

Recasting social protection systems to support climate transition from an ecofeminist perspective

(work in progress, please do not quote without the consent of the author : pascale.vielle@uclouvain.be)

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"Seen from the ground, Marina di Acate is a peaceful town of 11,000 inhabitants, drowsy by the sea until the arrival of summer, when holidaymakers revive its deserted houses. However, on either side of the road from Ragusa, the provincial capital, up to the coast, there is a much more cruel partition. Everywhere, greenhouses block the horizon, protected by high fences. Ten months out of twelve, from September to June, agricultural workers - the vast majority of whom are Romanian, Tunisian and Albanian - produce tomatoes, but also some of the fruits and vegetables that arrive on the tables of Italians and Europeans. In a silence that is only disturbed by the slamming of the tarpaulins shaken by the wind, employers' abuses have multiplied: wages at least half the union's minimum, irregular employment contracts, non-existent or precarious safety standards, substandard housing and several cases of sexual exploitation of women workers, particularly Romanian women. »²

"This is a rather curious example. There was a series of denunciations made by workers who became ill in factories working with asbestos. In the Spanish State, all judgments were won in the first instance, except one: women who became ill because they were washing their husbands' clothes. The husband would come home with his clothes full of asbestos powder, the women would shake those clothes at home, inhale all that powder and get sick too. This denunciation was lost because there was no clear working relationship between the wife and husband. In the second instance, the judgment was won and the company's responsibility was also recognized, because the company should have had a laundry service that would have taken care of this cleaning, instead of doing what companies always do: delegating this work, this part of the end of the production cycle, to family homes, ignoring everything that is necessary for the worker to regenerate himself and return to work the next day under the same conditions. »³

¹ I would like to thank the Nantes Institute of Advanced Studies, which enabled me in 2018-2019 to explore this new avenue of research, which I feel will occupy me in the coming years. I also thank Philippe Pochet for his encouragement, Denis Bouget for his patience, and all the people who have turned on lights on this path that I should have taken earlier.

² Débarre, Cécile, « En Sicile, le calvaire des migrants dans les serres de tomates », *Mediapart* 15 août 2019

³ Batalla Cueto, Pablo, « Eco-féminisme, science et décroissance. Entretien avec Yayo Herrero », *Contretemps, revue de critique communiste*, 8 janvier 2019 (<https://www.contretemps.eu/herrero-ecofeminisme-science-decroissance/>) - 15 août 2019)

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Introduction

Faced with the impossibility of reflecting on the social protection of tomorrow in the grammar of yesterday's world, it is necessary to resort to new sources of inspiration, and relevant to draw on ecofeminist thinking (Part 1). Eco-feminism⁴ has postulated since the early 1970s that land degradation and the persistence of patriarchy are framed into common logics and are consubstantial to productivism, which calls for a reconsideration of the fundamentals of social protection, as conceived in the 20th century, in order to build the main features of "climate compatible" social protection systems (Part 2).

To understand ecofeminist thinking, the text, which constitutes the first phase of a more ambitious research project, is based mainly on literature reviews⁵.

Part One: Relevance of ecofeminism to think about tomorrow's world

1.1. Thinking about tomorrow's social protection with yesterday's epistemic categories?

The ecological transition - and, in particular, the climate transition - seems to call for the resolution of an impossible equation: the reconciliation of the imperatives of reducing social inequalities, on the one hand, and of profound transformation of the capitalist system, which would endanger the existence of social security - an essential tool for redistribution - on the other.

⁴ The term "eco-feminism" sometimes refers to all women's ecological movements - we use it in this first sense - sometimes to the current that developed in the 1980s in California and of which we find a choice of text in Emilie Hache's anthology: *Reclaim, collection of eco-feminist texts, anthology*, Emilie Haché (Dir.), Cambourakis, 2016.

⁵ TO QUOTE – SEE Bibliography

Indeed, if we accept that social inequalities contribute to the worsening of the environmental and ecological crisis, which in turn increases inequalities⁶, the success of a climate transition would depend closely on our ability, over the coming decades, to ensure the redistribution of wealth. A few rare precursors (notably Laurent) have already undertaken to demonstrate that social security constitutes a privileged instrument in this respect, and to represent the dimensions and parameters of a "climate-compatible" social protection system : functions, financing, risks to be covered, etc⁷

However, neo-institutionalist approaches have highlighted the close interdependence between the configuration of social protection systems and the regime of capitalism in which they are embedded. By characterizing capitalist regimes as "welfare capitalism", and retracing their history, Esping-Andersen even postulates that the existence of social security in developed countries - as a pooling of income on a large scale, to cover social contingencies in cash or in kind - can only be understood as pegged to the modern capitalist system.

However, for many climate specialists, the "green growth" project, attractive at first sight, should at best only delay climate deadlines, so that the requirement of climate and ecological transition leads to questioning our mode of production and the capitalist system with growth⁸ - even though the possibility of perpetuating a capitalist system without growth⁹ divides economists¹⁰. Two possible paths, decisive for the existence and physiognomy of social protection, then emerge to ensure the transition: either an exit from capitalism or a capitalism without growth.

