

THE HISTORY OF STRUGGLE FOR WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE

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HOW DOES SUFFRAGE RELATE TO DEMOCRACY?

- What does democracy mean?
- Democracy in Athens:
 - Exclusion foreigners, slaves, workers.
 - How about women?
 - Why?
- It was not necessary to mention women AT ALL. Until the 19th century.
- First electoral norm to mention gender: the Reform Act 1832 (male citizens)
- Is there a difference in exclusion based on money, taxes, age and based vs. gender or race?

WOMEN'S STATUS

- Dependence on men
- Economically, legally
- Lack of autonomy
- Early feminists demanded:
 - Education
 - Change of legal status of married women
 - Better working conditions
 - How about suffrage?
 - The first exception: **Seneca Falls Convention in 1848**: Declaration of Sentiments and Resolutions

WHO SHOULD BE INCLUDED?

- Women's question was/is a political issue
- To make changes there needs to be a coalition of interests
- But whose interests?
- Intersectionality of gender issues
- Cleavages across classes, religion, race
- The 14th and 15th Amendments to the US constitution
- Europe: Should we demand suffrage on equal terms with men??
 - Emmeline Pankhurst and Women's Social and Political Union in the UK vs. Carla Zetkin and Damenwahlrecht in Germany

OPPONENTS' ARGUMENTS (DAHLERUP 2018)

- 1) **God and Nature:** distinction between private and public spheres
- 2) **Damaging effects:** to family, to the system
- 3) **Incompetence of women:**
- J. J. Rousseau: female reproductive functions made women incapable of rational thinking and, therefore women inherently could not exercise political rights
- Do we still hear the same arguments today? (What about the quota discussion?)

SUFFRAGISTS' ARGUMENTS

- 1) **The Rights Argument:** *"We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men and women are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty, and the pursue of happiness."* Seneca Falls Declaration of Sentiments and Resolutions, 1848
- 2) Different Experience: suffrage as a means of change of policy; purifying force
- 3) Conflict: the difference leads to conflicts in interests (such as biased marriage laws)

MARY WALLSTONECRAFT: THE VINDICATION OF THE WOMEN'S RIGHTS

- 1792, a powerful critique of Rousseau's ideas
- Arguments about liberty and equality
- Demanded inclusion of women into the concept of citizenship
- Education for girls
- Women in medicine and politics
- Equality in various areas, such as morality



TODAYS ARGUMENTS:

- Equality, difference, and conflict still prevail
- 4) **The Democracy Argument:** Beijing Platform for Action , the 4th UN World Conference on Women 1995: not only women will benefit. Gender parity is essential for democracy. Success!
- 5) **The Utility Argument:** neoliberal approach, conflicts the justice argument (in a way)

THREE WAVES OF WOMENS' SUFFRAGE

- 1st wave:: the 1890s and 1910s, including the period after the first world war.
- 2nd wave: Around the second world war
- 3rd wave: decolonization processes in 1960s

Figure 2.2 The Worldwide Progression of Women's Suffrage

—1893	New Zealand
—1902	Australia*
—1906	Finland
—1913	Norway
—1915	Denmark, Iceland
—1917	Canada*
—1918	Austria, Estonia, Georgia, Germany, Ireland*, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Poland, Russia, United Kingdom*
—1919	Belgium*, Belarus, Kenya*, Luxembourg, Netherlands, Sweden, Ukraine
—1920	Albania, Czech Republic, Slovakia, United States
—1921	Armenia, Azerbaijan, Lithuania
—1924	Kazakhstan, Mongolia, St. Lucia, Tajikistan
—1927	Turkmenistan
—1928	Ireland**, United Kingdom**
—1929	Ecuador, Romania*
—1930	South Africa*, Turkey
—1931	Portugal*, Spain, Sri Lanka
—1932	Maldives, Thailand, Uruguay
—1934	Brazil, Cuba
—1935	Myanmar
—1937	Philippines
—1938	Bolivia*, Uzbekistan
—1939	El Salvador
—1941	Panama*
—1942	Dominican Republic
—1944	Bulgaria, France, Jamaica
—1945	Croatia, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Senegal, Slovenia, Togo
—1946	Cameroon, Djibouti, Guatemala, Liberia, Macedonia, North Korea, Panama**, Romania**, Trinidad & Tobago, Venezuela, Vietnam, Yugoslavia
—1947	Argentina, Malta, Mexico, Pakistan, Singapore
—1948	Belgium**, Israel, Niger, Seychelles, South Korea, Suriname
—1949	Bosnia and Herzegovina, Chile, China, Costa Rica, Syria*
—1950	Barbados, Haiti, India
—1951	Antigua and Barbuda, Dominica, Grenada, Nepal, St. Kitts and Nevis, St. Vincent & the Grenadines
—1952	Bolivia**, Cote d'Ivoire, Greece, Lebanon
—1953	Bhutan, Guyana, Hungary, Syria**
—1954	Belize, Colombia, Ghana
—1955	Cambodia, Ethiopia, Eritrea, Honduras, Nicaragua, Peru
—1956	Benin, Comoros, Egypt, Gabon, Mali, Mauritius, Somalia

