally, because of this study's significant attention to the evolution of politics after 2000, we have the opportunity to examine how the intersection of gender, welfare, and democracy responded to events in the international environment (such as Ukraine's 'Orange Revolution' of 2004, or the global recession of 2008).