Some authors argue that a concrete way to achieve transition would be to replace *"the absurd production of goods for profit with production for real needs, determined within land boundaries and democratically, which implies both maximum decentralization and international planning. However, a society that produces for real needs is called socialism. (...) the consideration of ecological destruction justifies the addition of the prefix "eco"»*.¹¹ Based on widespread planning and redistribution, such a system does not allow social protection to

⁶ Laurent, Eloi et Pochet, Philippe, *Pour une transition sociale-écologique Quelle solidarité face aux défis environnementaux?* Paris, Les petits matins, 2015

⁷ Laurent, Eloi, *Le bel avenir de l'État providence*, Paris, Les liens qui libèrent, 2014

⁸ Arnsperger, Christian, verbo "Croissance" in *Dictionnaire de la pensée écologique*, Dominique Bourg and Alain Papaux (Dir), Paris, PUF, 2015

⁹ Jackson, Tim, *Prosperity without Growth, The Transition to a Sustainable Economy*, London, Sustainable development Commission, 2009

¹⁰ Harribey, Jean-Marie, « Un capitalisme sans croissance économique est-il possible ? », Blog " L'économie par terre ou sous terre " on the *Alternatives économiques* website, <https://blogs.alternatives-economiques.fr/harribey/2011/02/22/un-capitalisme-sans-croissance-economique-est-il-possible>, 22/02/2011, accessed on 2 August 2019. See, by the same author, "Les théories de la décroissance : enjeux et limites", *Cahiers français*, "Développement et environnement", n° 337, March-April 2007, p. 20-26

¹¹ « Daniel Tanuro, le capitalisme ne sera jamais vert », Jean-Marc B.'s Blog, *Mediapart*, 6 March 2019, <https://blogs.mediapart.fr/jean-marc-b/blog/060319/daniel-tanuro-le-capitalisme-ne-sera-jamais-vert> (my translation). See also Costanza, Robert, et al, *Vivement 2050, programme pour une économie soutenable et désirable*, Paris, les petits matins, 2013

be thought of in the same way as in a capitalist system, and indeed calls into question its necessity.

As for the second path, Harribey - followed by many authors, particularly heterodox ones¹² - already suggested in 2011 that "*Tim Jackson wants prosperity without growth, but one may wonder if this vision does not hide the risk of growing social tensions around the world without shared prosperity*"¹³. This conclusion - which seems to be confirmed, for example, by the emergence of social movements such as the "Gilets jaunes" - suggests that redistribution mechanisms and social protection are threatened by the prospect of a capitalism without growth.

Even though its function appears fundamental in a period of transition, the question of the configuration, and possibly even of the survival of social protection, seems to be raised in the event of a capitalism without growth. But this reasoning, apparently coherent and ruthless, is in reality only a reflection of our inability to represent the world of tomorrow, the needs that will have to be covered, the societal functions that will have to be ensured and, consequently, of our inability to redefine a new "social and environmental contract" that is congruent and likely to meet the climate challenge. For instance in Belgium, an emblematic corporatist regime, major social actors have defined, after a long process of dialogue, a "social and environmental pact". Though interesting, the result, however, shows that social democracy comes up against its own limits when it comes to articulating social and environmental reason in the economic regime agreed upon in the aftermath of the Second World War: starting from the lucid diagnosis of a systemic and multidimensional crisis, the authors of the Pact do not really consider to review the system in depth, nor to question the postulate of growth¹⁴.

Hall defines the political paradigm shift as follows:

« policy makers customarily work within a framework of ideas and standard that specifies not only the goals of policy and the kind of instruments that can be used to attain them, but also the very nature of the problems they are meant to be addressing. Like a Gestalt, this framework is embedded in the very terminology through which policymakers communicate about their work, and it is influential precisely because so

¹² See, for example, Christophe Ramaux, member of the « Economistes atterrés » : " Les collapsologues ravalent le politique à un mode religieux », Tribune in *Le Monde* of 15 August 2019, https://www.lemonde.fr/idees/article/2019/08/15/christophe-ramaux-les-collapsologues-ravalent-le-politique-a-un-mode-religieux_5499586_3232.html

¹³ Harribey, « Un capitalisme sans croissance économique est-il possible ? », cited (my translation)

¹⁴ <http://www.pactesocialecologique.org>

much of it is taken for granted and unamenable to scrutiny as a whole. I am going to call this interpretive framework policy paradigm"¹⁵.

In short, trapped in the paradigm of capitalist social democracy, we are struggling to grasp the extent of the political paradigm shift needed for climate transition. The question therefore remains: pending the "great transformations" required by the climate change, in this "in-between" mentioned by Cassiers¹⁶, can social protection constitute a relevant lever for transition and/or resilience policies? And if so, in which configuration, determined by which set of ideas, values and fundamental assumptions, that is completely new and adapted to the global transition requirement?

1.2. Ecofeminism to transform the epistemic framework

Answering the above questions requires revitalizing reflection, for example by drawing from the sources that had thought from the outset the articulation of concerns that the paradigm we are leaving has dissociated or neglected: the interdependencies of the economy and ecology, of the human and nature, and within human communities themselves. It is in this perspective that a dive into the eco-feminist reading of the world can suggest a heuristic reading grid of the crisis and address relevant issues to social protection.

