

WOMEN OF EUROPE  
supplements



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*Women  
in the French Revolution*

*Bibliography*



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WOMEN IN THE FRENCH REVOLUTION (1789)

Bibliography

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The celebration of the bicentennial of the French Revolution was required to draw historians' attention to the role played by women in the French Revolution.

The histories written by men often hide women in dark folds, erase them, or are unaware of their presence. This research is an attempt to give women their rightful place in History.

Fausta Deshormes la Valle

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## FOREWORD

No other period of France's history is as controversial as the 1789 Revolution. It was and still is controversial. One need only think of the recent bicentennial celebration and the polemics that ensued to be convinced of this. It is doubtless because we still feel its effects, like those of a trajectory that has not ended and is perpetuated even today by the issues of human rights (a term to be preferred over the more restrictive "Rights of Man", since it embraces both women and men) and freedom, which are basic legal principles in Europe's democracies. The French Revolution will have, among other things, taught the world's peoples that it is not enough to conquer freedom. Years of rupture are necessary to learn how to live together.

The notions of rights and freedom born of the revolutionary torment triggered a mechanism of self-perception, i.e., that the individual is a person belonging to a gender, a sex. Consequently, women are seen as demanding the rights that are specific to their persons, to their functions, and the places they want to occupy in the emerging new society. Actually, women rapidly served as alibis, then, accused of "abusing" freedom, they became the true victims of the revolutionary tragedy, for they won, then lost, all rights as soon as they had been freed of the bondage of the former regime, under which they had nevertheless made some gains. After that, they were put in a position of total dependence on their husbands, who, having overthrown a king, would set up an even more restrictive empire for women.

In 1989 it was interesting to draw the parallels that existed between the French Revolution of 1789 and the end of our century, especially those revealed by an analysis of the differences in law for men and women. Olympe de Gouges' Declaration of Women's Rights (1791) wanted to spark a revolutionary questioning of society. When this period is examined 200 years later we see that a *social history of women since the Revolution* is still lacking.

To this end we have tried to provide investigators of both sexes with a lengthy bibliography (close to 1,000 references) of works concerning above all the social history of women from the *ancien régime* to the Empire. In this way we show that History with a capital H turned its glance first of all towards those women who hated the Revolution and neglected the women who served the Revolution's ideals. Far from writing a complementary history, we have chosen to make our modest contribution by proposing a large compilation of studies, theses and works concerning the Revolution and its general history.

The late date of this publication is deliberate. We had to wait for the publication of some 1,000 works between 1986 and 1990 and the proceedings of the eight European seminars devoted to this subject if our bibliography was to be worthwhile.

Our aim is thus not to analyse the consequences for Europe of the movements born of the French Revolution, but, on the contrary, to draw attention, as we did in Women and Music (Supplement N° 22 of Women of Europe), to the place and role of women in history. We have emphasised the works concerning feminism and politics, the arts and culture, morals and society and religious life. In doing so, we hope to raise interest among European researchers so as to produce new studies, notably studies on the contributions made by the women of the French Revolution to Europe. We hope that this bibliography will help all those who wish to delve more deeply into one of the most troubled periods in the history of a people and its conquest of human rights.

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### THE JUDGMENT OF HISTORY

We possess close to 1,500 documents written by witnesses of the French Revolution. Few of them concerned women, especially since the 17,500 victims of the guillotine--officially, 166 of them were women--did not always have the time to write their memoirs and their last letters did not always reach their destinations. This is why we had to rejoice to have the memoirs of Mme Roland who, in judging her epoch, wrote, "*Everything is drama, novel, enigma in this still revolutionary existence.*" How, then, can we not be surprised by the contradictions that we find, especially in the writings of those who verily give testimony about the history that they lived?

The first historians of the French Revolution seized these documents steeped in impassioned judgments and the testimony (sometimes 70 years later, at the dawn of the 1848 revolution) of those who took part in the 1789 Revolution and took from them everything that might serve their own ideals or political leanings.

Actually, in the time of Michelet--one of the major historians of the French Revolution--two readings of the events overlapped, due to the birth of the scientific analysis of the documents and the psychological interpretation of the facts. "*We knew everything, we did not know, we wanted to explain everything, to guess everything, deep causes were seen even in indifferent things,*" Michelet wrote. It is thus not surprising that this epic inspired the romantic historians of the Restoration and July Monarchy. All of them expressed in their works either obvious political hostility, as did Burke and Taine, counter-revolutionary historians who execrated "the crowds of brigands, thieves, assassins, the dregs of the population" and everything that they represented, or Mortimer-Ternaux, who treated the Revolution from the standpoint of an aristocrat in 1792 who remembered only the Terror and its exactions. The French Revolution was too close to be useful in shedding light on the immediate future of France.

Why did Michelet publish the first two volumes of his history of the revolution in 1847? Why did Lamartine publish his *Histoire des Girondins* that same year? Why did Louis Blanc publish the first volume of his history of the Revolution and Alphonse Esquiros publish in 1848 his *Histoire des Montagnards*? Because France was on the eve of the 1848 revolution and these historians were not merely writing in the fabric of the history of politics or events, they had a presentiment of the sombre destiny of a people who, in forgetting its past, was hiding its scars.

In writing the history of the 1789 Revolution under the weight of the events of 1847, the historians who were witnesses of their time painted this new revolution heading to its inevitable doom from the vantage point of political history only, for until then the French Revolution had never inspired a study of morals or standards of behaviour. As for the rest, Balzac, in his preface to *The Human Comedy*, made this reproach in 1848, for the real revolutionary driving force of 1789--the mob and the populace, composed mainly of women, and their tragedy and humanity--was left almost completely aside. Who stormed the Bastille? "*The people, the whole people*," Michelet would reply. The majority of this people, likened by Taine to a "beast sprawling on a crimson carpet," consisted of desperate women. It is remarkable that, historically, the notion of crowds and masses has irremediably been associated with women, even though men were the ones who fired the first shots on those days.

Yet of what were the crowds that marched on Versailles and overthrew the monarchy made up? Mostly women. Who led them? The women of the market district (la Halle). On 20 June 1791, after the king's flight, the women declared, "*Women were the ones who brought the king back to Paris and men were the ones who let him escape*". Were women indeed the vectors of the revolutionary uprising of the people? Yes! This is unquestionable. Michelet, who admired women and sometimes exalted their virtues or courage, understood their powerful motivations. "*Women were in the forward ranks of our revolution*," he wrote. "*We should not be surprised at this; they suffered more. The greatest adversities are ferocious, they strike the weak hardest; they mistreat children and women much more than they do men.*"

Despite this, few women were remembered by history, although much was written about their roles in the Revolution and their impassioned rages. Sublime or fishwife, heroines or "crossroads Venuses", furies or hysterical individuals, while they were undoubtedly all this, they were also mothers and wives who suffered from being women under the *ancien régime* (old regime).

The Revolution, we have said, was a romantic epic and it is certain that women exacerbated the pens of the 19th-century historians to the confines of legend, to the point that, in relegating women to the anecdotes of history, the historians turned women into victims of the Revolution and victims of History in alternation.

What of the sketchy social justice conquered at the price of much blood would remain under the Directory? Nothing, or almost nothing! The major lesson to be remembered is that these women attempted to conduct the women's revolution alone. The history of men will never forgive them this.

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#### WOMEN AND HISTORY

Let us then read history. Mirabeau, wanting to offer the throne to the Duke of Orleans, fomented trouble and used the Duke's money to pay the troublemakers whom Choderlos de Laclos, the Duke's grey eminence, recruited at Palais-Royal. "Twenty-five *louis*," Mirabeau used to say, "will get you a very nice riot." While suggesting to the French guards that they go



fetch the King at Versailles and bring him back to Paris, they had the idea of paralysing the flow of food supplies to Paris for two days before setting the women on Versailles. After all, the soldiers would not fire on women. Louis XVI himself would meet the insistence of Monsieur de Narbonne and the Duke of Guiche, who wanted to call out the guard, with cries of "Come, come! orders of war against women? Are you mocking me?"

On Monday, 5 October 1789, five to six thousand women marched on Versailles, with the women of la Halle leading the way. Behind them came the men, with the youngest disguised as women. Covered with mud, soaked by the rain and sweat, worn out, drunk, most of these coarse women shrieked threats at Marie Antoinette. Actually, between 100 and 150 furies made history. Led by Maillard, the women of Pelican Street and *les Porcherons* insulted the bourgeois ladies, devout women, the women torn from their husbands' arms or housewives recruited by force when they were not struck or enrolled by the threat of having their hair cut off. The women packed before the royal palace flirted with the soldiers of the Flanders Regiment. An unknown woman distributed *écus* and gold *louis*. A horse felled in the square (*place des Armes*) was immediately cut up by these poor, starving women.

A large number of women, joined by men armed with some 700 muskets that the women ringleaders had stolen from the town hall's arms stores, picks, axes, hooks and iron bars, swarmed into the national assembly, which was housed at the time in the *Hôtel des Menus-Plaisirs*. The Deputies strove to calm the women who pushed them about, kissed them, insulted them, took off their dresses to dry them, lay down on the benches, sang or brayed "Down with the cloth/church party, not so many speeches, bread, meat at six sols!"

Taine depicted them as an army of "*laundresses, beggars, barefoot women, coarse women solicited for several days with the promise of silver!*" As for the men, they were vagabonds, criminals, the dregs of the *Faubourg Saint-Antoine* neighbourhood, some, according to Count de Fersen, were Swiss and Germans. Many sources (about 400) also indicate that many of the men were disguised as women to discredit them.

Finally, around six o'clock, the king received a delegation of five or six representatives of the "fishwives" led by Louise Chabry, a worker in sculpture and obviously endowed with sensitivity who definitely did not belong to their "guild" for she felt "ill at ease" when she was introduced to the king. The king served them wine and heard them out. Louise Chabry asked the king for that which all the women of the kingdom were clamouring, bread and food for the populace, while Louison and Rosalie, fish merchants at Saint Paul's market, shrieked their demand for Marie-Antoinette's head. The other women, who were few in comparison with the fish wives, behaved completely differently.

