



"Women, Politics and Public Voice in the New Europe"
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New Issues, New Actors, New Perspectives

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Introduction

- 1) In practically all countries in Europe, women's "issues" are taken up in institutional/governmental mechanisms.

Third wave of women's issues

is taking stock of women's culture
and how can this culture
affect main societal and political issues.

Women's issues are survival of persons
 groups
 planet.

But how to do that?

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- 2) A window of opportunity :

two open spaces,

- one the European space; complexity of its institutions (EC/CSCE/Council of Europe/WEU, ...)
unpredictability about evolution of its components ;
 - integration versus fragmentation
 - deepening versus enlargement of ECa few months ago still debatable, now just a question of calendar



- the other: the social territory of women
 - theoretically embracing all sectors, but in practice a narrow territory (mainly absent from decision making, cf. Lisbon Council)
 - still very often focussed on women as the receiving end, recipients, objects, victims, ...
 - *
 - * * to seize the opportunity for women to be the subjects, actors of the current change; to influence, to decide, to act;

3. A time of interdependence at all levels :

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- among issues
- among countries
- among actors.

Even without procedd of integration, European countries would be facing consequences of globalisation of issues

- { peace/security
- { economy
- { environment/population/development

Beyond the ideologies
the dichotomy subject/object
(already obvious in exact sciences)

- how can women become actors ?
 - . real deep down feelings (EC documentation)
 - . men's games
 - . women's lack of self-esteem (refusal to take office)
 - . lack of complicity among women
 - . critical mass of women

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- * * need to think anew issues
 - with new actors
 - opening new perspectives.

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Political governance

- 1) - diversity of groups, ideas, modes of thinking,
 in a context of interdependence
 becoming part of a complex system;
- regulation mechanisms not yet discovered, hence delays in
 decision-making;
- contradictory gestures {Dec.91 Germany --- Croatia
 {June 92 France --- Sarajevo
- (Europe + world integrated
 in the Renaissance period
 but asymmetric to the world and inside its borders
 and centered on elites --- change with communications)
- 2) - what is democracy in this new space ?

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para. 4. Third errand

new types: political conditionality
since November 1989

1.3 pg. 5 Democracy at stake

- { since 70s challenge to parliamentary democracy or to
politics as a profession
- { polls replacing votes



- { new types of external pressures
- { role of media, alienating the public (no time to form one's own opinion)
- { towards a participatory democracy



3) - individual rights

in the context of collective rights

- the need for coupling the two:
 - the collapse of a collectivist political regime should not erase the reality of collective needs, rights and obligations ;
- threat of individualism/hedonims/indifference
- the supreme dignity of each person in the shaping of the political reality:
 - "politics belongs to everyone"

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4) - citizenship and sovereignty:

as basic to political culture and practice
anglo-saxon versus continental

- citizenship as fulfilment of all rights
- sovereignty, capacity of self-organization in an interdependent system
- new forms and new concepts have to emerge.

Women to make a difference
risking to be deviant from the norm.



Management of the economy

1) Status of economy

not a goal but a means

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* * urgent need to redress the ethics.

- understanding the limitations of the economic science, so far unable to devise new instruments (e.g. economies in transition)

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* * not a dogma! not the criterium to evaluate where a country, a people ... is.

2) new regulatory and redistributive mechanisms to compensate for the blindness of the market (situation of Sweden/Netherlands)

3) Market as a logic of internal and external exclusion, built-in inequality, leaving aside the poor/disorganized/vulnerable

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* * another logic

women

patterns of consumption

patterns of production

conscious decisions of individuals

Survival process1) From war to peace

- (- "new" phenomenon for this generation:
European wars! - easier in Irak!!)
- leading the process of transformation
from "peace-keeping" to "peace-making"
(in January: to create UN "corridors" in Bosnia
to avoid confrontation)
- = transformation of military-industrial complexes into peace
instruments
- stopping arms trade (watch over!)
- Leading the process of comprehensive banning of nuclear tests.

2) Key-role of Science and Technology in peace-making

- nexus environment/development/population
- continent where science and technology were born
needs to think anew the political role they play

Women "universal adjustment"
change of life-styles
new self-discipline



Cultural and spiritual primacy

1) Trans-national identity

- common history
- a project together: to contribute to the betterment of all humankind

2) Beyond the paradigm of the "winner"

Women to create trust
to appropriate into one's own identity
the great cultural and
spiritual traditions of the
continent

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