

OLYMPE DE GOUGES

French Declaration of Rights for Women, 1791

Olympe de Gouges (1748–1793) was a French playwright whose writings became increasingly political as the French Revolution progressed after 1789. When the revolutionary government of the National Assembly passed a new constitution in 1791 with the Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen of 1789 as the preamble, and still did not give women the vote, de Gouges wrote the following document.

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What was Olympe de Gouges's argument? What specific rights for women was she seeking?

THINKING HISTORICALLY

Compare this document with the Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen. What are the similarities and differences? What is the purpose of the similarities? What is the significance of the differences?

Mankind, are you capable of being just? It is a woman who asks the question; you will not deprive her of that right at least. Tell me? Who has given you the sovereign empire to oppress my sex? Your strength? Your talents? Observe the creator in his wisdom; survey nature in all its grandeur, with which you seem to want to be in harmony, and give me, if you dare, an example of this tryanical empire.

Go back to animals. Consult the elements, study plants, finally glance at all the modifications of organic matter; and surrender to the evidence as I offer you the means; search, probe, and distinguish, if you can, the sexes in the administration of nature. Everywhere you will find them mingled, everywhere they cooperate in the harmonious unity of this immortal masterpiece.

Man alone has raised his exception to a principle. Bizarre, blind, bloated with science and degenerated, in a century of enlightenment and wisdom, in the crassest ignorance, he wants to command as a despot a sex which has received all intellectual faculties; he pretends to be revolutionary, and claims his rights to equality, in order to say nothing more about it.

Preamble

Mothers, daughters, sisters, representatives of the nation, demand to be constituted a national assembly. Considering that ignorance, forgetfulness or contempt of the rights of women are the only causes of public misfortunes and government corruption, they resolve to expose in a solemn declaration, the natural, inalienable, and sacred rights of women, so that this declaration, being constantly before the public, reminds them constantly of their rights and their duties, so that the authoritative acts of men and women are always comparable to the goals of every political institution, and deserving of respect, so that citizens' demands, from now on based on simple and incontestable principles, will always support the constitution, good morals, and the happiness of all.

Consequently, the sex that is as superior in beauty as in the courage of maternity recognizes and declares, in the presence and under the auspices of the Supreme Being, the following Rights of Woman as Citizen.

I. Woman is born free and remains equal to man in rights. Social distinctions may be founded only on general usefulness.

II. The aim of every political association is the preservation of the natural and inalienable rights of Women and Men: these are the rights to liberty, property, security, and especially the resistance to oppression.

III. The source of all sovereignty resides essentially in the Nation, which is the meeting of women and men: no body, no individual, may exercise authority not emanating expressly therefrom.

IV. Liberty and Justice consist of restoring the rights of others; since the exercise of the rights of women has no limits other than those imposed by perpetual male tyranny, these limits must be made to conform to natural law and reason.

V. Laws of nature and reason forbid all acts harmful to society; everything which is not prohibited by these wise and divine laws cannot be prevented, and no one can be constrained to do what they do not prescribe.

VI. Law is the expression of the general will; all citizens, male and female, have the right to concur personally or through their representatives in its formation; it must be the same for all; all citizens being equal before it, are equally admissible to all public offices, positions, and employments, according to their capacity and without other distinction than that of virtues and talents. . . .

X. No one is to be disquieted because of his opinions; woman has the right to mount the scaffold; she must equally have the right to mount the rostrum, provided that her demonstrations do not disturb the legally established public order.

XI. The free communication of thoughts and opinions is one of the most precious rights of woman, since that liberty assures recognition of children by their fathers. Any female citizen thus may say freely, I am the mother of a child which belongs to you, without being forced by a barbarous prejudice to hide the truth; subject to responsibility for the abuse of this liberty in cases determined by law. . . .

XIII. For the maintenance of the public force and the expenses of administration, the contributions of woman and man are equal; she shares all the duties and all the painful tasks; therefore, she must have the same share in the distribution of positions, employment, offices, honors, and jobs. . . .

XVI. Every society in which the guarantee of rights is not assured or the separation of powers not determined has no constitution at all; the constitution is void if the majority of individuals comprising the nation have not cooperated in drafting it.

XVII. Property belongs to both sexes whether united or separate; for each it is an inviolable and sacred right; no one may be deprived thereof unless a legally established public necessity obviously requires it, and upon condition of a just and previous indemnity.

Cixi: The Dowager Empress of China

Tzu-Hsi (pronounced "Tsoo Shee"), or Cixi, was one of the most formidable women in modern history. She was famed for her beauty and charm. She was either a great friend or terrible enemy. She was power hungry, ruthless and profoundly skilled in court politics. She would rise from a middle class family to a dowager empress affecting Chinese life forever.