—1957	Malaysia, Zimbabwe
—1958	Burkina Faso, Chad, Guinea, Laos, Nigeria
—1959	Madagascar, San Marino, Tunisia, United Republic of Tanzania
—1960	Canada**, Cyprus, Gambia, Tonga
—1961	Bahamas, Burundi, Malawi, Mauritania, Paraguay, Rwanda, Sierra Leone
—1962	Algeria, Australia**, Monaco, Uganda, Zambia
—1963	Congo, Equatorial Guinea, Fiji, Iran, Kenya**, Morocco
—1964	Libya, Papua New Guinea, Sudan
—1965	Afghanistan, Botswana, Lesotho
—1967	Democratic People's Republic of Yemen, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Kiribati, Tuvalu
—1968	Nauru, Swaziland
—1970	Andorra, Yemen Arab Republic
—1971	Switzerland
—1972	Bangladesh
—1974	Jordan, Solomon Islands
—1975	Angola, Cape Verde, Mozambique, Sao Tome and Principe, Vanuatu
—1976	Portugal**
—1977	Guinea-Bissau
—1978	Republic of Moldova
—1979	Micronesia, Marshall Islands, Palau
—1980	Iraq
—1984	Liechtenstein
—1986	Central African Republic
—1989	Namibia
—1990	Samoa
—1994	South Africa**
—1999	Qatar
—2002	Bahrain
—2003	Oman
—2005	Kuwait
—2006	United Arab Emirates
—2011	Saudi Arabia

Source: Updated from Paxton, Green, and Hughes (2008).

Suffrage was sometimes granted to women with restrictions; for example, only women of a certain racial or ethnic group could vote. When women's enfranchisement proceeded in stages, a single asterisk (*) denotes the first time women in a country were allowed to vote nationally, while two asterisks (**) signify universal suffrage.

DEFINING DEMOCRACY

- Can we speak of democratic order when women and minorities are excluded from the right to vote?
- Criteria of democracy
- In principle
- Paxton 2008: discrepancies between definition of democracy by various scholars and their actual dating of when a country became democratic

DEFINITIONS OF DEMOCRACY

Democracy “permits the *largest possible part of the population* to influence . . . decisions” (Lipset 1959: 71).

Democracy provides “*all citizens* with both the opportunity to participate in the governing process, as manifested by *universal adult suffrage* and free and fair elections” (Muller 1988: 65).

“Regular, free and fair elections of representatives with *universal and equal suffrage*.” Democracy “means nothing if it does not entail rule or participation in rule by the many” (Rueschemeyer, Stephens, and Stephens 1992: 43, 41).

