

Goran Đurđević i Suzana Marjanić
(ed.)

Ecofeminism on the Edge: Theory and Practice

Emerald Publishing Limited, Leeds,
2023, pp. 463

The book "Ecofeminism on the Edge: Theory and Practice" is published as part of the series "Women, Economy, and Labour Relations", edited by Martina Topić. The vastness of this edition is evident from the title, which does not limit itself to a single dimension of ecofeminism. By gathering 21 authors, it offers a spectrum of disciplinary perspectives while demonstrating the theoretical, academic, political, artistic, activist, and lifestyle dimensions of ecofeminism. In addition to featuring some well-known figures in ecofeminism, the empowering intention of the editors, Goran Đurđević and Suzana Marjanić, is apparent in their efforts to encourage and include young ecofeminists in the discussion and to expand the themes of the papers beyond the boundaries of the West. The collection consists of a total of 16 texts divided into three chapters: *Ecofem-Theories and Discourses*, *Ecofem-Art*, and *Ecofem-Practices*. These are preceded by short biographies of the authors and editors, a foreword by Martina Topić, and an introduction by Goran Đurđević and Suzana Marjanić. In her foreword, Topić elaborates on the unique advantage of the ecofeminist approach in today's context of global problems such as climate change, emphasising the role of ecofeminism as an alternative to technicism and anthropocentrism and highlighting its global character. In the introduction, the editors present the concept of ecofeminism and its specificities that distinguish it from other ecological philosophies, also giving space

to vegan ecofeminism and emphasising the personal-political dimension.

The first chapter, *Ecofem-Theories and Discourses*, begins with a text by Tara Kalaputi titled "Humans and the More-Than-Human World: Political Solidarity Against Eco-Social Oppression." The author discusses the role of nature or the non-human world in the political struggle against eco-social oppression through a review and analysis of various arguments present in contemporary ecofeminist theory. Kalaputi highlights the ongoing problem of incorporating nature into philosophical discussions on eco-social oppression and emphasises the importance of further discourse on the relationship between nature, society, and politics. She underscores the need to develop a common political language that does not exclude the non-human world and is based on political solidarity. The next work, by Sandra Iršević, titled "The Portal Audience: Ecofeminism on Social Networks," presents the results of a content analysis of the *Ecofeminism* portal, focusing on the active role of the audience and interpreting them in the context of the current state of the ecofeminist movement in Serbia. She highlights its potential for development hidden in virtual space. Goran Đurđević and Suzana Marjanić offer a review of the beginnings and development of ecofeminism in South-eastern Europe up to the present in their text titled "Ecofeminist voices from Southeastern Europe." The value of this text lies in its coverage of different forms of ecofeminism. The authors point out the emergence of the ecofeminist approach at the theoretical and academic levels in the mid-1990s, followed by an analysis of the relationship between ecofeminism and the media. The paper also addresses ecofeminist lifestyles using examples of ecofeminist villages and the political dimension of ecofeminism through

the political activism of formal and informal organisations in this area. Finally, the authors point to the increasing presence of ecofeminist themes in art, especially visual arts and literature. Magdalena Bogustawska presents an ecofeminist analysis of Slavic gymnastics for women in her paper titled “The Ecofeminist Capacities of Slavic Gymnastics for Women.” She outlines the development of the concept of Slavic gymnastics from its association with the Sokol movement, which was based on patriarchal ideology, masculine body ideals, and ethical perfectionism, to its current role as an alternative to patriarchy. Unlike the patriarchal approach based on hierarchical and dependent relationships, the new form of Slavic gymnastics offers the possibility of liberation from social oppression and limitations. The author cites Polish green Slavdom as an example of Slavic gymnastics that leads to self-transformation and control over one’s own life, where Slaviness and femininity, often suppressed values in Polish society, are actualised in the context of ecosystem vulnerability. The last text of the first part of the book is by Sara Czerny titled “Writing ‘for’ the Cows: Ecofeminism, Anthropology, and Disciplinarity,” which discusses academic and engaged anthropology and its potential ecofeminist contribution to this discussion. Her anthropological case study on cows and milk demonstrates the usefulness of an ecofeminist analytical approach in revealing networks of relationships between different actors that ultimately determine the position of cows in today’s milk production.