Ecofeminism is at the same time a philosophy, a mystique, an ethics, an aesthetics, and a political movement born of the conjunction of ecology and feminism that *"finds its unity in the intuitive link identified between instrumentalization and the will to control nature, and male domination over women or girls"*¹⁷. This link itself is inseparable from the exploitation of the countries of the South, and this triple exploitation is consubstantial to the birth and development of productivism. Larrère points out that the movement questions both traditional feminist currents - by claiming to be part of nature, in apparent conflict with feminists who fight against essentialism, and by not claiming rights for women, but rights for all -, and ecological movements - by reintroducing the feminine which permeates their cognitive approach and narrative, the form of their struggles, etc¹⁸. It avoids two pitfalls of ecological movements in that it *"does not advocate neither a scientific utopia, which leads to the artificialisation of life and to human control over nature and political power, nor a restorative utopia, which naturalises social relations and makes nature sacred"*¹⁹.

¹⁵ Hall, Peter A., "Policy Paradigms, Social Learning, and the State: The Case of Economic Policymaking in Britain", *Comparative Politics*, Vol. 25, No. 3, Apr., 1993, pp. 275-296

¹⁶ QUOTE THE ARTICLE! *Towards a post-growth society, integrating ecological, economic and social challenges*, Cassiers, Isabelle, Maréchal, Kevin and Méda, Dominique (Dir.), La Tour d'Aigues, Editions de l'Aube, 2017

¹⁷ Luyckx, Charlotte, verbo "Ecoféminisme" in *Dictionnaire de la pensée écologique*, supra (my translation)

¹⁸ Larrère, Catherine, "Postface, l'éco-féminisme ou comment faire de la politique autrement" in *Reclaim*, cited, pp. 372 to 388

¹⁹ Gandon, Anne-Line, "L'écoféminisme : une pensée féministe de la nature et de la société", *Recherches féministes*, vol. 22, n°1, 2009, pp. 5-25 (my translation)

Specialists in the environmental movement often have difficulty distinguishing this current from the "Deep ecology"²⁰. And indeed, the dictionary of ecological thought defines this movement as "*an intellectual nebula in which elements of spirituality and religion, data of scientific analysis and metaphysical proposals are indistinguishably mixed, making extensive use of myth, narrative and poetry*"²¹. Afeissa shows that the two currents have never ceased to influence and enrich each other. Ecofeminists recognize deep ecology for having identified as fundamental the problem of the metaphasic discontinuity between human beings and nature, and criticized, from this point on, the way environmentalists pose ethical questions. However, more radical, ecofeminists consider that the problem of nature/humanity discontinuity itself must be understood as part of a set of interconnections, consisting of disjunctive and exclusive conceptual pairs (universal vs particular, abstract vs concrete, rational vs emotional, human vs natural, male vs female etc.), characterized by a hierarchy of values between the two poles²². This system constitutes a "*conceptual framework of oppression*"²³, a set of beliefs, values, attitudes and theoretical hypotheses articulated by a logic of domination - i.e. a structure of argumentation that makes oppression conceivable while legitimizing it. This is what allows Luyckx to affirm that:

*"the critique of modern anthropocentrism characteristic of deep ecology is transformed, from the point of view of eco-feminism, into a critique of androcentrism: the anthropos of modern anthropocentrism is not an abstract human being, but rather the generalization of a particular case - the white, Western man - and of the same structure of domination that prevails over sexual, racial, cultural or natural otherness"*²⁴.

Eco-feminists plan to deconstruct this "oppressive conceptual framework" to overcome the systems of domination that permeate our culture. But in challenging this paradigm, their struggle is not to claim "male" values. On the contrary, it aims to re-appropriate, reinvent and revalue ("*Reclaim*"²⁵) the feminine side of these values, by assuming the connection of the Land and the feminine, and by proposing to rehabilitate all the "inferior" values of the conceptual framework of oppression, in order to build a new model of society. This is why the

²⁰ Initiated by an article by Arne Naess in 1973: Naess, Arne, "The Shallow and the Deep Long Range Ecology Movement", *Inquiry*, 1973/16, pp. 95-100

²¹ Afeissa, Hicham-Stéphane, verbo "Deep Ecology" in *Dictionary of Ecological Thinking* above (my translation)

²² Plumwood, Val. "Nature, Self, and Gender: Feminism, Environmental Philosophy, and the Critique of Rationalism." *Hypatia*, vol. 6, no. 1, 1991, pp. 3-27, quoted by Afeissa, "Solidarité versus identification, le débat entre écoféminisme et deep ecology", *Multitudes*, 2017/2 (n°67), pp. 94 à 101

²³ Warren, Karen J., "The promise and power of ecofeminism", *Environmental Ethics* 12 (2), 1990, pp. 125-46, quoted by Afeissa, « Solidarité versus identification », above

²⁴ Luyckx, supra (my translation)

²⁵ The beautiful title of Emilie Hache's collection, mentioned above

movement differs from other forms of feminism (notably Beauvoir's²⁶) and has even been described as "essentialist", whereas the very fundamental difference with this current of feminism, lies in the fact that eco-feminism is not based on a discourse of "complementarity" between men - assimilated to the "masculine" - and women - assimilated to the "feminine" - but on the contrary aims at a re-appropriation by all human beings of the "feminine" values and links to the land, that the conceptual framework of oppression of productivism has confiscated from all. This is well about the profound transform of what can now be characterized as a "political paradigm", following Hall's definition.

The literature reviews which we draw upon agree to qualify the importance of the dissensions within the movement, highlighted by some scholars. Divergence is often only apparent and in reality rather represents a variety of points of view related to the dimensions of the conceptual framework that are being challenged (religious, political, philosophical, aesthetic, etc.), sometimes to the diversity of experience of the authors - that of an indigenous Amerindian defending her land from shale gas extraction, an Indian woman who fights against deforestation, a botanist who is aware of the harmful effects of pesticides during her walks, or an intellectual trained in the most prestigious French schools. These perspectives guide the diagnosis of the crisis, the emphasis on a materialistic or rather spiritualist approach, or the representation of the link between women and nature.