If Burke clothes in public opprobrium the women at Versailles in October 1789, he obviously forgot that these women were driven by a spontaneity engendered by the miserable conditions of their lives. In no case did they wish for anything during the days at Versailles other than to bring back the most precious of objects to Paris, namely, bread. Had they not gone to fetch it from the very King, Queen and Crown Prince, "the baker, bakeress and baker's boy"? Yet, during the celebrations held on 10 August 1793 an arc of triumph would be set up in honour of the "heroines" of October.

Here, too, we must destroy one of the many legends of which women were the main victims. Those who distinguished themselves in the riots were neither in rags nor slovenly, as history has too often suggested. Witnesses of the marchers of 5 October 1789 saw "well-dressed gentlewomen", "women wearing hats" according to Hardy, who added, in describing the women massed in the Assembly at Versailles, "this strange spectacle was made even stranger by the dress of several of them who, while wearing rather elegant women's clothing, had hung hunting knives and half-sabres along their skirts". The same day the women forced the beadle of Saint Margaret's church in Faubourg Saint-Antoine to sound the tocsin. His attention was caught by a well-dressed woman "who did not seem a commoner". Six women were chosen to give their respects to the king and, according to the Marquis de Paroy, "two of them were rather handsome". This does not mean that the others were "slovenly", "in rags" or, as Taine asserts, "the capital seemed to have been given up to the lowest of plebians, bandits, vagabonds who were in tatters, almost naked", for eyewitnesses of the "coarse clothing of the men and women of the populace" were referring more to the fabric of which they were made, for lack of means, than their condition or "rag cut".

During the food riots of 1793 a report of the Arsenal's commissar mentioned "a woman who was not bad...wearing a negligé (dress) of blue cloth with a running design, a short, black taffeta cape and a gold watch on a silver chain." Yet Agnès Bernard was a "fishwife" at the central market. In any event, of the 1,683 arrests made after the 11 Paris riots that occurred from 1775 to 1795, none of the 148 women who were arrested fit the description given by Burke, "all the unspeakable abominations of the furies of Hell incarnated in the fallen form of the most debased women." The descriptions of women, their clothing and their behaviour, including that of the populace--'the rabble', as Taine put it--most harshly and unjustly discredited the revolutionary mobs, especially the women. Despite evidence to the contrary, the wealth of testimony and, above all, police reports, "bad habits," the historian George Rudé wrote, "are tenacious and the general historian is only too inclined to make up for his shortcomings by using a convenient, it is true, vocabulary that has been consecrated by tradition but is nevertheless misleading and rather incorrect."

On the occasion of the 1789 Estates-General women prepared some 30 files of grievances and complaints in which they expressed their demands, often anonymously and in highly varied styles, and denounced the condition of women. They asked for the right to vote, to divorce, and to have their own representatives, but mainly stressed their living conditions and the suffering they had to endure.

The pamphlet "La Lettre au Roi" reveals the real motive behind the Revolution - hunger: "Your Highness, our latest troubles should be attributed to the high cost of bread". And this is plain to see: at that time Paris harboured more than 70,000 people without work, and a 4-pound loaf of bread cost 12 sous on 8 November 1788, 13 sous on the 28th, 14 sous on 11 December, and 14.5 sous in February 1789. It remained at this price until the fall of the Bastille. A worker earned between 18 and 20, a woman between 10 and 15 sous a day. The price of bread was the women's main demand for, despite token decreases of 1, then 2 sous, a loaf of bread cost between 40 to 80% of a woman's wages.

Men lost time waiting in long lines and they blamed the women says George Rudé, quoting Hardy's journal: "to have bread, the more hurried men tried to push the women away and even bullied them to be first in line." The women could no longer bear these privations, and to compound their problems there was no fuel left that year and the winter of '88/89 was extremely bitter.

Each time there was a demonstration for more bread or lower prices, women led the ranks, and they were always the first targets of the inevitable repression. Doctors noted a large number of medical disorders resulting from the intense fear of the times, especially among children and women. There was an increase in miscarriages.

At the end of the 18th century, 16 to 18% of the French population lived in cities, and the population of Paris alone increased by 14,000 new arrivals each year (as an indication there were 28 million French at the time, compared with 9 million in England, and 7 million Russians). There were roughly 20 million peasants in France, half of them women. Eighty percent of the population were illiterate, and of the other 20%, it should be noted that women were among the most "cultivated". Some 20,000 water carriers (women and men) wended their way through 900 streets among 200,000 cats and as many dogs. Each year the French consumed an average of 122 liters of wine per person, but ate three times less bread than the English. But this was all they had to eat, and unfortunately the situation was not new. More than 300 revolts preceded the Revolution. In Grenoble on 7 June 1788, called "tile day" because angry women hurled tiles at garrisoned troops, Stendhal heard an old woman say "I'm in revolt"; she was hungry. And the little money the French had left became worthless with the appearance, in November 1789, of bank notes or "assignats" that were exchanged at the rate of 50 pounds of money for 100 pounds of assignats.

Once Louis XVI abolished censorship, Axel de Fersen wrote to his father: *"All minds are in ferment. And all people talk about is the constitution. Now women are getting involved, and you know as well as I do the influence they have in this country."*

It is true that insurrectional and popular movements rallied a large part of the classes which we now call disadvantaged. As a result women, who have always been among the least advantaged of society, were at the heart of movements that often degenerated into street fights. Very few women, however, actually led uprisings.

We now have the three lists of the Victorious of the Bastille ("*Vainqueurs de la Bastille*") that were approved by the Constitutional Assembly in 1790. These lists contain the names of those whose active participation in the storming of the Bastille could be proven. One list—drawn up by Stanislas Maillard, secretary of the Victorious—contains the names, addresses and professions of 662 participants; there is only one woman: Marie Charpentier, wife of Hanserne, laundress from the parish of St. Hippolyte in the Faubourg St. Marcel. Michelet also wrote of another woman who, dressed as a man, would later become an artillery captain, but we find no trace of her in these lists. Many of the victims were women and children. Working behind the lines, they ensured the constant supply of food and arms.

We know neither the names of the rioters nor the number of dead in the uprising of 28 April 1789, known as the Réveillon Affair, which preceded the Bastille. Historians have never agreed on the exact number, which varied from 25 to 900 dead. On the other hand, there is no longer any doubt about the rôle of agitators, most likely in the pay of the Duke of Orleans. On this day, in the Faubourg St. Antoine, rue de Montreuil, a crowd attacked the Réveillon wallpaper factory. The origin of this riot is generally attributed to the price of bread, but the Duchess of Orleans was cheered as she went by while other nobles were mistreated and robbed. In any case, we have the name of just one woman, Marie-Jeanne Trumeau, who was recognised as one of the leaders and condemned to be hanged at the Place de la Grève. She was pardoned because she was pregnant.

Among those who participated in the attack of 10 August 1789, 90 Federates and close to 300 Parisian *sectionnaires* were killed or wounded. There were only 3 women among them, including Louise-Reine Audu, who was also listed as participating in the events of 5 October. 600 Swiss soldiers lost their lives in one day. Nevertheless, we should not conclude that women were exempt from combat, that they led no revolts or that they were passive witnesses to the Revolution. Who could believe it was possible to escape the legitimate anger of the fishwives of the Halle? And imagine trying to curb the simmering hatred of 70,000 prostitutes (without counting those who gave in to the "promiscuity" of the times, food had to be found one way or another). And what about the women out of work, the poor and diseased, the beggars and battered women? And even when we deplore the acts of vandalism and cruelty, we also know that women, through their devoted efforts, saved many more lives than they took.

They hid priests who refused to swear fealty to the Republic, fed armies, all the armies - Royalists, Federates, and Catholics. In their battle cries and in their acts they incited the crowds to loot and murder, but the atrocities attributed to women are so rare that history remembers them. In Montauban the women reached the limits of cruelty, but this was the sole case in the whole Revolution. We shall come back to this later.

It is also surprising to see how history and legend intertwine when you speak about revolutionary women. Théroigne de Méricourt is undoubtedly the sorriest example, with all due deference to Baudelaire. The famous "Amazon" was not at the Bastille as the Goncourt brothers wrote, nor was she at the Invalides as Lamartine claimed. It is unlikely she participated in the march on Versailles, and it is not certain, despite Michelet, that she played any rôle whatsoever in the events of October, which she always denied. Eccentric and outspoken, she attracted many enemies, but was mainly reviled by Royalist newspapers, like most of the other women patriots.

The murder of the journalist Suleau (10 August 1789), who had covered her with sarcasm in the *Actes des Apôtres* newspaper, was less a revolutionary act, as Théroigne de Méricourt constantly preached, than one of personal reprisal. Her deed was not so much an example of "female hysteria" as it was the product of one woman's deranged mind. Her political influence was restricted to founding the *Club des amies de la Loi* (Club of Women Friends of the Law), which never had more than 12 members. Théroigne de Méricourt died insane. More than anything, she was a victim of the counter-revolution and a victim of History's injustice.

She was dismissed as a hysteric, like so many other women. In itself this is not surprising, for at the time this psychic manifestation was still considered an excess of morbid feminine eroticism. Notwithstanding, Michelet and Carlyle devoted reams of paper to the excesses of feverish male hysterics.

On 10 August 1792, Claire Lacombe, an actress who arrived in Paris from the French provinces in 1792, and Pauline Léon, former chocolate-maker, received civic laurels, like Théroigne, for their participation in the fall of the Tuileries. In May 1793 these women founded the *Société Républicaines-Révolutionnaires* (Society of Revolutionary Republican Women), the most famous women's revolutionary club of the time. With Pauline Léon as its president, the club installed itself in the library of the Jacobins Club, and adopted strict rules of procedure. The Revolutionary Republicans' primary mission was to foil the aims of the republic's enemies. Their power was most evident in the streets. Participating in

people's demonstrations that led to the fall of the Girondins, these ardent partisans of the Jacobins paraded in the streets wearing red bonnets and pantaloons, harassing the Girondins, and silencing them in the galleries of the National Convention and public meetings.

On 2 June the Jacobins, with the crowd's assistance, threw the 29 Girondin Deputies out of the National Convention. The Revolutionary Republicans guarded the entry so that no members could leave to protest the act.

