



Second Wave of International Suffrage – Japan, India and Latin America

Speakers:

Citizenship or Complicity? The Conundrum of Empire and Japanese Women's Suffrage
Barbara Molony, Professor, St Clara University, USA

From Suffrage to Empowerment: Legal Reform and Feminist Consciousness in 20th Century India
Chitra Sinha, Associate Professor, University of Uppsala

The fight for women's right to vote in Latin America. A long and winding road.
Verónica Giordano, Professor, University of Buenos Aires, Argentina

Sign up:

Contact Christina Florin christina.florin@historia.su.se no later than *April 1, 2019*

- ▶ Date: Wednesday April 10, 13 - 17.
- Venue: Lecture hall 9, Södra huset, Stockholm University

Historiska institutionen

Stockholms universitet 106 91 Stockholm, Tfn 08-16 20 00 www.historia.su.se



**Stockholm
University**

Second Wave of International Suffrage

– Japan, India and Latin America

Symposium at Stockholm University

Date: 10 April 2019, 13 – 17

Venue: Stockholm University, Lecture hall D9

Program

- 13.00– 13.10 Welcome and presentations
- 13.10-14.10 Citizenship or Complicity? The Conundrum of Empire and Japanese Women’s Suffrage
Barbara Molony, Professor, St Clara University, USA
- 14.10 – 15.10 From Suffrage to Empowerment: Legal Reform and Feminist Consciousness in 20th Century India
Chitra Sinha, Associate Professor, University of Uppsala
- 15.10 – 15.30 Coffee
- 15.30 – 16.30 The fight for women’s right to vote in Latin America.
A long and winding road
Verónica Giordano, Professor, University of Buenos Aires, Argentina
- 16.30-17.00 Concluding remarks

For questions and signing up, contact Christina Florin, christina.florin@historia.su.se

Please sign up no later than **April 1, 2019**

The symposium is organised by the network “Vote 2021”, in collaboration with the Department of History and the Department of Political Science, Stockholm University

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Abstracts and biography

Citizenship or Complicity?

The Conundrum of Empire and Japanese Women's Suffrage

Barbara Molony

Japanese women went to the polls for the first time exactly 73 years ago today—10 April 1946—following decades of struggle against conservative opposition. Feminist activists began in the last decades of the 19th century, focusing on gaining equality and respect in the family, the workplace, and society. They did not adopt suffrage as a goal until after World War I, when the Women's Suffrage League and other organizations called for just and equal citizenship, which meant the vote. They saw citizenship as grounded in several important principles: the community of equal members of the nation and those members' right to a voice in governance. They argued that women deserved full citizenship both because they were equal to men and because their experience as mothers was beneficial to the nation. When the Japanese government repressed social-justice activism in the 1930s, suffragists turned to civic actions like trash collection and modernizing the fish market to demonstrate their right to membership in the national community. Some joined government organizations, and continued to participate in the government throughout World War II. Japanese feminists of the 1980s criticized these foremothers for working with the wartime imperial government. The question still stands: Was this complicity? Should the struggle for citizenship be questioned as complicity with a state that committed heinous acts in the process of building an empire or praised as a critical expansion of gender justice?

Barbara Molony, Professor of Japanese History at Santa Clara University, co-President of the Coordinating Council for Women in History, and past president of the American Historical Association Pacific Coast Branch, specializes in research on women's rights, transnational feminisms, and the construction and representation of gender in Japan and East Asia.

She has published more than two dozen articles and chapters on these topics. She has also co-authored or co-edited *Women's Activism and "Second Wave" Feminism: Transnational Histories* (with Jennifer Nelson, 2017), *Gender in Modern East Asia* (with Janet Theiss and Hyaewool Choi, 2016), *Modern East Asia: An Integrated History* (with Jonathan Lipman and Michael Robinson, 2010), *Asia's New Mothers: Crafting Gender Roles and Childcare Networks in East and Southeast Asian Societies* (with Ochiai Emiko, 2008), and *Gendering Modern Japanese History* (with Kathleen Uno, 2005). She is an associate editor of *Women and Social Movements in Modern Empires since 1820*. She is currently co-authoring *Ichikawa Fusae: A Political Biography* (in progress).