Like *deep ecology*, however, ecofeminism is a current that is difficult to identify according to the usual scientific criteria. If we disregard the secondary literature, which attempts to define and to summarize what ecofeminism is (and to which this text belongs), we are referred to a corpus that develops over a long period of time (we can already cite, for example, in 1962, "Silent Spring", Carson's *bestseller* on pesticides, whose title refers to a spring when we would not hear birds singing anymore because they would all die from pesticides)²⁷, and knows its most prolific production in the 1980s. It should be noted that it was Françoise d'Eaubonne who, in 1978, coined the term "ecofeminism" in her seminal book "Écologie et féminisme, révolution ou mutation" (written in 1974)²⁸.

Proteiform corpus, some of whose major "gestures" are poems, manifestos, lists of aphorisms or other texts/works of different kinds, which often hybridizes various registers of discourse (scientific, spiritual, political, artistic)²⁹. Corpus, which resists integration into scientific discourse, in line with the criticism of modern science, driven by the movement, for which this science is closely linked to productivism, favours a mechanistic and abstract approach, and

²⁶ See Gandon, *supra*

²⁷ Carson, Rachel, *Silent Spring*, Houghton Mifflin, 1962

²⁸ See d'Eaubonne, Françoise, *Écologie et féminisme, révolution ou mutation*, 2nd ed., Libre et solidaire, 2018. However, Anne-Line GANDON refers to one of her earlier works, from 1972, entitled *Le féminisme* ("L'écoféminisme ..."; *supra*).

²⁹ Hache, Emilie, "Introduction - Reclaim Ecofeminism !", in *Reclaim, ...*, *op. cit.*

specifically male modes of thought (reductionist, objectivist, universalist)³⁰. Luyckx observes that this criticism *"is accompanied by a criticism of the clear distinction between the scientific and the layman, which modern science carries and which would have discredited a body of traditional knowledge, carried largely by women"*³¹. By virtue of the inseparable, political and epistemological dimensions of this critique of science, ecofeminists will favour a pragmatic, sensitive, emotional, materialistic approach; a holistic, subjective and particularistic approach, which would rather be a "feminine" one; as well as productions that ignore disciplinary divisions linked to the conventional registers of narrative. For ecofeminist Mellor (1997), *"knowledge of the natural world is a "conversation", not a discovery"*³². This fundamental critique of modern science, which may seem peripheral to our purpose, is in fact central to understanding the eco-feminist diagnosis of the environmental crisis and its proposals for a paradigm shift.

Part Two: Reconfiguring social protection systems

2.1. The eco-feminist diagnosis of the crisis

The narrative itself - the narrative of origins, of original accumulation, etc. - is at the heart of many texts³³, as if this "tradition" (in the etymological sense) of the narrative by women also constituted a fundamental issue of *reclaiming* and re-appropriation. Hache considers that the importance of the narrative in the ecofeminist thinking reflects the concern to go beyond the register of criticism by elaborating it from the distinct worlds that narratives build³⁴. But the invention and tradition of a new narrative is also one of the indispensable elements of a political paradigm shift defined by Hall.

Caliban and the Witch, an essay by Silvia Federici, is an emblematic example of this, allowing us to take a different look at contemporary capitalism. By studying the transition to modernity at the end of the Middle Ages, the author shows that witch-hunting and slavery are two analogous forms of domination that reflect the systematic enslavement of women, and the monopolization of the resources of the New World, and allow, in the service of emerging capitalism, the simultaneous transformation of gender relations, of the relationship with nature - through its privatization - and of human labour³⁵.

³⁰ Luyckx, Charlotte, *supra*; Hache, Emilie, *supra*

³¹ Op. cit. See also Gandon, *supra*.

³² Mellor, Mary, *Feminism and Ecology*, New York University Press, 1997, cited by Gandon. In a similar sense, although in a completely different tradition, see Supiot's beautiful text : Supiot, Alain, "Du savoir à la connaissance de la pauvreté", in *Quand les plus pauvres deviennent acteurs*, Mireille Delmas-Marty and André Vauchez (Eds), Paris, Académie des inscriptions et Belles-Lettres, 2019, pp. 65-74

³³ See the *Reclaim* anthology, *supra*

³⁴ Hache, Emilie, "Introduction...", *supra*

³⁵ Federici, Silvia, *Caliban and the witch*, Autonomedia, 2004

When we look at those of these stories that favour a political approach³⁶, we understand that for eco-feminists, the original accumulation is based on the dual domination of land and women, the two being intrinsically linked and subject to identical modes of domination. Women, because they are in charge of the reproduction - blind angle, not counted, of the productivist economies - ; it is the exploitation of their bodies, and the tasks of care and attention that they perform on a free basis that justifies patriarchal domination, characterized by inequalities and gender violence. Conceived as an unlimited resource, susceptible to appropriation by any means, including violence, land is the other blind angle of the system. The eco-feminist narrative, declined in multiple forms, carries a series of invariants, such as the criticism of "illimitism"³⁷, of the disconnection between the system and its material conditions of reproduction, and of the denial of interdependence. Relevant for a diagnosis of the regimes in which social protection is embedded, and to better understand its function in a new policy paradigm, we explore them further in the following lines.