The Girondins considered these women to be despicable characters. In his memoirs, Buzot described them as pariahs, women of the streets, "*female monsters with all the cruelty of weakness and all the vices of their sex*".

In July and August, the Revolutionary Republicans were accepted on the councils of the Parisian sections. They even managed to pass a law, after vigorous campaigning, that obliged women to wear the revolutionary cockade in public. Like Théroigne, Claire Lecombe called for the right to bear arms. Her frequent interventions in Jacobins Club debates and at the National Assembly earned the wrath of at least one member, who said that this woman meddled in everything. Another was convinced she was an agent of the counter-revolution. Like Constance Evrard (23 years old, cook, *Club des Cordeliers*), who was arrested on 17 July 1791 for insulting the wife of a National Guard militiaman who had participated in the Champ-de-Mars massacre, these women were considered dangerous because they were outspoken. The Revolution, after giving women the right to speak, would soon silence them.

In 1793, there was only one vote against outlawing women's clubs, which were considered to be dangerous for the republic. The deputies were asked three questions:

- Should assemblies of women be allowed in Paris?
- Should women be allowed to exercise political rights and take an active part in the affairs of State?
- Should they be allowed to deliberate in political associations or popular societies?

The Convention members replied with a resounding "no", thus sealing the "political death" of women as the Civil Code was preparing their "civic death".

The women did not take long to react. Wearing their famous red bonnets, a delegation led by Claire Lecombe went before the Paris Council. However, the Council president, Pierre Chaumette, denounced them saying: "*It is horrible--unnatural--for a woman to want to become a man...Since when has it been decent for women to abandon their pious household tasks and their children's cradles, to meet in public places yelling from the galleries?*"

*"Impudent women who want to turn themselves into men, don't you have enough already? What more do you want? Your despotism is the only force we cannot resist, for it is the despotism of love, thus the work of nature. In the name of nature itself, stay as you are. Instead of envying our perilous, busy lives, you should be content to help us forget all this at home in our families, where we can rest our eyes with the enchanting sight of our children made happy through your cares."*

Fierce rhetoric when you know the fate of the women to whom he preached. Mme Roland and Olympe de Gouges were already dead; Claire Lecombe and Pauline Léon had no choice but to give up their struggle if they did not want to follow in their steps. And this is what they did. For a time the women of the provincial clubs continued to take care of the poor, the sick and the needy, but only passively, as all initiatives were discouraged. The Terror executed blindly.

Robespierre's "virtuous republic" cleared the situation up by clearing people out. Prostitutes were banned from the streets of Paris, women were sent back to their homes, and only a few exceptions escaped this ostracism from public life: all over France the goddesses of Reason, named for the new state religion, became the priestesses of the new "cult of the Supreme Being". This period was also hallowed in Fabre Eglantine's revolutionary calendar.

Nonetheless, during a *décadaire* ("decimal") celebration in Castres, most likely after the arrest of Louis XVI (10 August 1791), the crowd gathered before the statue of the Republic sang the melody "Garrissou de Marianno" written by the shoemaker-troubadour Guillaume Lavabre. A statue so massive it was nicknamed "la" (feminine pronoun) "Marianno" (masculine suffix), it became the allegory of the First Republic, in the form of a woman.

The first Goddess of Reason at the first celebration of the Revolution, held in Notre Dame cathedral, was the famous actress Mademoiselle Maillard. She was dressed in white, with a long blue cape and the bonnet of liberty.

To the refrain of "*Ca ira*" and the "*Marseillaise*", she was carried in procession and installed on the throne. In "*Les Femmes de la Révolution*", Michelet described the ceremony as "*chaste ceremony, sad, dry, and boring.*" The women's revolution was over.

#### ORIGINS OF THE FEMINIST MOVEMENT<sup>1</sup>

It is not just mere chance that the first enthusiasm for Emile (J.J. Rousseau) was contemporary with the birth and childhood of the heroes of the revolution, Robespierre, Danton, Desmoulins and others. The Social Contract was also read by their mothers and Rousseau had thus shown them the disdain for maternity demonstrated throughout the 18th century. They instilled in their children the love of liberty and equality: "*All men are born free...Renouncing man's liberty is tantamount to renouncing his humanity, his rights to humanity, and even his duties...*" These pages of Rousseau, like the writings of Voltaire and the Encyclopaedists Diderot and D'Alembert, were even closer to the souls of women because they carried the seeds of a reform in their condition, even though Voltaire and Montesquieu were not particularly feminist and their influence should not be exaggerated.

<sup>1</sup>Even though the term "feminism", created in 1837, did not exist at the time, we shall use it here with its current meaning.

It is no less true, however, that, saturated with pleasure, the dominant classes yearned for other philosophies. Likewise the working class, plunged in the deepest misery, found in these philosophers the first fruits of the cultural revolution that would later mature into the torment of the revolution. The theories of the thinkers and the dreams of the philosophers spoke to the emotions, "*such as had never been done before,*" wrote Lily Braun. And the women became their most ardent partisans. This was the time of "revolutionary romanticism" which, for the women of the Revolution, exalted the Antique tragedy in a mixture of nature and liberty, death and terror.

Manon Philipon, the future Mme Roland, not only read Collin's history of Rome, she constantly read and reread Plutarch. Sophie de Grouchy, Marquise de Condorcet, had read the Meditations of Marcus Aurelius.

The women of the revolution learned about collective action in the riots and revolts. They also learned how to "think in terms of social movements" according to Sheila Rowbothan, and to defend their sex as a disadvantaged group and no longer as an individual destiny.

Another influence, American this time, also stamped the character of the budding feminist movement. The women of America kindled the resistance to slavery—a movement of which Olympe de Gouges was also a most vehement supporter—and also became involved in movements against British sovereignty. Mercy Otis Warren, the sister of James Otis (an American revolutionary), even appealed to leaders such as Washington for the Colonies' independence at a time when they were not yet advocating separation from England.

Mercy Otis was also a close friend of Thomas Jefferson's and the Declaration of Independence shows traces of her influence. Abigail Smith Adams (1744-1818), a feminist and patriot and wife of the second President of the United States, was with Mercy one of the first women to demand equality of the sexes.

In 1776, while the Constitutional Congress was deliberating, Abigail wrote to her husband: "*If the future Constitution does not pay particular attention to women, we are ready to revolt, and we shall not consider ourselves obliged to obey laws that do not give us a voice and a representative.*"

As a consequence schools were opened to women, and only two states—New Jersey and Virginia—gave them the right to vote. This legal measure made quite a bit of noise in France, to the point of inflaming "feminist" enthusiasm.

In 1786 a *Lycee* was opened for women; a small number of men also enrolled, and the number of students soon grew to 700. The last Encyclopaedists gave lessons which quickly degenerated into violent diatribes. Under the leadership of Condorcet and La Harpe, who appeared wearing the phrygian bonnet, the students soon became actors in the drama played out in the streets. Mme Roland and the Marquise de Condorcet were among the group. In founding the *Lycée*, women's right to education was recognised. They then asked the National Assembly for the State to recognise this right. The 1789 Constitution took this into account, and Talleyrand, rapporteur for reorganizing public education, devoted a paragraph to the question of education and the teaching of women. He took the precaution of limiting

their culture to the minimum, arguing that nature had created women for domestic life with their children, and it would be a serious error to violate any natural law. The National Assembly decided to allow girls to go to school until 8 years of age only; after that their education would be their parents' responsibility. In 1793 all children between 5 and 12 would be raised in "homes of equality". These preoccupations, however, were actually the fruit of a handful of women intellectuals who had just discovered politics and were absorbed in what was described as "intellectual enjoyments".

The case was quite different for working class women, who were living in abject poverty. Twenty years after the revolution there were some 50,000 beggars in France; and in 10 years of revolution Louis Blanc counted 1½ million. In Paris, out of 680,000 inhabitants there were 116,000 beggars in prisons, and women beggars were imprisoned and whipped.

Scurvy and dysentery soon took the place of misery and hate, killing great numbers of children. Another plague then settled in and grew in frightening proportions: prostitution. F. Havel estimated in 1784 that there were 70,000 prostitutes in Paris. Texts describing the situation more often were published anonymously. In the *Pauvre Javotte* Motion (a grievance dossier), the young girl was unable to find an honest job and described her fall in heart-wrenching terms.

And, in one of many contradictions of the time, women were criticised for making easy money through prostitution, even leading men into marriage for lucrative purposes. Women called for the restoration of women's professions, and in a petition to the king, they promised to employ "neither the compass nor the T-square" because, they said, "we want a job, not to usurp men's authority, but to be able to earn a living." Women were also influential in suppressing, in 1791, the professions that excluded them.

In late 1792, a new group of women, more radical and feminist, took up the flame. Women of popular classes now demanded a voice in current political issues, especially those concerning means of subsistence. In February 1793 they organized riots against the abusive prices of sugar, candles and coffee and invaded grocery and candle merchants' shops throughout the city. The women of this time were far from defending any privileges - they did not have any! If they sparked uprisings, it is because the most effective force behind a revolt is a mixture of despair, shame, and hate which have been contained and repressed for too long a time.

The Revolution's "feminist" movement does not seem to have brought any results, which is true in France. It continued, however, in silence and attracted disciples in many countries of Europe. The most significant reaction came from England, in a book written by Mary Wollstonecraft. In 1792, Mary Wollstonecraft (1759-1797), feminist and writer (novels, translations, historical documents, children's books and anthologies), wrote the *first feminist manifesto*, Vindication of the Rights of Women. This book followed her 1790 work on the Defence of Human Rights, written in response to Burke's Reflections on the French Revolution. This is what she had to say about human rights: "*Man's birthright, ... is a degree of civil and religious liberty insofar as it is compatible with the freedom of any other individual to whom he is linked by the social contract...*"



In her writings on women's rights she developed the same theme: "*(there can be no society among unequals, and a) state of equality for all mankind must exist without any differences between sexes.*" She shared this idea of equality with another Englishwoman, Catherine Macaulay, author of Letters on Education. Mary took up the opinions developed by Catherine in her pamphlet in which she also rendered homage to her inspirer. The influence of Rousseau's Confessions and Emile, which she read during a stay in Ireland, should also be mentioned.