The second chapter, *Ecofem-Art*, offers ecofeminist analyses of various artworks. The first work, by Ana Vukmanović, titled “Maidens in the World of Herbs: Poetic Reflexes of the Herbal Magic in South Slavic Oral Lyric Songs,” presents an analysis of oral lyric songs from the South Slavic region that thematise the magical powers of plants and the relationship of female heroines with

the plant world. The author emphasises how female magic points to the connection between nature and the universe, as well as the conflicting dimensions of the world, thereby offering certain power to women in a patriarchal society. This is followed by another ecofeminist analysis of the literary work titled “Fisherman Plunk’s Supper: A Feminist-Vegan Reading of a Fairy Tale” by the famous writer Ivana Brlić Mažuranić. Lada Čale Feldman offers a new subversive reading of the popular author, pointing to the presence of alternative vegetarian ideology in the work, where literary characters befriend animals and do not eat them, while those who behave otherwise are punished. Given the increasing presence of female characters in the traditionally masculine genre of science fiction, authors Marija Geiger Zeman, Mirela Holy, and Brigita Miloš decided to delve into this area and wrote a paper titled “Searching for ‘A Green Place’ in a World of ‘Fire and Blood’: An (Eco)Feminist Reading of the Mad Max: Fury Road,” in which they highlight various (eco)feminist elements in the film. These include breaking gender stereotypes, the presence of (eco) feminist heroines, the role of hegemonic masculinity and the patriarchal (post)capitalist system in the destruction of the world, as well as the idea of sisterhood. The film art is also the subject of a paper by Nataša Govedić titled “Agnes Varda: How Do We Embody the World,” which analyses Agnes Varda’s film “La Pointe Courte”. Govedić discusses the depicted relationship of economic exploitation of individuals and the entire system, raising questions about the necessity of discussing issues related to the ecological crisis, rejecting silence, the role of the director in presenting a critical perspective, and the new relationship between nature and humans that is not under the imperative of productivity. The chapter dedicated to ecofeminist art concludes with two analyses of visual artworks. The first

is an analysis by Barbara Martinović titled “An Ecofeminist Approach to Paula Rego’s Dog Women,” which examines a series of visual representations that resist traditional dualisms and question concepts such as nature, gender, and interspecies relations present in the history of art. This is followed by a paper by Jadranka Ryle titled “Queer Island Feminism in Magda Dulčić’s Comics,” which demonstrates how Dulčić’s comics involve queer-embodied autography, where the space of the island plays an important role not only as a context but also as an actor that shapes and ultimately merges with identity. The paper highlights the connection with nature and the fluidity of identity.

The third chapter, *Ecofem-Practices*, begins with a paper by Maryse Helbert titled “The Space Between Motherhood and Mother Earth: An Ecofeminist Analysis of the Post-Development Model in Bolivia.” The author presents the post-development model implemented in Bolivia in response to the current climate crisis and the unsustainable practices of global capitalism. Despite certain positive aspects of this model, the author observes the presence of maternalism and gender-binary rigidity that prevent the emancipation of women in certain social positions. She highlights the importance of continuously detecting other forms of domination in new models, that is, the need for a paradigm shift that moves away from the subordination of nature and women. Another text placed in a non-European context is by Joy Ogbemudia and Karen Vollum-Dix, titled “Women’s Lives and Agriculture in Rural Nigeria: An Ecofeminist analysis,” written using an interesting new qualitative method – a duo-ethnographic discussion between two ecofeminist researchers. Intending to understand the relationship between Nigerian women and agriculture, the authors examine the intertwining of environmental politics and hegemonic masculinity and their role in that relationship. Spanish researcher

Clara Esteve Jordà, in her text “Ecofeminizing Law: Some Notions Toward Rethinking Law for Equity and Sustainability” discusses the concepts of Anthropocene and “Manthropocene,” or “Andropocene,” highlighting the unjust distribution of resources among different individuals, where the exploitation of women through traditional gender roles played a very important part. The author explains the role of law as a legitimising factor of capitalist patriarchy and points to its crucial role in the fight against the Anthropocene by introducing a gender and ecological perspective, or the creation of ecofeminist law based on care, leading to a world of equity and sustainability. The last part of the book is dedicated to inspirational texts in the form of an essay by Bénédicte Meillon, who discusses the various possibilities of ecofeminist action and its complexity, calling for sisterhood among women, and an interview with the world-renowned Australian ecofeminist Ariel Salleh. The common denominator of all the presented texts is clear: the power of ecofeminism as an alternative epistemology that does not fall into the capitalist trap unlike liberal and socialist feminism, and offers hope in the fight against anthropocentric culture.

This collection has demonstrated the adequacy and usefulness of the ecofeminist approach in various fields, whether in theoretical discussion, understanding social phenomena, producing artistic works, or inspiring political activism. Moreover, it has proven to be an extremely valuable ideological alternative to patriarchal androcentrism. Beyond the themes, the ecofeminist dimension of the collection is evident in the inclusivity of papers written by authors at different points in their professional careers and papers that transcend not only regional boundaries but also European ones, thereby giving voice to often silenced areas unfairly positioned in a hierarchical relationship towards the West. In conclusion, given the urgent global

problem of climate change and the often partial and insufficiently effective solutions proposed, the applicability, if not the necessity, of the ecofeminist approach becomes clear. Its holistic logic, inclusivity of the entire

planet, and the fight against all social inequalities offer hope and a great source of inspiration for scientists, politicians, activists, and artists, and, equally importantly, provide a fairer value framework for all of us.

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