Criticism of "illimitim" and growth:

Françoise d'Eaubonne is a pioneer in the theory of negative growth (it seems that she has invented the term "décroissance", that is used in French for "negative growth"). She devoted an entire chapter of her book "Ecologie et féminisme"³⁸ in 1978 – written in 1974 - to³⁸ denouncing the "imposture of growth" (it is surprising that Serge Latouche, who wrote the preface to her reissue in 2018, did not mention her in the verbo "décroissance" entrusted to her by the Dictionnaire de la pensée écologique³⁹). She challenges productivism, which characterizes both the "administered economy" and capitalism, two modes of development that are equally patriarchal and destructive of nature. She also denounces green growth or sustainable development, which she considers to be another sham. For her, "illimitism" (another term in her pen), which simultaneously leads to overconsumption of resources and galloping demographics, in response to a perpetual economic injunction in the service of growth, is the implicit, founding premise of the principle of domination by both nature and women.

However, the answer does not necessarily lie in reducing GDP:

"No one seems to remember that growth is not necessarily linked to the market economy, or a sign of exchange; and that if, for example, the working time freed by the

Supprimé: La domination patriarcale a construit un monde de valeurs, pratiques, épistémies « masculines », qui ont conduit à la déconnexion de l'humain et de la nature. Reléguées par la division du travail aux tâches de « care », ce sont les femmes qui, de manière empirique, pragmatique, ont gardé avec la terre une relation d'alliance, et c'est par elle, par la réappropriation de leurs savoirs, de leurs pratiques, que l'humanité pourra renouer un pacte nouveau avec la nature. Cette dernière conviction, plus largement explorée par des écoféministes issues des pays du Sud – qui souvent travaillent la terre au quotidien - , enrichit le récit de l'accumulation primitive d'une troisième dimension, indissociable des deux premières, la domination des Suds, à travers l'esclavage, la colonisation et toutes les formes contemporaines d'accaparement des terres et d'exploitation de la main-d'œuvre.

³⁶ Among the best known are Mies, M. and Shiva, V., *Ecofeminism*, London, Zed Books, 1993; Mellor, Mary, *Breaking the Boundaries. Towards a Feminist Green Socialism*, London, Virago Press, 1992; Mellor, Mary, *Feminism and Ecology*, New York University Press, 1997; Warren, Karen, *Ecological Feminism*, London, Routledge, 1994; Plant Judith (ed.), *Healing the Wounds: The Promise of Ecofeminism*, London, Green Print, 1989 and Salleh, Ariel, "Nature, woman, labor, capital: Living the deepest contradiction", *Capitalism Nature Socialism*, 6:1, 1995, pp. 21-39

³⁷ A transliteration of d'Eaubonne's neologism "unlimitedism"

³⁸ D'Eaubonne, *supra*.

³⁹ Latouche, Serge, verbo *Décroissance*, in *Dictionnaire de la pensée écologique*, *supra*

ban on the nuclear power, on the plastic manufacturing industry, the suppression of advertising, etc., were applied to maximum reforestation and resurrection of the soil, not only would "well-being" not only be reduced (while lowering GNP), but growth (in terms of resources and quality) would tend to be achieved – a growth that would not be traditionally "economic"⁴⁰.

Many authors - after d'Eaubonne - have in turn questioned the political relevance and normative legitimacy of the dogma of economic growth, at the heart of the neo-liberal agenda⁴¹. One may, with them, wonder whether GDP is the appropriate measure of prosperity - the work of Cassiers and Thiry is emblematic in this respect - and more generally, with Latour *"how to accept that economic theories that are incapable of integrating into their calculations the scarcity of resources whose exhaustion they were intended to predict?"*⁴². In the same vein as Harribey, Christophe Ramaux, "économiste atterré"⁴³, known for his heterodox positions and his commitment to the social state, states: *"And let us not deceive the world: the sustainability of pensions, the increase in purchasing power for the greatest number of people, the satisfaction of social and ecological needs cannot be achieved, at constant GDP, solely by reducing inequalities"*⁴⁴. But why could social and ecological needs not be met, *"at constant GDP, only by reducing inequalities"*... Why not? Is it not above all - growth or decline - a matter of political choice - and of the ability to impose it⁴⁵? In the light of the writings of d'Eaubonne, the reasoning that we had developed under point 1.1., and which seemed to be obvious, actually testified to our inclusion in the productivist paradigm, which leads us to admit as intangible a series of assumptions.

Criticism of the denial of material conditions of production (reproduction):

Eco-feminists consider that patriarchal and nature domination has built a world of values, practices, "masculine" epistemic, which necessarily leads to the disconnection of human beings and nature - a disconnection that in turn reinforces patriarchal domination. Women - and with them reproduction in its broadest sense - have been driven back to nature, while being torn from it in different ways (disciplining and medicalizing women's bodies, moving to intensive agriculture, etc.). The epistemic and political approach of ecofeminists, which leads

⁴⁰ D'Eaubonne, supra (my translation)

⁴¹ See for example Meda, Dominique, *La Mystique de la croissance. Comment s'en libérer ?*, Flammarion, 2013 ; Thiry, G r aldine, « L' conomie  cologique pour penser la post-croissance et fa onner de nouveaux indicateurs de soutenabilit  », in Cassiers, Isabelle ; Mar chal, Kevin et Meda, Dominique, *Vers une soci t  post-croissance. Int grer les d fis  cologiques,  conomiques et sociaux*, L'aube, 2017, pp. 153   180. and Arnsperger, supra