In 1792, Mary left England to seek in France the egalitarian society she dreamed of, but the Terror was heartless towards free-thinkers and she was forced into isolation in order to avoid arrest. Mary died one month after the birth of her daughter, Mary Godwin, who before her marriage to the poet Shelley, became famous for writing Frankenstein at the age of 16.

In Germany, Theodor von Hippel wrote Ueber die buergerliche Verbesserung der Weiber (On the Civic Improvement of Women), which appeared the same year as Mary Wollstonecraft's work, in 1792. In Italy, Giulia and Mariantonia Carafa, and Luisa Molina Sanfelice wrote feminist papers. But the Jacobin Marquise Eleonora Fonseca Pimentel was Italy's foremost proponent of the revolution, and in Assisi in 1794 Rosa California wrote a summary of the rights of women. History then closed the door on the feminist movement and these courageous women to whom humanity was also indebted for being the pioneers of human rights through the awareness they incited.

#### WOMEN AND POLITICAL "FEMINISM"

When the women of Paris mingled with the rioting mobs and the "knitters" ("*tricoteuses*") harangued the deputies from the galleries of the Convention, one should not think that the Revolution was born in the cultural salons, even though it did capture the political inclinations of some women, such as Mme Roland and Mme de Staël, who were caught up in the ideas of the time and the passion for change. It is not surprising that the women of the bourgeoisie and the nobility knew nothing about the straits in which the common women lived. They never knew each other before the Revolution, nor did they speak together, and obviously emancipation did not mean the same thing for all classes. In the salons, they spoke of education and culture - educating the elite that is. But the common women asked for much more than political rights; they wanted nothing less than the right to live. Mme de Staël showed very little interest in the plight of her sex, as she was above all that. For her part, Mme Roland, the "muse" of the Girondins, although admirably courageous, was a bad politician with confused ideas in this realm. She had no direct influence on the "feminist" movement, from which she took a considerable distance.

One of the Revolution's major pre-feminist figures was to become its first organizer. Thanks to Olympe de Gouges, a whole nation became aware that a woman's aspirations were common to all classes, bourgeois and common women. She was the first to call for "political rights" for women, something more than the "political voice" they shyly obtained during the Revolution.

Condorcet spoke of "human" rights, a term we still use today: "*Either no individual of the human species has any true rights or they all have the same, and he who votes against the rights of another - of any religion, colour, or sex - has henceforth denied his own.*" In 1787 he even took an open stance on the equality of the sexes in his "*Lettres d'un bourgeois de New Haven*" ("Letters from a Bourgeois of New Haven"). In 1790 he took an even more radical approach in his "*Sur l'admission des femmes au droit de cité*" ("On the Acceptance of Women"). Had Olympe heard him speak? Olympe's real name was Marie Gouze, the daughter of a humble bourgeois family of Montauban. Unhappily married, Olympe escaped to Paris, where despite her sketchy education, her beauty and brilliant wit made her the toast of Parisian society of the time.

She had a fairly tumultuous sentimental life before becoming an ardent "feminist" and putting her rich imagination to the service of dramatic literature. Despite worthy attempts, she had little success, with the possible exception of the play performed on the anniversary of the death of Mirabeau at the Italian Theatre, the "*Ombre de Mirabeau aux Champs-Élysées*" ("The Shadow of Mirabeau in the Elysian Fields").

Influenced by the progress of the Revolution, she soon abandoned her theatrical attempts and her former life. "*I am burning,*" she wrote "*to work for the welfare of all.*" And this she did, with all her energy. The misery of the people and the members of her sex, which she knew from personal experience, gave her an extraordinary force. She astounded her contemporaries with the wealth of her ideas and the strength of her words.

Even the National Assembly itself, although hardly inclined to pay attention to women, listened, surprised by this brilliant orator, and often heeded her practical advice. In all her writings and speeches, the character of women is expressed in its most vivid colours: "*Let's not talk about my sex. Women are just as capable of generosity and heroism, the Revolution has proved it so on many occasions.*" "*Until something is done to elevate women's minds, and until men become open-minded enough to seriously deal with the glory of women, the State can never prosper.*" In all her works - "Urgent notice to the Convention", the "National Pact" addressed to the National Assembly, or her pamphlet "Union, Courage, Surveillance, and the Republic is saved!" - Olympe couples vibrant language with a good deal of modesty and reserve. For she was against violence, and while she rallied people to combat she never called for murder or looting. "*You can see the most promising youth of our general land flying towards its borders to shed their pure and innocent blood. And, by God, what for? For the fatherland, not to gratify your selfish passions and to place another tyrant on the throne!*" Was she thinking here of Marat, whom she qualified as a "freak of humanity"?

She laboured to solve the problem of famine. Through public appeal and her own courageous example she persuaded a number of women to donate their finery to the State. She was also a humanist; she gave a stirring account of the misery in the Hospice St Denis and, aware of the humiliations involved in begging, she called for public welfare funds and State workshops to be organized for the poor. Some of her ideas were actually given shape.

In her "Address to Women", she proclaimed "*Isn't it time for the revolution to begin for us women as well?*" But when the 1789 Declaration of the Rights of Man became the preamble of the Constitution in 1791, Olympe de Gouges wrote her own declaration, filling in the gaps of the Declaration of the Rights of Man, drawing inspiration from its style and pointing out its shortcomings. She demanded equal rights and responsibilities for women before the law and in all other circumstances of public and private life.

Even though many brochures were printed, both in favour and against Olympe's demands, her declaration has been rarely printed since then, and history has retained only an extract of article 10: women have the right to ascend the gallows; they must also have the right to ascend to the tribunes.

Here is a translation of the full text:

## DECLARATION OF THE RIGHTS OF WOMEN

DEDICATED TO THE QUEEN

1791

### Article 1

*Women are born free and are man's equal in law. Social distinctions can be founded solely on common utility.*

### Article 2

*The aim of all political associations is to conserve the natural and indefeasible rights of woman and man; these rights are liberty, property, safety and especially resistance to oppression.*

### Article 3

*The principle of all sovereignty lies essentially in the nation, which is nothing more than the gathering of woman and man; no body, no individual can exercise an authority that does not expressly emanate from that union.*

### Article 4

*Freedom and justice consist in returning all that belongs to others; as such the exercise of women's natural rights are only limited by the perpetual tyranny of men who oppose these rights; these limits must be reformed by the laws of nature and reason.*

### Article 5

*The laws of nature and reason forbid all actions that are harmful to society; all that is not forbidden by these wise and divine laws cannot be prohibited, and no one can be forced to do what these laws do not ordain.*

Article 6

*The law must be the expression of the general will; all Citizens ("Citoyennes et Citoyens") must agree personally or through their representatives in forming these laws; the law must be the same for everyone: all citizens of both sexes, equal before the law, must also be equally admitted to all public dignities, places and offices, according to their capacity, and without any distinction other than their virtue and their talent.*

Article 7

*No woman can be exempt; she can be accused, arrested and imprisoned in cases determined by law. Women, like men, obey this rigorous law.*

Article 8

*The law must establish only those punishments that are strictly and evidently necessary, and one can be punished solely under a law that was established and proclaimed prior to the crime and legally applied to women.*

Article 9

*Any woman declared guilty is liable to the strict application of the law.*

Article 10

*No one should be harassed for her or his opinion, even the most basic beliefs; women have the right to ascend the gallows; they must also have the right to ascend to the tribune, insofar as their demonstrations do not trouble the public order established by law.*

Article 11

*The free communication of thoughts and opinions is one of women's most precious rights, because this freedom ensures the legitimacy of fathers towards their children. All citizen of the female sex can thus freely say: I am the mother of a child who belongs to you, without any barbarian prejudice forcing her to hide the truth; except in response to abuses of this right in cases determined by law.*

Article 12

*The guarantee of the rights of women and citizens of the female sex means that it must be generally useful to the majority; this guarantee must be instituted for the advantage of all, not only the particular usefulness of those eligible for this right.*

Article 13

*Women and men contribute equally towards maintaining a public army and administrative expenses; women take part in all chores and all difficult tasks; they must thus have the same part in the distribution of posts, offices, responsibilities, dignities and industry.*

Article 14

*Citizens of both sexes have the right to determine by themselves, or through their representatives, the need for public contributions. Citizens of the female sex can only assent to an equal share, not only in revenue, but also in public administration, the right to determine the quotas, base, collection and duration of the tax.*

Article 15

*Women as a group, together with men as a group, have the right to oblige all public agents to render accounts for their administrations.*

Article 16

*Any society in which the guarantee of powers is not ensured or where there is no separation of powers does not have a constitution; its constitution is null and void if the majority of individuals making up the nation have not co-operated in its writing.*

Article 17

*Property belongs to both sexes united or separated; for each sex, property is an inalienable and sacred right; no one can be deprived of it as the true heritage of nature, except in cases where legally registered public necessity so requires, and under the condition of a fair and prior indemnity.*

Another political demand was universal suffrage for women, as the new constitution extended it to men only. Many other demands were published, with little action taken on them; some finding their way to the dustbin when the National Assembly did not even bother to reply to their author.

Olympe was not content to merely write, she also wanted to defend the King and offered to plead in Louis XVI's favour along with the feeble 71-year-old Malesherbes. Olympe summarized the charges against the King as follows: "He was weak; he allowed himself to be misled, he misled us, and he misled himself as well." The Paris Revolution would not pardon Olympe's initiative, and disdained her offer: "Who does she think she is?" they replied, "She would be better off knitting breeches (*"culottes"*) for our brave *sans-culottes!*"

She was arrested on 20 July 1793, imprisoned in the Conciergerie on 28 October, and on 2 November appeared before Fouquier-Tinville's infamous revolutionary tribunal. Five days after the death of Mme Roland, on 3 November, Olympe de Gouges was guillotined for "attempting to pervert the republic with her writings", especially *Les Trois Urnes ou le Salut de la Patrie* ("Three ballot boxes or the Salvation of the Fatherland"). In her farewell letter to her cherished son she wrote "I shall die, my son, victim of my idolatry of my country and its people. Their enemies, beyond the specious mask of republicanism, remorselessly led me to the scaffolds... Farewell my son, when you receive this letter I shall be no more."