She was born on November 29, 1835. Her given name was Yehonala. She was born to parents of the middle ranks of Manchu society. By the time she turned 17, she was one of the concubines of the Emperor Hsien-Feng. "Tzu-Hsi", meaning kindly and virtuous, was her court name. When the emperor would chose to sleep with her, she would be escorted to his room by eunuchs and left naked at the foot of the bed.

This was done in order to insure no weapons were brought into his room. The emperor had many wives and concubines, but only Tzu-Hsi gave him a son. Upon the birth of their son, she immediately moved up in the court and upon the death of her husband she was given the title of Empress of the Western Palace. Tzu-Hsi was now the dowager empress.

However, her relations with the Emperor were never that fulfilling. According to Wu, a noted Chinese historian, the relations between the two were never anything but strained. She resented all attempts on his part to exercise real power. Their fights were always a struggle for power between them. When the Emperor died in 1861, her son, Chih, became the Emperor. She was one of the eight regents named by the emperor to rule during Tung Chih's youth, since he was only 5 years old when he took the throne. The other seven regents could have removed her from power, but she had allies. With the support of Jung Lu and his banner men, revolutionary eunuchs, the empress seized control of the government.

However, she still could not rule openly; she had to rule through her son. When Chih turned 17, his mother's reign had come to an end. She selected a wife and four concubines for him, supposedly to keep him so busy that she could rule for him. After a few years, the emperor died of venereal disease in 1875 and Tzu-Hsi became ruler once again. However, the empress still was not totally free to rule, for her son's favorite concubine was pregnant and if she delivered a boy, the boy would be the new emperor and his mother dowager empress. Mysteriously, the concubine died before giving birth. Many historians conjecture that this was done at the request of Tzu-Hsi, while others simply believe that she was mentally unstable and took her own life.

The Boxer Rebellion of 1900 was a key turning point of her reign. The Boxer Rebellion was named after the secret society of the "Righteous and Harmonious Fists" who were poor Chinese who blamed Westerners and their imperialism for their poor standing of living. First organized in 1898, they may have been tacitly supported by Tzu-Hsi's government. Rising in rebellion in early 1900, the empress and her government both helped and hindered the revolt. The Boxers



attacked Western missionaries and merchants, as well as the compound in Peking where foreigners lived, beginning a siege which lasted eight weeks. On August 14th the 19,000 troops of the allied armies of the Western imperialist Powers captured Peking and ended the siege. Tzu-Hsi decided to flee the city with the emperor. The Boxer Rebellion was over; at least 250 foreigners had been killed and China had to accept a humiliating peace settlement.

In 1901, she returned to the city with a whole new outlook. She was now in favor of modernizing China and making moral and social reforms. One of her major reforms was to outlaw slicing, a practice of killing people with thousands of small cuts. The empress even promised the people a constitution and representative government. However, this was too little too late.

In 1908, Tzu-Hsi suffered a stroke and, realizing she was dying, she began to think about who she wanted to succeed her. She chose her three year old nephew, P'u Yi. Upon her death she was buried in splendor, covered in diamonds. In 1928, revolutionaries dynamited her tomb and looted it while desecrating her body.

Tzu-Hsi's legacy is clearly an important one. Whether the people liked her or not does not take away the pivotal role she played in the history of China. During her life in politics, Tzu-Hsi was clever and masterful. Her narrow-mindedness and ultra-conservatism in government policy delayed what China needed to do to keep pace with the rest of the world in the late 1800's. By the time she realized, it was too late. Therefore, many historians believe that Tzu-Hsi's success in the politics of her country helped put an end to any realistic hope of a modernized imperial China.

Senate measure regrets 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act

IMMIGRATION

By Carolyn Lochhead

Washington -- As it prepares to pass a bill this week to punish China for undervaluing its currency, the U.S. Senate has passed a resolution expressing regret for the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act and subsequent laws that banned most Chinese immigrants from the United States and denied them citizenship.

The resolution, SR201, was sponsored by Sen. Dianne Feinstein, D-Calif., and Scott Brown, R-Mass. It passed unanimously by voice vote Thursday. The vote cleared the way for a companion bill in the House by Rep. Judy Chu, D-Monterey Park (Los Angeles County), who is the first Chinese American woman elected to Congress. Large-scale Chinese immigration began with the California Gold Rush in 1848. After the federal government authorized and supported construction of the first transcontinental railroad during the Civil War, railroad companies recruited Chinese laborers to build the Pacific portions of the track and predominantly Irish laborers to construct the line from the East.