⁴² Latour, Bruno, *O  atterrir? Comment s'orienter en politique*, Paris, La D couverte, 2017, p. 86 (my translation)

⁴³ A left wing, heterodox, movement of economist scholars in France

⁴⁴ Ramaux, supra

⁴⁵ See, for example, the more nuanced conclusions of Chancel, C. ; Demailly, L. ; Waisman, D. ; Guivarch, C., « Une soci t  post-croissance pour le xxi  si cle - Peut-on prosp rer sans attendre le retour de la croissance ? », *Studies* n 08/13, Iddri, Paris, France, 80 p.

them to reject classical science as mentioned above, also leads to denouncing the disconnection that technocratic management - inherent in productivism - produces between reality and its representation - which is what Françoise d'Eaubonne's reading (and in particular her criticism of the fetishism of growth) suggests since 1978. This system of "governance by numbers" was later convincingly criticized by Supiot⁴⁶.

The eco-feminist need for "Reclaim", of a re-appropriation, a re-invention, arises from these observations, and involves the reintroduction of different, sensitive, cognitive modes, and the transmission of traditional knowledge, often held by women, which reopens an appropriate political space. For Hache, *"these women tell us the importance of inventing a sensitive relationship with nature to defend it and to defend ourselves, to come out of the dominant epistemology of an objective, inert and external nature, not only theoretically, but politically, physically, sensually"*⁴⁷.

Relegated by the division of labour to the tasks of "care", it is women who, in an empirical, pragmatic way, have kept an alliance relationship with the land, and it is through them, by re-appropriating their knowledge and practices, that humanity will be able to renew a new pact with nature. This latter conviction, more widely explored by eco-feminists from the countries of the South - who often work the land on a daily basis - enriches the account of the primitive accumulation of a third dimension, inseparable from the first two : the domination of the South, through slavery, colonization and all contemporary forms of land grabbing and human labour exploitation.

Criticism of the negation of interdependence:

Far from the coldness of modern science, the way eco-feminists view the world is inclined to grasp it in terms of "systems of generation", rather than of "systems of production", a fertile opposition that we borrow from Latour⁴⁸, for whom *"the system of generation is not interested in producing goods for humans from resources, but in generating the "earthians" - all the inhabitant of the planet and not only humans. It is based on the idea of cultivating attachments, an operation that is all the more difficult because the animates are not limited by borders and do not cease to overlap and become entangled in each other"*. And indeed, far from conceiving the individual as an isolated human being, eco-feminist thinking views him as a vulnerable being, inserted in complex bonds of material dependence with the Earth (nature, living beings), on the one hand, and with Others, on the other. It also conceives the different forms of domination (of women, of the land, of the South) as linked - and even inseparable -

⁴⁶ In this regard, read Alain Supiot's fundamental work in the book "La gouvernance par les nombres, cours du Collège de France 2012-2016", Paris, Fayard, 2016

⁴⁷ Hache, "introduction", above

⁴⁸ Latour, *supra* (my translation)

because of their common modes of exploitation, their identical purposes, the analogous way in which they are embedded in the conceptual framework of oppression and their destiny: productivism cannot do without any⁴⁹.

By entrenching us, these multiple, crossed, interdependencies impose a convergence of struggles. This is well illustrated by the quotation from Mediapart, highlighted in this article, an expressed by Yayo Herrero, Spanish ecofeminist, who speaks of "cannibal economy":

"The liberation of women consisted in liberating some, at the cost of slavery of others. Every person or collective who lives with more resources than those provided by their territory always does so to the detriment of other territories, depriving these territories of their property or people of the opportunities to build life (...) For a long time it has been maintained through immense flows of energy and materials, as well as through the expulsion of residues to other places, but also through the capture of people from these same places who come here to work. »⁵⁰

2.2. Eco-feminist principles to transform social protection

Tomorrow - today – the question will no longer be to support consumption, as in the Keynesian approach, nor to reduce the socialized budget, in order to financialize the economy, as in a neo-liberal approach. Above all, we will have to think about how we, together, are going to meet new individual and collective needs in a globalized world with depleted resources or resources to preserve. Eco-feminists *"reconnect what the development of modern society had separated: social, biological and environmental reproduction"*⁵¹, and it is reasonable - and intuitive - to think that this reconnection is part of the solution.

It is likely that an assembly of eco-feminists would adopt a radically different economic system than the one we know, and it is difficult to imagine the function and physiognomy that social protection would have there. Recently - and despite their reluctance to politically invest public institutions, which they conceive as superstructures of productivism, and therefore incompatible with the revolution they call for - ecofeminists have asserted themselves in the political arena, especially at the international level, with a series of concrete proposals⁵². In this "in-between", we set out here, for our part, some fundamental principles that can be drawn from their thinking in the field of social protection. From the eco-feminist diagnosis

⁴⁹ Emile Hache expresses this connection as follows: *"These forms of oppression are "not only factually contemporary but are interrelated, namely one is based on the other and vice versa, like a Möbius ribbon; women are inferior (but also irrational, more sensitive, impure, etc.) because they are closer to nature and the desacralization - but also the exploitation - of nature is based on feminization".* (Hache, introduction, above – my translation).