In the early days following 10 August 1792, Camille Desmoulins rebelled against her husband's authority: "A husband's power over his wife, the creation of a despotic government, must no longer be preserved. Women must be made to love the republic, and we shall attain this aim only by enabling them to enjoy their rights."

Women, in fact, were pleading for their right to happiness, and the Code replied, inspired by the philosopher Jouffroy: "*But happiness itself deceives us by its insufficiency.*" On 1 April 1792 a deputation of women wearing red bonnets had appeared before the Legislative Assembly, begging the representatives, through the divorce law, to place the "final seal on French liberty".

The idea had been floating around for some time, and that same year the "*Nouveau code conjugal établi sur les bases de la constitution*" ("New marriage code based on the constitution") was published. The author, a revolutionary named Bonneville, wanted to make marriage obligatory even for priests - and this in the name of liberty!

Marriage was a social duty which the State was entitled to require of all citizens. The religious ritual, "a barbaric vestige of centuries of obscurantism", was obviously abolished. Bonneville described his proposed civil ceremony as follows: a great number of weddings were to be celebrated at the same time, on a specified day, dozens at a time before a crowd assembled for the purpose. The civil officer, with one hand on the Constitution, would tell the newlyweds: "Hail Free Citizens! Always bear in mind the law that unites you in legal marriage by bounds that friendship alone and your interests must render indissoluble!" And all the couples would reply: "Long live liberty! Long live the Nation! And shall all good citizens bless our union!"

The Directory drew inspiration from these ideas when it decided that weddings would be celebrated altogether, on a set date, on "decimal" (the Revolutionaries replaced the week by ten-day periods) celebrations where an official could read a speech full of lyrical effusions and brilliant metaphors.

Here are some examples of the speeches pronounced on 10 Floréal, Year VI of the Republic (29 April 1798) on the Feast of the Spouses: "*By the hands of Beauty, the hands of woman, Nature prepared us for happiness; Nature wanted us to freely gather the fruits of happiness and gave us the power to withdraw from the unfortunate beings who cannot offer us happiness.*" "*Newlyweds, have for one another all feelings of friendship.*"

Man, despite his thirst for liberty, had nevertheless not forgotten his "interests": "woman is man's companion in his youth, his friend in mid-life, and his nurse in old age."

It is nonetheless strange to observe how all these nuptial orations never failed to praise the advantages of divorce while recommending to all newlyweds to avoid it. Mary Wollstonecraft was the first woman to qualify marriage as "legal prostitution". What is certain is that a large number of revolutionary women called for the right to divorce by crying Long live Liberty! It is also true that, in order to save their lives, other women divorced their exiled husbands only to re-marry them after the Terror.

On 20 September 1792 a law was voted which allowed divorce not only by mutual consent, but also at the request of one spouse only, on simple claims of incompatibility. "*For example,*" one deputy cried, "*it is incompatibility to have different ideas about the Revolution!*"

The advocates of indissoluble marriage still wavered. Aubert Dubayet dispersed their final hesitations with a classic argument, by telling them: "*But you are only being asked for a theoretical vote, for the possibility to divorce will banish the desire to divorce, its threat will make spouses more patient, more attentive to each other, and divorce will be especially favourable to the happiness of women!*" Her colleague Sédillez held the opposite opinion: "*I believe that, on the contrary, it will be a great misfortune for a woman to be forced to look for a second husband when in losing her first husband she loses, along with her youth, most of her advantages!*"

This cruelly realistic opinion did not prevail and women divorced *en masse*. A letter of 2 Messidor, Year IV (20 June 1796) states, "*The libertine behaviour of women in particular seems authorised and most of the requests for divorce are made by this 'flighty sex' that never ceases to swear eternal fidelity!*"

While women could ask for divorce, their reasons were always specious. During the Revolution it is true that divorce and marriage became a sort of industry that enabled people to capture fortunes and frustrate creditors. They gave rise to genuine courtroom comedies, complete with false witnesses and false family gatherings in which relatives who had been "prevented from attending" were replaced, without their knowledge, by willing friends or "extras" bought for the occasion. Marriages and divorces occurred at such a rate that there were those who contended that there was no longer any reason to prosecute bigamists, who, it was said, had not committed a crime but simply failed to accomplish a simple formality. One Deputy stated that this formality was designed to hide polygamous acts. Nevertheless, divorce on the grounds of incompatibility, mutual consent and if one of the spouses was abandoned for more than two years, thereby putting women and men on equal footing, had become legal in 1792.

Actually, let us ask the real question of History, namely, what contribution did the French Revolution make to women? In response one may consider that from September 1792 they acquired the dignity of free persons, for the institution of divorce enabled them to escape the disastrous consequences of "forced marriages" and domestic slavery. This victory came to a sudden end with the promulgation of the Napoleonic Code in 1804, but if the Revolution had not taken place, feminism as we know it could have neither emerged nor developed. The current emancipation of women is a direct offshoot of their earlier partial emancipation.

#### WOMEN'S CONTRIBUTION TO THE REVOLUTION

By the end of the Revolution women had sized up the conquests yet to be made. They had acquired the experience necessary for the struggles that they had to wage. Women also made a much greater contribution to the Revolution than romantic images tend to depict. However, much more time is needed before a true historical study of women's contributions, not just to the Revolution and the defence of human rights, but the social history of France, can be produced.

An historical study under a feminist spotlight would force us to consider daily life, as women under the *ancien régime* did not have opportunities to make pronouncements in public matters. Such a study would thus tackle the real issues of education, health, work, religion, and wars from the women's standpoint.<sup>2</sup>

The women of the populace had no "foyer" (home), the question of "housewives" (*femmes au foyer*) was not even raised ("foyer" at the time meant "premises to inhabit", i.e., a genuine servitude). What may be said about the existence of associations, their emotional lives, health, hygiene, imagination, or creativity? Far from being confined to a history of women *per se*, such a study should try to embrace the history of society in its entirety through an assessment of the status of women.

For example, if the issue of universal suffrage is considered without including women, as was the case until now, the notion of universal suffrage loses its very meaning. The grounds given for refusing to give women the right to vote were the very reasons that allowed understanding of this right; they are why France was one of the last countries to grant women the right to vote, doing so after World War II and thanks to General de Gaulle, who was not particularly feminist, whereas the 1936 Popular Front, which was an advocate of feminist ideas, did not even raise this issue. (Similar situations may be found in many European countries.)

Health, famine, the ravages of infant mortality, delivery room conditions, hospital conditions, even emotional voids—all direct consequences of the world's many wars—would take on another light if the women of history were given the floor. Why in France, as in the "States of Belgium" (1789-1790), did the female crime rate seem much higher than under the *ancien régime*, and what were the causes? Can we simply content ourselves with pointing to the poverty, lack of support, and solitude?

We know that women were excluded from political militancy. The Revolution itself showed a clearly anti-feminist face. If Chaumette urged wives to devote themselves to their household tasks only, this is merely a reminder of the true social function attributed to women due to the absence of their husbands, who were waging the Revolution, emigrating, being executed, hiding out in another administrative area, hiding or in detention. Women had to assume more and more of the burdens of child-rearing, caring for the elderly, running businesses, working the land, and setting out in the painful search for sustenance. If you bear in mind that 2,408,000 marriages, 10,618,000 births and 9,442,000 deaths were registered in France between 1780 and 1789, it is clear that between their child-rearing and nursing tasks women had little time to spare for revolutionary combat or political militancy.

Marie-Claire Berh, a 39-year-old widow and mother of three, was denounced by the Directory commissioner as "the most dangerous person in the *département*". She was accused of being a plotter, an enemy of the Republic who protected rebellious priests and organized collections for them. Arrested as a public safety measure and transferred to the Temple, in Paris, where she was detained three months, she stated under questioning in January 1789, "*Be informed, citizens, that I have nothing to do with the Revolution. I am looking after my household and my humble interests only.*"

<sup>2</sup>Issues that, it might be added, were raised intelligently, doubtless for the first time from an overall perspective, at the conference on women and the French Revolution held in Toulouse on 12-14 April 1989 (*Les femmes et la Révolution française*, International Colloquium, 12-13-14 April 1989, Toulouse-le-Mirail University).



Women's tasks multiplied as a direct result of the Revolution, particularly as the absence of their menfolk forced them to play an economic and social rôle. "*They took care of the fields and the harvests, trade and business,*" Marie-Sylvie Dupont-Bouchat wrote.<sup>3</sup> At the same time they safeguarded the ecclesiastic heritage that governed births, marriages and burials.

In the absence of their masters, the parish priests' women servants jealously guarded the parish registers and ledgers, refusing to turn them over to the civil authorities. They also saved a great many priests, nuns and monks. In Belgium, the only events in which women took part were the religious riots, such as the one that occurred in Namur in July 1789, when they carried the statue of the Virgin on their shoulders through the streets of the town, despite the ban on the procession.

The women of the Revolution shared the revolutionary ideals of the men, including the republican ideal. A small minority of them even fought alongside the armies. The degree of their involvement in the *Vendée Wars* was much greater (several hundred women enlisted), especially among the "Whites" (Royalists) fleeing before the twelve infernal columns of "Blues" (Republicans) who had organized under the orders of *Turreau* to "exterminate without reserve all individuals, regardless of age or gender, convicted of having participated in the war." Although a genuine genocide, the *Vendée Wars* also revealed the exceptional heroism of women and the strength of their convictions.

Remarkably, these "women of war" never threw off their dependence on their husbands and had to adapt to the worst situations while accomplishing their daily servitude. Anne Quatresols enlisted at the age of 16; Magdeleine Petit-Jean was almost 49 when she went to join the Western Army after losing her 15 children.