“No country can be considered democratic if national executive and legislative authority are not subject to meaningful competition via multiparty elections and no major, adult social group is excluded” (Reich 2002: 7)

Table 3.1 Comparison of transition dates of democracy to female suffrage

	Author's transition date	Date of female suffrage	Difference in years
<i>Lipset</i>			
Belgium	1918	1948	30
Ireland	1918	1928	10
Luxemburg	1918	1919	1
Netherlands	1918	1919	1
Sweden	1918	1919	1
Switzerland	1918	1971	53
United Kingdom	1918	1928	10
United States	1918	1920	2
<i>Müller</i>			
Australia	1892	1902	10
Belgium	1919	1948	29
Canada	1898	1918	20
France	1875	1944	69
India	1947	1950	3
Netherlands	1918	1919	1
New Zealand	1879	1893	14
Sweden	1917	1919	2
United Kingdom	1918	1928	10
United States	1870	1920	50
Uruguay	1919	1932	13
<i>Rueschmeyer, Stephens, and Stephens</i>			
Argentina	1912–30	1947	25
Britain	1918	1928	10
France	1877	1944	67
Italy	1919	1945	26
Switzerland	1848	1971	123
Uruguay	1919–33	1932	13
Venezuela	1945–8	1946	1
<i>Reich</i>			
Australia	1901	1902	1
Belgium	1919	1948	29
Czechoslovakia	1918	1920	2
France	1849–51, 1891–1940	1944	51
Ireland	1922	1928	6
Netherlands	1917	1919	2
Norway	1898	1913	15
Sweden	1917	1919	2
Switzerland	1848	1971	123
United Kingdom	1885	1928	43
United States	1870	1920	50
Uruguay	1918–33	1932	14

AFTER THE GAIN OF POLITICAL RIGHTS

- The goal was met
- The movement lost its unifying element
- Change of agenda
- Political rights not sufficient to achieve equality
- New goal: changing deeply-rooted cultural prejudices and socialization patterns
- Sexism encompassed in cultural prejudices and structural mechanisms, women in subordinate positions
- Also other types of rights
- Liberal feminists demanded equal access to male-dominated institutions
- Radical feminists demanded redefinition of the entire social order
- Third-wave feminism: early 1990s, need for intercultural dialogue, global inequalities.

THE CZECH WOMENS' MOVEMENT (IN AUSTRIAN-HUNGARIAN EMPIRE)



THE CZECH WOMENS' MOVEMENT (IN AUSTRIAN-HUNGARIAN EMPIRE)

- The general political goal of the Czech people: NATIONAL EMANCIPATION
- Struggle for the Czech language, political rights and representation (neo-absolutism after 1848 to early 1860s)
- Settlement of the Czech-Austrian relationship
- The mainstream ideology: Liberal nationalism
- Most of the women's movement within this political camp

IMPLICATION OF NATIONALISM FOR WOMEN'S EMANCIPATION?

- Women's political efforts perceived negatively, distraction from nationalist goals, disintegration of the national block (opponents' arguments not only antifeminist but also nationalist)
- It was also a strong case for women's suffrage, it would strengthen the Czech voice in the monarchy (but not other progressive measures usually supported).

MARIE ČERVINKOVÁ- RIEGEROVÁ

- *" Man is meant to establish laws of social order , woman's place is to eagerly fulfill higher laws – those of humanity, she is meant to govern the empire of mercifulness".*



PANÍ MARIE ČERVINKOVÁ-RIEGROVA.

Zemřela v Praze 19. ledna 1895.

THE CZECH WOMENS' MOVEMENT (IN AUSTRIAN-HUNGARIAN EMPIRE)

- Women excluded from political life in the monarchy by law (1867)
- Not sufficient prerequisites for political participation (first grammar school in 1880, first university graduates 1901)
- Women expected to be good patriots, sufficient manifestation of political maturity
- Female public activities: charity work, philanthropy
- Non-political clubs could be established (since 1861)
- 1865: The American Ladies' Club in Prague (goal to bolster patriotism, this was true for most women's clubs in the 19th century)

TWO MAIN COMPETING TRENDS

- 1) nationalism, women's effort to benefit the nation, gender issues subordinated to national interests.
 - These women did not participate in the movement
 - Charity work
 - Patriotic clubs
 - Renáta Tyršová (wife of Miroslav Tyrš): refused to run for the leadership of the the Women's Suffrage Committee: *"I have not been interested in politics – and I will not be. I do not understand politics and I don't like what is being called politics these days. In my patriotic feelings I am not a progressivist, I always see the matter of the nation first – not the interest of any class or gender."*