Worker recruitment was marked by kidnappings, misleading contracts and, in some cases, sales of laborers. The resolution said the Chinese railroad workers "faced grueling hours and extremely harsh conditions in order to lay hundreds of miles of track and were paid substandard wages," and that without their work, construction would have been "seriously impeded."

The Senate resolution acknowledged that the laws targeting Chinese immigrants were incompatible "with the basic founding principles recognized in the Declaration of Independence that all persons are created equal," and with "the spirit" of the Constitution. It said the United States "deeply regrets passing six decades of legislation directly targeting the Chinese people for physical and political exclusion and the wrongs committed against Chinese and American citizens of Chinese descent who suffered under these discriminatory laws."

The resolution in the Senate comes as animosity in Congress against China's huge trade imbalance with the United States is increasing amid widespread U.S. unemployment. The tariff legislation is sponsored by Sens. Chuck Schumer, D-N.Y., and Lindsey Graham, R-S.C., and is expected to pass the Senate with substantial bipartisan support this week. But the resolution faces a tougher hurdle in the House, where Speaker John Boehner, R-Ohio, has said he will refuse to bring it to the floor.

The resolution apologizes for six decades of legislation targeting Chinese people for physical and political exclusion during a period in the development of the American West that many scholars believe parallels the history of African slavery and segregation in the American South.

Race-based laws aimed at Chinese immigrants ranged from the 1882 exclusion act, signed by President Chester Arthur after he initially vetoed it, to amendments and renewals enacted through 1904. The laws were repealed in 1943 when China allied with the United States in World War II. The 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act was the first ban on immigration to the United States. Until then, U.S. borders were open. By the 1860s, Chinese were the largest immigrant group in the state; hostility against them was especially intense in California, which passed its own discriminatory laws. Chinese children in California were required to attend segregated schools, and Chinese laborers, who congregated in San Francisco and other California cities after the Gold Rush, were blamed for unemployment and depressed wages.

The resolution highlights numerous incidents of racial hostility, including the 1887 Snake River Massacre in Oregon where 31 Chinese miners were killed, and attacks on Chinese in San Francisco and Los Angeles. The resolution also notes "overzealous implementation" of the 1875 Page Act, which barred importation of female prostitutes from China, Japan "or any Oriental country," but was used against Chinese women in effect to prevent "the formation of Chinese families" in the United States and limit the birth of ethnic Chinese.

Forms of Migration

AP World History Mr. Rhinehart

- There were many different types of migration that were prevalent during the period 1750-1900 . . .

#1: **Internal migration** – travel or movement within a region, normally from rural to urban areas

#2: **External migration** – complete change of region, often across seas and sometimes in the context of colonization.

#3: **Chain migration** – migration that occurs in a series of steps, frequently starting as internal migration and then becoming external.

#4: **Seasonal migration** – temporary movement usually undertaken for seasonal employment. Can be internal (most common) or external for longer periods of time with the intent of returning to one's homeland.

Directions: Read the following excerpts and then categorize each type of migration below.

Fergus MacDonald

I was born on the Isle of Skye in 1860 and worked on the family farm until I was 15 years old. After the harvest in October 1875, I traveled for the first time to Glasgow to work in a mill for a few months. I went back home to help with planting in March 1876, then returned to Glasgow the following October. I kept this up for six years, until my father died and I took over the farm permanently.

Sacha Koltsov

When I was born in 1840, my father worked the land for a *boyar* [nobleman] near Kiev. When I turned six, my brother, Alexis, was told that he had to join the army, and we knew that meant we would never see him alive again. Instead, my family escaped from Kiev, and my parents found work in Upper Silesia (southwest Poland). The crops failed the following year, and food could not be found for any amount of money. We left there and made our way to England where my father and Alexis found work at the docks. Smoke from the factories and chimneys was very bad and made father sick. In August 1854, he died from having to work in the filthy air. A man came to the room in which we lived and told us that a group of people had put up money to help families such as ours to move to America. With few other choices, mama agreed. We sailed from Southampton in October 1854, landing in the great city of New York after just two weeks on the ocean. Both Alexis and I found work quickly, and we have been able to find a room where we and mama can live well enough.

Zhang Kaiping

I was born in 1865, and my dream had always been to go to America, to become rich, and to come home a wealthy man. I knew that many Chinese had gone, that they lived a hard life, building railroads or performing other forms of physical labor. But I felt I could be different. Even though laws made it difficult for me to go, I arrived in San Francisco at the age of 25 in March 1890; to me it was a very big city! For 15 years, I worked in a shop in "Chinatown," and I managed to save about \$5 every month. Even though I liked America, I felt the need to go home. In June 1905 I returned to China, having saved three times as much as I would if I had stayed in China.