⁵⁰ Batalla Cueto, supra (my translation)

⁵¹ Larrère, supra

⁵² See for instance the « Contribution pour une transition écologique sociale et féministe » for the G7, open to the signature of civil society organisations :www.adequations.org/spip.php?article2541

formulated above, we can deduce an ethic based on generation (in the sense of Latour), which rehabilitates the issue of reproduction in the broad sense (as opposed to production), based on the values of benevolence, *care*, solidarity, and autonomy. From these values, guiding principles can be deduced to ensure that social protection is consistent with climate transition.

Compassion and solidarity

The interpretation grid in terms of "generating system" necessarily imposes a requirement of benevolence and solidarity towards the Other, the most vulnerable, such as us involved in the race towards /against disaster. In the field of social protection, at least two dimensions are concerned by this issue. The first concerns *financing*: it is no longer a question of "sharing the fruits of growth", as the expression is used, but precisely... to distribute and allocate wealth. Reducing inequalities does not appear here as an end in itself⁵³ but rather as a means of achieving the objectives of the system *without resorting to growth*. From the point of view of social protection, it is a revolution; from the point of view of eco-feminism, it is a categorical imperative, justified by the radical rejection of productivism and of the violence of all forms of exploitation and appropriation that it implies, with regard to the Earth, "animates" and human beings.

The second dimension concerns the *scope* of social protection: from an eco-feminist perspective, all human beings must participate in the system; if we have to keep it within geographical limits (this is one of the inherent, essential, characteristics of a social protection system), it should be defined in line with the concrete project being pursued by the system (it could be the European Union for certain aspects, or local or regional mutualization systems for others) and it is no longer conceivable to exclude migrants, undocumented people or to make it more difficult for certain categories, such as women, to access.

It follows from the above that the *social compromise* can no longer be based solely on the capital-labour alliance, and moves towards a capital/exploited, excluded, etc. alliance, which must give full place to the representatives of "reproduction" (social economy, education, health, human rights, etc.). In this sense, for Plumwood, "*The fundamental concept required for the development of an appropriate activist environmental ethic is not that of identity or unity (or conversely, that of difference), but that of solidarity - the establishment with the other - natural - of a supportive relationship in the political sense*"⁵⁴.

Reproduction and care

⁵³ Nuance that distinguishes this proposal from that of Laurent and Pochet, mentioned above

⁵⁴ Plumwood, Val, cited by Afeissa - above

We have not deliberately resorted to the notion of "care" - that does not come from the eco-feminist tradition⁵⁵. However, the "care ethic" as proposed by Tronto (and defined as a *"species activity that includes everything that we do to maintain, continue, and repair our 'world' so that we can live in it as well as possible. That world includes our bodies, our selves, and our environment, all of which we seek to interweave in a complex, life-sustaining web"*⁵⁶) reflects their analyses and proposals. In the field of social protection, care ethics has many applications, but an eco-feminist perspective leads to the identification of three important aspects.

The first concerns *the benefits*, the material scope of social protection. The examples of Ramaux⁵⁷ cited above once again show the difficulty of thinking about the major issues - which will determine basic needs - outside the traditional risks covered by social protection⁵⁸; Ramaux refers to pensions or purchasing power, where a small effort of imagination suggests that the demands of human communities that will require the priority allocation of available resources - and therefore their sharing - will probably rather be: access to drinking water, physical shelter from extreme temperatures, food, clean mobility etc. From a "care" perspective, priority must be given to guaranteeing the vital needs (in the sense of a dignified life) for all. And, to take into account the criticism of the consumer society - and to counter windfall effects - benefits in kind should be favoured where possible. In this respect, the *universal public service*⁵⁹ instrument, which is familiar in Beveridgian and Scandinavian social protection systems, appears to be an appropriate form of coverage that can be extended to services other than health care (water, energy, mobility, etc.).

The second aspect concerns *health care*, precisely, which the eco-feminist approach calls for a radical reconsideration, to enable patients to maintain control of their health and access to necessary care, while containing medical overconsumption (it is therefore imperative to stop thinking about health care systems in the service of growth points). Public health services must be given priority over fee-for-service systems - where supply determines demand - and relations with pharmaceutical companies must be redefined: it seems difficult to conceive of as "partners" private actors who can permanently influence the supply of medicines in order to maximize their profit. Finally, decentralized systems, which make it possible to approach

⁵⁵ Voir Ferrarese, Estelle, "Vivre à la merci. Le care et les trois figures de la vulnérabilité dans les théories politiques contemporaines, *Multitudes*, 2009/2, n°37-38, pp. 132-141

⁵⁶ Fisher, Bernice, and Joan C. Tronto. "Toward a Feminist Theory of Care." In *Circles of Care: Work and Identity in Women's Lives*, edited by Emily K. Abel and Margaret K. Nelson. State University of New York Press, 1990.

⁵⁷ See supra PRECISE WHERE, but there is an identical problem in Chancel et al.

⁵⁸ C102 - Social Security (Minimum Standards) Convention, 1952 (No. 102)

⁵⁹ Coyle, Diane. "Universal basic services are more important than income", *Financial Times*, 20 April 2017 ; Portes, Jonathan ; Reed, Howard ; Percy, Andrew, *"Social prosperity for the future: A proposal for Universal Basic Services"* London, UCL Institute for Global Prosperity, 2017

(https://www.ucl.ac.uk/bartlett/igp/sites/bartlett/files/universal_basic_services_-_the_institute_for_global_prosperity_.pdf, accessed August 15, 2019).

the patient in a holistic way by adjusting preventive, curative and palliative approaches as closely as possible, are the most consistent with an ecofeminist vision. Particular attention will be paid to the de-medicalization of women's bodies, particularly - but not only - in terms of reproduction and of re-appropriation of control on their bodies and fertility⁶⁰.