From Suffrage to Empowerment:

Legal Reform and Feminist Consciousness in 20th Century India

Chitra Sinha

Over the 20th century, women in India have carved a space of their own within an overtly patriarchal social framework. The empowerment of women in India, as in other parts of the world, has been far from smooth, witnessing frequent intense struggles with patriarchal forces in various spheres of society. Ever since the attainment of franchise in the 1920s, legal reforms have slowly emerged as an enabling force towards women's progress. Since the early 20th century, the progress of Indian women was shaped by a constellation of forces including growth of women's movement, necessities of the nationalist struggle and the need for legal reforms to build a modern nation. While the enactment of Hindu family laws in India gave majority of Indian women far reaching rights in society, reluctance of Indian patriarchy to embrace the enactments resulted in failure of implementation at the ground level. While such legal reform appeared to be symbolic rather than substantive, the true historical significance legal reform, from suffrage to marriage and inheritance rights was evident in the evolution of feminist consciousness in Indian society. The analysis of

public and legislative discourse over the 20th century demonstrates a decisive shift in social perception about women's role in Indian society. Slowly, but steadily, legal reforms shaped the Indian social psyche contributing to gender justice. The growing political participation of women, from grassroots to national political processes became a resilient force to counter populist and patriarchal backlash. India's journey towards women's empowerment thus shows how political and civil rights combine to contribute towards the transformation of feminist consciousness, empowering women and sustaining women's rights in society.

Dr. **Chitra Sinha** is currently Guest Researcher, Center for Gender Research, Uppsala University, Sweden working in the broad area - Women, Law and Society in Asia and the Middle East. She is also a non-resident Research Fellow of the Centre for Gender and African Studies, University of the Free State, Bloemfontein, South Africa.

Chitra did her Ph.D. from the Department of History, University of Mumbai. Her research areas include history of women's movement in India, family law reforms in Asia and the Middle East, role of media in society, communication, identity and broader issues of human rights. Her books include "Debating Patriarchy: The Hindu Code Bill Controversy in India (1941-56)", Oxford University Press (2012) and "Discourse and Identity Formation: Parliamentary Debates in Bahrain" by Benjamin Publishing House, The Netherlands (2017).

Chitra has worked in various institutions of Women's Studies globally— as an associate professor in women's studies at the Research Centre for Women's Studies, S.N.D.T Women's University, Mumbai, India and as a visiting fellow at the Centre for Study of Women at the University of California, Los Angeles, USA. She was also an Associate Professor at the Royal University for Women, Bahrain.

The fight for women's right to vote in Latin America.

A long and winding road.

Verónica Giordano

The fight for women's right to vote in Latin America started as early as independence. However, it was only in the turning of the second half of the 20th century that most countries legalized it. In some cases women had access to the right to vote earlier than others, such as Brazil and Uruguay. In other countries the right to vote also came early but it was only legal for the subnational level or for certain qualified groups, such as in Ecuador. In some other countries, the women social movements that historically struggled for the vote were absent when the law was finally passed, such as in Argentina and Chile. I argue that these variations are better explained when looking at the broader spectrum of the struggle of power relations to establish a social order. Women take part of this macro-process together with men and they do it in a particular political frame and social conditions. I will show the map of women's vote in this broader frame to highlight the particularities of Latin America road to accomplish this fundamental right for women emancipation.

Verónica Giordano is an Argentinian Sociologist and she holds a PHD in Social Sciences (University of Buenos Aires, UBA).

She teaches Latin American Historical Sociology in undergraduate and postgraduate courses at UBA. She is the Director of Maestría en Estudios Sociales Latinoamericanos (mesla.sociales.uba.ar) and Senior Researcher at Instituto de Estudios de America Latina y el Caribe (iealc.sociales.uba.ar // geshal.sociales.uba.ar) in the same university. Her research focuses in long term social processes in Latin America in the fields of comparative historical sociology and gender studies. Lately, she has focused on the building of women's rights and social order during the XXth century and the study of gender stereotypes in women's political participation since 1989 in Latin America. She is the author of *Ciudadanas Incapaces* (Teseo, 2012) and *América Latina. La construcción del orden* (Waldo Ansaldi co-author, Ariel, 2012 y 2016).