In November 1793 the newspaper *L'Echo des Pyrénées* printed an article under the title "*Héroïsme d'une femme soldat*" (Heroism of a woman soldier) lauding Liberté Barrau, who fought alongside her husband and brother in the 2nd battalion of the Tarn. During an attack on a redoubt in which her husband was wounded she carried on the attack, burnt nineteen cartridges, shook off two adversaries and reached the objective. "*Citizen Barrau then went back to her husband, kissed and consoled him, raised him, transported him in a cart and accompanied him to the hospital, where, in giving him all the care that a wife owes a husband, proved that she had not renounced the virtues of her sex, despite have excelled in all the virtues that are not of her sex.*"

As for the "knitters" led by Aspasia and given their name because of their habit of knitting during executions, this attitude definitely does not plead in favour of their sensitivity, but might justify the patriotic duty that these women were expected to carry out by working without a pause for the totally impoverished armies. They may be reproached for the "cruelty" of the "hidings" that the "women flagellants" gave the "bigots" who persisted in attending the services given by refractory priests and the women who refused to wear the blue, white and red cockade.

<sup>3</sup>M.-S. Dupont-Bouchat, *Histoire de la prison en Belgique (XIXe - XXe siècles)*, Louvain-la-Neuve University.

The atrocities attributed to the women of the Revolution must be considered a part of legend, for the only real example of an action in which women outlawed themselves from society, i.e., the Montauban massacre of 10 May 1790, also got them the famous Address to the women of Montauban in which Louise de Keralio (Mme Robert) expressed her complete indignation: "*...to see women in the public square calling men to arms, provoking some, exciting others, ordering murder and setting the example of it! This is a spectacle that the barbaric centuries do not offer us.*" This dramatic example deserves a few lines of commentary.

Like the surrender at La Rochelle, the surrender of Montauban, a former Protestant stronghold that Richelieu had besieged, reversed the relationship of civil and religious power. In 1790 the Protestant minority, which was banned from holding public office, and better organized than the Catholics, dominated practically the entire economy, including trade, real estate and the town's private mansions. The Catholic women used the day of Rogations, which coincided with the inventory of the suppressed churches, to settle scores with the Protestants. They did so with a barbarity that had no precedent in the history of France, if one does not include the drowning of 3,500 citizens of Nantes due to the murderous insanity of Carrier. This incident is only distantly connected to the Revolution, unless it is considered the first serious incident generated by the religious question. More important, it is above all the culmination of ancestral hatred between Catholics and Protestants.

Most of the historians who studied the "revolutionary harpies" have curiously forgotten that women inspired the impressive social achievements of the Convention, such as the law on charity of 4 May 1794. They asked for rooms to "be used for sewing and mending linens" that would then serve the soldiers of the nation. They created the soup kitchens, sold their jewellery for the Republic (7 September 1789), then, ruined, organized countless fund-raising drives all over France. On 22 Brumaire 1792 they wrote to the woman president of a provincial society to tell her that they had a great many poor to help and little money, which gave them great cause for complaint.

The key action of women in showing solidarity with the poor and soldiers saved a great many lives, for they created care centres, notably in Paris, that persisted until 1870. In 1790 already women were the victims of obvious, paradoxical misogyny that was all the more redoubtable as a "revolutionary" conduct was imposed on them and their refusals were not directly attributed to them since, "being weak, they are seduced, led to crime". They were invariably manipulated by the priests, it was said. The speeches of the day intimated that women were feeble-witted beings with whom the priests could do as they liked.

Michelet had no hesitations about using such an assertion, and was followed by others. It was cited as a ground for denying women the right to vote. Actually, women did not want society to dictate their behaviour or impose a type of dress, for example, on them. The phenomenon of "feminine haberdashery" would be the object of heated debate, especially among men, who wanted to have them wear the "red bonnet" and blue, white and red cockade.

While the vast majority of women did not want to change their style of dress, they also stated before the tribune of the Assembly, "*Citizenesses, be honest, hardworking girls, modest and tender wives, wise mothers and good patriots...Wearing the bonnet and 'pique', trousers and pistol...should be left to the men born to protect you and make you happy.*" It is interesting nevertheless to see that each sex sent each other the image held by the opposite sex.

A Deputy to the Convention, Jean Bon Saint-André, stated on 8 September 1792, "*Since we are in the empire of Freedom, we should not force (our will) upon the fair sex, which must be able to continue to dress according to its own taste only.*" However, the Assembly voted on 21 September 1793 that "*women who do not wear the tricolor cockade will be punished by 8 days in prison the first time. If they repeat the offence, they will be declared suspect.*" This was a metaphor for the inevitable death sentence.

Unlike what we have tended to believe, the Revolution did not lead to many changes in women's fashion, other than the widespread use of the national colours (fabrics, shoes, ribbons and hats), the "Carmagnole jacket" and the counter-revolutionary fashions launched by the aristocrats after the Terror--"à la guillotine" or "à la victime"-- that were all short-lived, dead-end movements. The main trend, however, was simplicity, starting in 1789, and, starting in 1790, a certain "pastoral" fashion that borrowed elements of working-class garb.

Turning to the entertainment world, a decree of the 1791 Convention proclaimed the freedom of entertainment. The immediate result was that more than 60 Parisian theatres hosted 250 plays by 140 playwrights, including a large number of women, during the Terror alone. During the revolutionary period women wrote an estimated 900 plays inspired by events or personal positions. Many of them were played by Olympe de Gouges or Isabelle de Charrière, to cite just a couple of examples. However, we must recognise that if all the playwrights, both men and women, were taken together, their works were seldom of very high quality. Still, examination of the women's writings shed light on the sensitivity of the authoresses and their perceptions of the events that they experienced.

Paris's eighteen concert halls continued to offer the usual selection of platitudes, highlighted here and there by the works of Mozart and Haydn. The women musicians, who outnumbered their male counterparts, fostered the nascent popularity of the piano. Hélène de Montgeroult, who was sentenced to the guillotine by the Tribunal of Public Safety, was saved at the eleventh hour by accepting to play the Marseillaise. Marie Grosholtz, the famous Madame Tussaud, was working on her wax *salon*. There were women, like Emilie Candaille and Edmée Sophie Gail, who composed (see Women and Music, Women of Europe Supplement N° 22). There were women who painted, following the lead of the famous Madame Vigée Le Brun and Adélaïde Labille-Guiard. The exceptional talent of such singers and actresses as Mademoiselle Maillard, the Opera's most talented actress, illustrated the most flourishing period in the history of late 18th-century art. The Revolution did, however, close the Royal School of Dance in 1792.

Imprisoned as women were in the archaic shackles of women's duties, women's education raised little interest, at least for the working-class women. The bourgeois classes made education for girls one of their short-lived hobby horses but, backed up by Rousseau, the perfidious friend (according to Rousseau, women should devote themselves to their rôles as wives and mothers), forgot this with the advent of the Empire. Filled with a sense of duty, despite timid efforts to break free (see Mme de Rémusat), women themselves kept themselves in these conditions of dependence on their husbands and society.

A 1792 pamphlet put out by the boarding school of citizenesses Brutè, mother and daughter, is self-explanatory: *"The goal of education, especially of girls, is to develop their reason, to train their memories, to illuminate their minds and to direct their judgment, so as to enable them to be useful to their country, to themselves, and to become mothers who are honoured for their virtue, respected for their standards of behaviour, sought after because of their talents, esteemed because of their conduct, pleasant of character and charming due to the ornamentation of their wit."*

Actually, the Revolution fostered a sense of creative independence in women. This may have been the only gain that they kept after the Revolution, a gain that opened the gates of literature to such individuals as Georges Sand and Marie d'Agoult. Similarly, while many women expressed their opinions about the politics of the time, as Madame de Staël did, or passed sentence on the era, as Madame de Duras judged *"this cruel society that considered me responsible for the evil that it alone had done"*, others wrote in almost all fields of thinking, including science and education, as attested by the writings of the Countess of Genlis.

#### AFTER THE REVOLUTION

Let us remember that the Constituent Assembly decreed unanimously on 2 September 1791 that a code of civil laws for the entire kingdom would be established. This legislative unification was a good measure. Under the *ancien régime* legislation varied from one province to the next, even from one town to the next. Still under the influence of J.J. Rousseau, one spoke only of "natural law". All legislation, simplified to the extreme, had to be founded on this "natural law" and apply without distinction to the whole of mankind.

Cambacérés would be put in charge of drafting this "code of Nature sanctioned by Reason and guaranteed by Liberty". Adjustment followed adjustment, adjournment followed adjournment, the end of 1799 had arrived and the Nation still had not been provided with a Civil Code!

Under the influence of the Napoleonic code divorce laws would be modified in men's favour. There was no longer any question of equality in education and when the Constitution was returned to the drawers of History all hope that women's political rights would be recognised vanished. By 1810 not only had women lost all of the ephemeral rights that they had acquired during the Revolution, but they were often ostracised for behaviour that, at other times, would have prompted admiration. Dressing like a man during the Revolution was often proof of patriotism, but under the Empire this attitude "*exposed (a woman) to insults and could, depending on the circumstances, provide the pretext for attacking her intentions as well as her morals*" is how Count Decazes, then Minister Secretary of State in the Department of the General Police, described the situation on 24 September 1818.

Having been named First Consul, Bonaparte did not try to draft the "code of nature" or legislate for humanity. He was firmly bent on wrapping things up as quickly as possible, and to give the members of the State Council responsible for drafting the preliminary draft of the Code a vigorous shove, he personally presided over 57 of the 400 Council sittings, using this opportunity to impose his personal ideas on the chapters on marriage and divorce alone.

In taking part in the discussions--although the true father of the Napoleonic Code was Cambacérés--the First Consul stated, "*Will you not exact a promise of obedience from women?...We need a formula for the mayor considered in his capacity as registrar that contains the woman's promise of obedience and faithfulness. She must know that, in leaving the guardianship of her family, she comes under the guardianship of her husband. Obedience! That word is good for Paris, especially where women believe they have the right to do what they want. They are interested only in pleasure and clothes. If we did not grow old, I would not want any women!*" Later he added, "*It is women who give men children; they thus belong to men just as the fruit tree belongs to the gardener.*"

The Napoleonic Code codified what had preceded all written laws. Canon law, like civil law, could only take note of it, before regulating it. Consequently, we have no French jurisprudence that has lightened woman's duty to obey to her husband. On the other hand, the husband's obligation to provide his wife with "everything that she needs" is a delicate euphemism and very ineffective protection.