TWO MAIN COMPETING TRENDS

- 2) progressive trend, represented by Teréza Nováková (editor of Women's Papers)
 - Fighting for women's suffrage
 - Activist movement (speeches, articles)
 - Friend of Charlotte Garrigue Masaryk
 - Intellectual-feminist camp



THE CZECH WOMENS' MOVEMENT (IN AUSTRIAN-HUNGARIAN EMPIRE)

- The progressive camp strengthened in 1890s
- The struggle peaked in 1905-07
- New generation of educated women, need for modernization
- 1st congress of Czech women in 1897
- 1903 establishment of the Czech Women's Central Club (*Ústřední spolek českých žen*), issued paper Women's World
- 1905 establishment of the Committee for Women's Suffrage (*Výbor pro volební právo žen*) by Teréza Nováková and Františka Plamínková, political (informal and thus not illegal) body of the Central Club
- Support by influential politicians like TGM, Václav Choc, Bohuslav Franta

POLITICAL PARTIES

- Refused suffrage for women
- One exception: The Czech Progressive Party (Tomáš Garrigue Masaryk)
- National Socialist Party included women's suffrage in the program
- Fear of clericalism
- Czecho-Slavic Social Democratic party did not even participate on the Women's Suffrage Committee
- Women could be members of parties (social democrats first to admit women)

THE CZECH SUFFRAGIST'S ARGUMENTS

- Natural right
- Refused to understand rights only in terms of male rights
- Civil rights and civil duties
- Women's duties in the society = being mothers, raising new generations of Czechs (equivalent of military duty)
- Women = only half-citizens (only duties, no rights)
- Liberal women vs. socialist women

1907 ELECTORAL REFORM

- Abolished the curia system (voting in curia: group of voters based on their property, five groups in Austria: large landowners, business and trade, industrial cities, country, and so called universal curia for men over 24 – since 1896) – suffrage for men but unequal
- Women in the landowners' curia could vote (not directly)
- New law: "universal right" to vote only for men, setback for women!
- Protests of women
- Change of strategy: looking for lacunas in the electoral law

FIRST FEMALE CANDIDATES

- The Bohemian Regional Assembly did not explicitly ban female candidates
- First candidates in 1908
- First women elected: Božena Viková-Kunětická in 1920
- She was joint candidate of political parties

VIKOVÁ-KUNĚTICKÁ

- Radical nationalism and chauvinism
- Conflict with Charlotte Garrigue Masaryk
- National not women's emancipation
- The first women to be elected in Central Europe
- Boycott of the International Women's Suffrage Alliance congress in Budapest in 1913 for nationalist reasons
- She was not allowed to enter the Assembly



INDEPENDENT CZECHOSLOVAKIA

- 28 October 1918
- Female members of the Revolutionary National Assembly
- Total of 10 women – nominated by parties (not elected)
- One of them Alice Masaryková (gave up her seat in 1919)
- Women of various classes
- The suffrage for women granted by the Constitution in 1920
- Equality of all citizens regardless of origin and sex
- Voting right for all citizens over 21 (the Chamber of Deputies) and 26 (the Senate)
- Between 1920-1938:
 - total of **29 women in the Chamber** of Deputies and **16 in the Senate**.

CZECHOSLOVAKIA

- Female politicians founded an association called Women's National Council (Ženská národní rada)
- Very successful and influential advisory body, broad coalition of women from various parties and institutions
- Chaired by Plamínková (between 1923 and 1942), after renewed the second world war under leadership of Milada Horáková
- Only after the second war, women in the presidency of the parliament (1946) and appointed minister (1947, Ludmila Jankovcová, minister of industry)
- After 1948 the gender issue considered to be irrelevant, ideology of equality, candidates chosen by the leadership of the Communist Party



CZECH STRUGGLE FOR FEMALE SUFFRAGE

- Very restrained movement
- No violent actions
- No radical actions (as in UK or USA, different contexts)
- Given by the context: no inherent political conflict with men, the main goal was national
- Gradual development
- Key factor: the foundation of a new independent state

CONCLUSIONS

- What are the main arguments for and against women's suffrage
- Do we see analogies today?
- The main ideologies behind the political rights of women
- Intersectionality
- Three waves of suffrage
- Individual differences across states (see literature)
- Can we talk about democracy?