

Transition through gender lenses. 'Cinderella goes to Market' three decades later

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The book by Barbara Einhorn, published in 1993, seems prophetic even after nearly thirty years. Its author predicted the most important patterns of transition in Central and East European post-socialism countries viewed through gender lenses. Although two of four states taken into account in this analysis, German Democratic Republic and Czechoslovak Republic, disappeared and became parts of new state structures in the short period covered by the analysis, and all countries included in this analysis underwent transition processes that could not be predicted in early 90s., the observations concerning gender dimension of transition published by Barbara Einhorn then defined the most important phenomena in that field, also those that were only to happen when the book was published. Moreover, conclusions concerning those 4 countries included in Einhorn's research could also describe other post-socialism countries in Central East Europe.

Einhorn's unique conclusions include two parallel processes: relegating women to the private sphere in the name of the national interest and displacing them from participation in the labour force by planting them squarely back in the family, their "primary sphere of responsibility" (Einhorn 1993, 258). Both processes overlapped, reconceptualising the definition of women's roles. Although it was not so obvious in early 90s, those two phenomena dominated further stages of transition in Central and East European countries. Nearly thirty years after we do observe their strong impact of anti-gender movement, directed against gender equality, LGBT+ rights, reproductive rights, including abortion. The anti-equality pillar of this anti-democratic movement, associated with illiberal or de-democratizing direction of transition in the region, seems to be rooted in those anti-equality and anti-feminine phenomena described by Einhorn. That is why the concept of Einhorn should be reminded and re-read, especially in the context of contemporary observations and discussions about dangers of anti-gender movement.

Einhorn, B. (1993) *Cinderella goes to Market. Citizenship, Gender and Women's Movements in East Central Europe*. London, New York: Verso.

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