Women were likewise treated like minors in the chapter on property. They were forbidden to conclude contracts without the consent of their husbands or fathers and under the scheme of joint ownership the woman would have no right to look into, check, or oppose any action taken by her husband. The Code stipulated that the husband could dispose of the household's belongings to the benefit of any person without his wife's being able to make any legal objection.

A woman also had to accept that all debts contracted by her husband prior to their marriage, regardless of their origin, become joint debts, whereas the rules for settling her personal debts were much less advantageous. She could not go sue or defend herself at court without her husband's consent. She could not accept an inheritance, donation, or bequest, sell or mortgage a building, etc. She could not leave France, even for a short spell, without her husband's permission. In exchange, the legislators would protect the wife from the dangers of perfidious correspondents and tempters by allowing her husband to read her correspondence.

The reaction finally came on Saturday, 29 October 1904. A group of women gathered in the heart of the Latin Quarter and burnt the Civil Code in protest against the shining glorification of principles that had dispossessed married women of all abilities for 100 years. On that day, the members of the Government and diplomatic corps, out in full strength and in the presence of the President of the Republic, scientists and the legal profession, brought up the question of the major work begun under the Revolution and completed under the Consulate, namely, the Civil Code.

The First International Feminist Congress was held in Paris in 1926, with Suzanne Grinberg, Esquire, presiding. During this meeting, likewise held under the sign of the Napoleonic Code and attended by a large, enthusiastic public, the women lawyers of France, Belgium, the Netherlands, and Romania, whose laws are founded in the Napoleonic Code, heaped reproaches on the writers of the 1804 Code, which relegated the married woman to the ranks of the incompetent, alongside minors, the insane and prisoners incarcerated for life.

This is the heritage left to women (the other half of the French people) by the Revolution: a missed appointment not only with social advancement and politics, but also with women's emancipation, for while it is true that contemporary feminists' ideas may be linked to the natural demands of the women of the Revolution, the Napoleonic Code prevented all further development of feminist ideas. And while it is also true that codes are usually drawn from social behaviour, the European Community took the opposite approach by enshrining in the Treaty of Rome the principle of equality between men and women, with which the EC's Member States are bound to comply.

Dominique Godineau ends her remarkable book *Citoyennes Tricoteuses* with the following lines, "*The women activists of the revolutionary period, the "knitters", gave a certain reality to the woman citizen...even if they were forgotten, we are indebted to them for this heritage.*"

Let us hope that the lessons of 1789 will bear fruit and Europe's women will find in the legal, political and socio-cultural instruments the strength, will and perseverance to obtain their demands. Let us hope that the clear-sighted Olympe de Gouges will no longer deserve women's recognition for her ideas alone. As heiresses of her Rights, they are also heiresses of the duty to carry on her work since that day in 1789 when she wrote, "*my ideas, it is said, have not been developed sufficiently. Yet the diamond that falls into the lapidary's hands for polishing is no less a diamond, although it is rough...*"



## DÉCLARATION DES DROITS DE LA FEMME ET DE LA CITOYENNE,

*A décréter par l'Assemblée nationale dans  
ses dernières séances ou dans celle de  
la prochaine législature.*

### P R É A M B U L E.

Les mères, les filles, les soeurs, représentantes de la nation, demandent d'être constituées en assemblée nationale. Considérant que l'ignorance, l'oubli ou le mépris des droits de la femme, sont les seules causes des malheurs publics et de la corruption des gouvernements, ont résolu d'exposer dans une déclaration solennelle, les droits naturels, inaliénables et sacrés de la femme,



## GLOSSARY

p.2:

Madame Roland (Manon Jeanne Philipon), 1754-1793. Wife of Roland de la Platière, she was the mastermind of the Girondin group from June 1791 to June 1793. She was exalted, but showed exceptional courage when guillotined on 18 Brumaire, Year II of the Republic. She was the one who uttered the famous words, "*O liberty, liberty, what crimes are committed in your name!*" (see bibliography)

Michelet (Jules), 1798-1874. France's most important historian, professor at the *Collège de France*. His monumental *Histoire de la France (History of France)* was published in 1833 and the first volume of his *Histoire de la Révolution française (History of the French Revolution)* in 1847. (see bibliography)

Restoration: Political regime of France under Louis XVIII and Charles X, from the collapse of the Empire (1814) to the July Revolution (1830).

July Monarchy: Regime of France from 1830 to 1848. At the end of the 1830 Revolution--which ended in July--the liberal bourgeoisie had the Duke of Orleans take the throne under the name of Louis-Philippe I.

Burke (Edmond), 1728-1797. Member of the Commons, great orator, nicknamed "the British Cicero". As one of the most implacable enemies of the French Revolution he warned his compatriots to guard against the contagion. (see bibliography)

Taine (Hippolyte), 1828-1893. French philosopher, critic and historian. We are indebted to him for his *Essai de critique et d'histoire* (1858) and *Origines de la France contemporaine* (1858-1893). (see bibliography)

Mortimer-Ternaux. Historian of the Terror. He relied on a wealth of documents that have since disappeared. (see bibliography)

Terror: A *de facto* government reposing on force and coercion. It began on 10 August 1792 and ended with the fall of Robespierre (10 Thermidor 1794) who, with Danton, was one of its leading figures. It may be qualified "repressive paranoia", so great was the number of executions: 2,000 in Paris in June 1794 alone, with the guillotine functioning up to 6 hours a day. 500,000 people were in gaol and 300,000 assigned to residence.

Lamartine (Alphonse de), 1790-1869. French poet known for his *Méditations poétiques* (1820) and *Harmonies poétiques et religieuses* (1830). He put his talent in the service of liberal ideas by writing the *History of the Girondins* (1847).

Girondins. Also called the Brissotins after one of their members, Deputy Brissot, this was a political group of elected representatives from the Gironde *Département*. It numbered 150 deputies of the 745 at the Convention that tried to avoid the king's death. The group was eliminated by *la Montagne* ("the Mountain") on 31 October 1793.

Montagnards. Name given mockingly (literally: the Mountaineers) to the 120 extremist deputies seated in the upper left of the Assembly. Of their number, Danton, Marat and Robespierre would be responsible for the Terror.



Blanc (Louis), 1811-1882. French publicist, historian and politician, born in Madrid, he also recounted part of the reign of Louis-Philippe in his Ten-Year History (1811-1822). (see bibliography)

Esquiros (Henri-Alphonse), 1814-1876. French literary hack and author of works about England. (see bibliography)

p. 3:

"Women of La Halle". The *Halles* (markets) formed the heart of Paris since the reign of Philippe-Auguste. The stalls at the corn, fish, calf, wine, leather and draperies markets were generally manned by women, who were the first insurgents of the Revolution.

Mirabeau (Honoré Gabriel Riquetti, Count of Mirabeau-Tonneau), 1749-1791. Famous for his reply to Dreuz-Brézé, who asked him to withdraw on 23 June at the end of the Estates-General, "*We are here at the wish of the nation; material force alone could get us to leave*", and not "*We are here at the will of the people, we will leave only under the strength of bayonets.*" Mirabeau incarnated the 1789 Revolution.

Orleans (Louis Philippe Joseph, duke of, known as Philippe Egalité), 1747-1793. Descendent of Louis XIV's brother. Strongly suspected of having fomented the taking of the Bastille and the march on Versailles. He coveted Louis XVI's crown but was guillotined on 6 November 1793.

Palais-Royal. At the heart of Paris, one of the main centres of the Revolution. Surrounded by gardens, theatres, cafes and gaming rooms, it remained open all night.

Laclos (Pierre Ambroise François Choderlos de), 1741-1803. Successful author of Dangerous Liaisons (1782), which illustrated paradoxically the hair-raising connivance that constantly benefitted the most mysterious figure of the Revolution.

p. 4:

Maillard (Stanislas Marie), 1763-1794. Court clerk and drunken failure, he suggested to the women who had swarmed into the Town Hall of Paris on 5 October that they march on Versailles, then, advancing to the head of the procession, addressed the assembly as self-appointed spokesman.

p. 5:

Estates-General. Representative assembly of the three orders, the nobility, clergy and Third Estate. Louis XVI convened the Estates-General on 1 May 1789 but granted no reforms. The Estates-General was mired in procedural debates for an entire month, then, finally, when the sittings had ended, the Third Estate refused to leave the room (Mirabeau's famous answer comes in here). On 7 July 1789, under the presidency of Lefranc de Pompignan, the Assembly took the name of Constituent National Assembly, thereby granting itself the highest right to draft a constitution and determine the king's powers. This event is the political origin of the Revolution.

George Rudé. Historian of the French Revolution, history professor at Concordia University, Montreal. (see bibliography)

Hardy (Simon). Kept a written diary of events on the eve and at the start of the Revolution in Paris. *Mes loisirs, ou journal d'événements tels*

qu'ils parviennent à ma connaissance, Ms. in 8 Vol., Paris, 1764-1789, *Bibl. Natl. Fonds français* N° 6680 to 6687.

p. 6:

Assignats. Issue of notes "assigned" to church property, which property the Constituent Assembly had just decided to sell off, thereby triggering the most colossal devaluation compared with metal coin.

Fersen (Axel, Count of), 1755-1810. Swedish officer hopelessly in love with Marie-Antoinette. He prepared the flight to Varennes and tried to save the royal family from the Temple prison.

p. 7:

The Federates: Name given to the 20,000 national guards who descended on Paris from all over France to celebrate the 14th of July 1792. They played an important rôle in the 10 August 1792 insurrection.

Sectionnaires: Members of the 48 sections into which Paris was cut up by the 21 May 1790 decree of the Constituent Assembly.

Goncourt (Edmond de, 1822-1896) and (Jules Alfred Huot de, 1830-1870). French writers. Edmond gathered a small circle of friends who met in the attic of his mansion in Auteuil, sowing the seeds of the famous *Académie des Goncourt* (Goncourt Academy). (see bibliography)

Actes des Apôtres. Founded by Peltier as an organ of the monarchy, this paper was published from 2 November 1789 to October 1791. Its editors--Suleau, Mirabeau and Rivarol--ridiculed the partisans of the Revolution.