Care ethics obviously invites us to reconsider a third aspect, that of the *reevaluation of reproductive tasks* - what is now grasped under the aseptic term "reconciliation of family and professional life". From an eco-feminist perspective, it is a question of designing mechanisms that guarantee the right to be cared for when one is in a vulnerable situation, but also the right not to care for a specific person (an obligation that generally falls on women). In this regard, we refer to our previous work, which indicates how social protection can play a decisive role, not by providing a maternal salary or by women giving up these responsibilities, but by means of mechanisms guaranteeing the sharing between women and men of both the time and the resources required for this purpose.⁶¹

Interdependence and autonomy

For Latour, it is appropriate to "*abandon the emancipation project for the newly recovered virtues of dependency. Dependency first limits, then complicates, then forces us to resume the emancipation project, and finally leads to amplify it*"⁶². In an equally paradoxical way, in the eco-feminist vision, the observation of interdependence invites us to promote *empowerment*, but an entrenched, rooted *empowerment*, situated in a territory and a human collective that will make it possible to value the practices, know-how, values, feelings, aptitudes etc. relegated as "feminine" by the division of labour, and necessary for the transition. It will also allow each individual to control his own destiny and transform himself *into a "site of resistance to power"*⁶³. The notion therefore has both a meaning of individual autonomy, the ability to connect with the Earth and others, and the ability to reclaim political space..." *Reclaim*". Conceived in this way, *empowerment* becomes a necessary condition for both resilience and the ecological and social innovations necessary for transition⁶⁴.

It is the *very purpose of social protection* that must be rethought in this light: rather than "colonizing the lived world", rather than regulating social practices, it must ensure the material conditions for enabling collective initiatives of resilience and transition, at the as near

⁶⁰ See Tabet, Paola, "Fertilité naturelle, fertilité forcée", in Nicole-Claude Mathieu (dir.), *L'arrondissement des femmes*. Paris, École en hautes études en sciences sociales, 1985 pp. 61-146.

⁶¹ Vielle, Pascale, *La sécurité sociale et le coût indirect des responsabilités familiales. A gender approach*, Brussels, Bruylant, 2001

⁶² Latour, supra, p. 107 (my translation)

⁶³ Afeissa, "Solidarité vs Identification...", supra (my translation)

⁶⁴ Convinced by this principle, ecofeminist movements have experimented with collective, often lesbian, self-managed forms of life in symbiosis with nature. See for example Flamant, Françoise, *Women's Lands Construction d'une utopie, Oregon, USA, 1970-2010*, Donnemarie-Dontilly, IXe Editions, series "Fonctions dérivées", 2015. But Latour, mentioned above, evokes in the same idea, the ZADs, "Zones to be defended", like Notre-Dame-des-Landes

to grass roots level as possible⁶⁵. This implies going beyond the model of the active social state, as it was elaborated in the 1990s⁶⁶, in that it was conceived both in terms of a synallagmatic contract - rather than the support of initiatives of general interest - and in the productivist paradigm - rather than in that of reproduction.

Yayo Herrera defines a common good as "*a source of life, something necessary to sustain life and around which exists a community that organizes itself to administer and care for it. What is necessary for life, being limited, must be managed together*"⁶⁷. Social protection must provide the material conditions that enable everyone to manage the common goods. But *it is itself a common good* and, in this sense - and despite the propensity of eco-feminists to reject institutions and reinvent politics away from the state⁶⁸ - a political place to reinvest. To use Ewald's expression, it must once again become "*the last place where society negotiates with itself*" and, in terms of *governance*, be determined by all its stakeholders, starting with its beneficiaries.

We could not conclude this article without stressing that an ethic of reproduction, according to an eco-feminist approach, is based on an equitable allocation of resources, and that one of the fundamental resources involved in reproduction (in the strict sense: conceiving and raising children; in the broad sense, caring for others, "animates, the Earth, ensuring transmission) is *time*, at individual and collective level. This time is necessary to cultivate the bond with others, the bond with the Land, and to reclaim political space. Social protection, because it aims to guarantee material resources, is a valuable tool for *liberation and time sharing*. Social protection is therefore, from an eco-feminist perspective, a relevant instrument for "*making ecology a reproductive issue in the broad sense*"⁶⁹.

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⁶⁵ See in this respect the concept of polycentric governance developed by , Bauwens, Thomas et Mertens, Sybille, « Economie sociale et gouvernance polycentrique de la transition » in *Vers une société post-croissance précitée*, pp. 89-101. "*Thinking in terms of polycentric governance means that we rely on two key concepts: on the one hand, the relevance of localism and, on the other hand, the capacity for self-organization of actors.*" (my translation)

⁶⁶ Vielle, Pascale; Pochet, Philippe; Cassiers, Isabelle, *L'Etat social actif, vers un changement de paradigme ?*, Pie P. Lang, 2005

⁶⁷ Batalla Cueto, above (my translation)

⁶⁸ Larrère, *supra*

⁶⁹ Hache, *supra* (my translation)

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