Carlyle (Thomas), 1795-1881. English historian and critic, one of the first to have written a history of the French Revolution. He was the victim of a rather curious incident. Upon completing his history of the Revolution he absent-mindedly left the manuscript on his desk. His housekeeper, ever one for order, thought they were old papers for burning. It took Carlyle ten years to rewrite the manuscript. (see bibliography)

Léon (Pauline). Born in Paris on 28 September 1768, this chocolate-maker and vendor requested on 6 March 1792 the right for the women of Paris to form a women's national guard. She married Enragé Leclerc. They were arrested, then released on 4 Fructidor, Year II, after which they disappeared from the pages of history.

Lacombe (Claire, known as Rose), 1765-after 1798. This provincial actress used her acting talents, it was said, to inflame the mob and lead it to storm the Tuileries on 10 August 1792. She ran the Society founded by Pauline Léon to combat the Jacobins. Together with her sisters she fought the market women of *La Halle* on 26 August 1793. On 30 October 1793 the Committee of Public Salvation, having lost all patience, closed Claire Lacombe's Society. Arrested on 31 March, released in August 1795, she returned to the theatre in Nantes in 1796, then walked off stage and vanished from the record.

p. 8:

"Club". Term borrowed from English. From 1788 on it referred to societies given to political discussion. The Deputies used these clubs to prepare their debates in the Estates-General.

Club des Jacobins (Jacobins Club). The most famous of the clubs of the Revolution. Founded by Brittany's Deputies to the Estates-General, it took up residence in October 1789 in the Jacobin (a Dominican order) convent in rue Saint-Honoré. It boasted 200 Deputies, 155 provincial branches, and 1,200 members in Paris. Accused of the excesses of the Terror it was banned by the Convention on 12 November 1794.

Buzot (François Nicolas Léonard), 1760-1794. Deputy of the Third Estate, he came under the spell of Madame Roland, whose positions he voiced. He proposed that the Jacobins Club be disbanded and committed suicide after Madame Roland's execution.

Chaumette (Pierre Gaspard, called Anaxagoras), 1763-1794. One of the leaders of the Cordeliers Club. He was homosexual with a rabid hatred of prostitutes. On 1 October 1793, in the midst of the Terror, he pronounced a terrible indictment against "public women" that the Convention judged excessive. He was guillotined in Paris on 13 April 1794.

Robespierre (Maximilien Marie Isidore de), 1755-1794. Definitely the most enigmatic figure of the Revolution, he remains a complete mystery to historians. Was he the soul of the Revolution to the point of carrying the title "the Incorruptible"? Was he the blood-thirsty monster depicted by Aulard? In a word, Robespierre will continue to raise a number of questions for history, including that of the enigma of his death, for the attack by the *gendarme* Merda, who broke his jaw with a pistol shot, continues to be interpreted as a suicide attempt. A simple confirmation of his identity was enough to send him to the scaffold on 28 July 1794 (10 Thermidor), the date that marked the end of the Terror.

Conventionnels ("conventioners"). The Constituent Assembly adopted the name of "Convention" on 21 September 1792, following the precedent set by the United States of America. The Convention was dominated by the Girondins until 2 June 1793 and voted in favour of the death of Louis XVI. Then the *Montagnards* installed their reign of Terror until 9 Thermidor, Year II (1794). After that, having passed into the hands of the people who killed Robespierre, it was given the misnomer of "Thermidorian Reaction". The Convention disappeared on 26 October 1795.

Desmoulins (Camille), 1760-1794. Parisian solicitor. On 12 July 1789 he announced from atop a Palais-Royal table the dismissal of Necker, Louis XVI's minister, thereby triggering the massacre of the patriots. He was among the Victorious at the Bastille on July 14. A member of the Cordeliers Club and friend of Danton, with whom he was guillotined, Desmoulins was the epitome of a truly gifted, modern journalist who understood the excesses of the Revolution too late.

p. 10:

Condorcet (Jean Antoine Nicolas de Carilat, Marquis of), 1743-1794. Mathematician, "last of the philosophers", according to Michelet. His generous ideas were never listened to, for he swam against the current of the Revolution. His remarkable public education project never came to fruition. Arrested at Clamart and imprisoned at Bourg-la-Reine, where he poisoned himself.

La Harpe (Jean-François de), 1739-1803. A friend of Voltaire's and formidable literary critic, La Harpe began a literature course on the eve of the Revolution. His major work would be edited in 16 volumes.

Talleyrand-Périgord, (Charles Maurice de), 1754-1838. The Limping Devil (he had a club foot), as he was known, was either the greatest strategists among statesmen or the most self-centred weathervane in the history of France. Upon his death in 1780 he could be counted a member of all the regimes, all intrigues, and all compromising events. He betrayed all his friends and enemies alike, but remained ever faithful to France.

p. 16:

Malesherbes (Guillaume Chrétien de Lamoignon de), 1721-1794. First President of the *Cour des Aides* and director of the Library in 1750. He protected the philosophers and let the Encyclopaedia be disseminated. On 13 December 1792 he volunteered with Tronchet and de Séze to defend the king. It was a seventy-three-year-old old man, accompanied by his daughter and grandchildren, who was made to climb the scaffold.

Fouquier-Tinville (Antoine Quentin Fouquier, called Fouquier-Tinville), 1746-1795. This obscure figure became on 13 March 1793 one of the three substitutes of the public prosecutor of the Revolutionary Tribunal, then replaced Faure as the prosecutor. In 16 months he executed Marie-Antoinette, the Girondins, Barnave, the Hébertists, Danton and his friends and, finally, his boss, Robespierre. At his trial, which lasted 39 days, he claimed that he had merely been enforcing the law. He was finally guillotined on 7 May 1795.

p. 17:

Directory: The French regime from 26 October 1795 to 10 November 1799.

p. 20:

Vendée Wars (Poitou): All of Vendée exploded on 3 March 1793. The cause of this Catholic, counter-revolutionary, Royalist uprising was the decision to raise an army of 300,000 men that was adopted by the Convention on 23 February 1793. The Vendée would be put to fire and the sword until 1796, devastated by twelve infernal columns under Turreau's command. Calm was restored after the fall of Robespierre, when Hoche obtained the Whites' (Royalists') surrender and granted them the Blues' (Republicans') amnesty.

p. 21:

Carrier (Jean-Baptiste), 1756-1794. Prosecutor at Aurillac, afflicted with a criminal madness to which he quickly gave full expression. Dispatched on 14 August to quell the royalist uprising in Nantes, he organized drownings by the hundred, for which he invented "pull-the-plug" boats. His victims are estimated to number some 10,000. He was finally guillotined in Paris on 16 December 1794. This "missionary of the Terror", as Michelet dubbed him, apparently had the last word during his cross-examination, as he proclaimed, "Everything here is guilty, down to the President's bell."

p. 24:

Cambacérés (Jean-Jacques Régis de), 1753-1824. Elected to the Council of the 500, then appointed Second Consul, de Cambacérés played a more important rôle under Napoleon than he did during the Revolution. He was the one who put together the Concordat. He contributed greatly to the drafting of the Civil Code.

BRIEF CHRONOLOGY

- Before the Estates-General: Women's notebooks of grievances and petition
- 5 May 1789: Opening of the Estates-General
- 26 August 1789: Declaration of the Rights of Man and the Citizen
- 27 August 1789: Confirmation of Salic law.
- 5-6 October 1789: The women are at Versailles, the King is brought back to Paris.
- 22 December 1789: Women are excluded from the right to vote.
- January 1790: Théroigne de Méricourt founds the Club of Women Friends of the Law (*Club des Amies de la Loi*)
- 23 February 1790: Monastic orders abolished.
- 3 July 1790: Condorcet speaks on admitting women.
- 14 July 1790: National federation.
- Night of 15-16 April 1791: Théroigne de Méricourt arrested by *Chevalier de Valette* under the Austrians' orders
- March 1791: Etta Palm d'Aelder founds the *Club patriotique* (Patriotic Club) and *Société patriotique et de bienfaisance des amies de la Vérité* (the Patriotic and Good Works Society of the Friends of Truth).
- 8 and 15 April 1791: Abolition of feudal rights, abolition of male privilege.
- 21 June 1791: Flight of the royal family.
- 17 July 1791: Champ-de-Mars massacre
- Publication of a "warrant" for Etta Palm's arrest.
- Olympe de Gouges: Declaration of the Rights of Woman and the Citizeness.
- 30 September 1792: End of the Constituent Assembly
- Development of Women's Clubs.
- 10 August 1792: The taking of the Tuileries, insurgent commune
- 30 August 1792: Divorce law.

September 1792:	September massacres
	Women excluded from electing representatives to the Convention (universal suffrage)
20-25 September 1792:	Women allowed as witnesses for the registry office
21 January 1793:	Execution of Louis XVI.
February-March 1793:	First coalition.
10 May 1793:	<i>Société des Républicaines-Révolutionnaires</i> (Society of Revolutionary Republicans)
31 May-2 June:	Paris uprising; end of the Girondins
24 June 1793:	Adoption of the so-called 1793 Constitution
	Women lose their political rights.
13 July 1793:	Marat assassinated.
16 October 1793:	Execution of Marie-Antoinette.
20 October 1793:	Women's Clubs disbanded.
November 1793:	Olympe de Gouges and Madame Roland are executed.
December 1793-January 1794:	Women's deputation to call for the release of prisoners detained without grounds.
April 1794:	Executions of Danton and Chaumette.
	Arrest of Claire Lacombe.
28 July 1794:	Execution of Robespierre and Saint-Just.
April/May 1795:	Popular uprising.
4 Prairial Year III (24 May 1795):	Ban on women's participation in political assemblies.
26 October 1795:	End of the Convention

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The predominance of French references is not due to an arbitrary choice, but the historical origins of the sources that we obviously could not ignore. However, we have indicated whenever possible the translations that exist in other languages, including other editions. To facilitate consultation we have also respected the titles of the various editions of one and the same work, including the spellings of the authors' names for the older editions.

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