

Course Reader

Gender, Nature, Body – Ecological Crises and Conflicts over Nature from Feminist Perspectives

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1 Introduction and Central Concepts

1.1 Introduction and Learning Objectives

Feminist scholars have engaged in a long debate regarding the connections between women*, gender and nature. Interconnections between environmental change and crises, economic development and the usage of land and nature with gender and gender politics are an important topic of analysis in feminist scholarship. Contemporary research explores the linkages between societal relations to gender and nature – looking for more egalitarian and just human-nature forms of living. In the last decades, feminists from different realities around the world have developed various theoretical approaches and concepts in order to explain the human–nature nexus, ranging from essentialist to poststructuralist, from constructivist to approaches of new materialism. Many works, developed in this very heterogeneous field, present a twofold connection between women*/gender and nature: Both, women* – their bodies, work, knowledge, ideas – and nature experience economic exploitation as well as social devaluation that is connected to their ‘reproductive’ capacity. They are constructed as ‘the other’ to male subjects, the capitalist economy and patriarchal institutions. Processes of ‘othering’ of people and nature legitimize their exclusion from dominant positions within social, political and economic structures. Secondly, nature is often used as an argument to justify social differences. Through that, gendered hierarchies and social structures are naturalized and can remain unchallenged. Dismantling those hierarchies, which are repeated and thus reproduced in everyday practices, institutional settings as well as dominant discourses, thus becomes a central aim of feminist analysis.

This course offers insights into a variety of feminist approaches and theories related to the interlinkages between gender, environment, ecological crises and conflicts over land and nature. Students will become familiar with the history of academic debates in the area in general as well as with debates in Latin America in specific. Furthermore, they will learn how those theoretical perspectives can challenge hegemonic views on current ecological crises in a variety of empirical areas, such as mining, land, water, climate and care work.

The course is structured as follows: Firstly, it will present conceptual and theoretical approaches such as structuralist and poststructuralist approaches as well as perspectives from new materialism and queer ecologies. Students will learn about similarities and differences between those perspectives and their usefulness for different empirical analyses. The second half of the course will focus on different aspects and dimensions of current ecological crises and conflicts over nature from feminist perspectives. Within the different sections, students will discuss the interconnections between gender and climate, gender and mining, gender

and water, gender and land as well as gender, care and ecology. Each session contains recommendations for preparatory reading. At the end of the document, we provide a list of introductory readings as well as a general bibliography that includes all references.

The learning objectives of this course are as follows:

- Students will become familiar with and understand a variety of concepts and theories related to the interlinkages between gender and nature.
- Students will learn about similarities and differences between these approaches.
- In particular, students will become familiar with contemporary debates within this research area from Latin America.
- Students will learn about several empirical cases of gendered aspects and dimensions of current socio-ecological crises in Latin America regarding water, land, mining and climate change.
- Students will engage with and apply the theoretical approaches to current social-ecological crises in Latin America and elsewhere.
- Students will receive an overview of the academic debates and research in the area.

1.2 Central Concepts: Gender, Nature, Body

The concepts of gender, nature and body can be classified as the main analytical concepts within this research field. For that reason, these concepts are at the core of conflicts between different feminist approaches. A variety of definitions and understandings of the three concepts exist. Before diving more into the different analytical approaches, we start by presenting one understanding of these three categories and their entanglement, as is presented by Andrea Nightingale and Wendy Harcourt (2020).

From their perspective, **gender** can be identified as the central analytical category to start with when analyzing power relations and power-laden processes from the scale of the body to the scale of global political economy. Following Butler, Nightingale and Harcourt see gender as a relational category through which it becomes possible to analyze the processes of the emergence and reproduction of social difference and inequalities which are based on and legitimized through assumed biological sexual characteristics. Such a conception of gender highlights its performative, dynamic and processual character. Gender relations are thus not static, but produced within complex societal relations. This approach to gender relations furthermore insists that inequalities and social hierarchies can never be explained by gender relations alone. Gender always intersects with race, class, age, ability and other embodied aspects of social differentiation that help to understand how power operates and produces inequalities in society. Analyzing ecological crises from a performative conception of gender does not assume that women*'s burden as 'care takers' automatically increases, for example

because of longer drought periods and longer ways to draw water. Instead, such a perspective asks how power relations between men* and women* change in times of ecological crises and degradation of land, water and other natural resources. From such a perspective, researchers are looking at the changes of gendered (working) practices as well as at the symbolic meaning of those practices within a broader local, national and/or global context and its history.

The concept of **nature** is the second important and a lot discussed concept in this research field. Harcourt and Nightingale argue that there exist two related but somehow separated debates: While political ecologists argue that it is important to look at what belongs to the category of nature, as naming and separating (society-nature divide) are powerful processes, socionature theorists argue that nature, as well as the nature-society divide, are socially constructed. Following that, the concept of 'socionatures' makes visible that nature and society are contingent, co-emergent and co-consistent and make sense only in relation to one another. Such a perspective on nature also includes the analysis of colonial histories, global supply chains and questions of equity and justice while looking at environmental change processes. Or the other way around: Analyzing ecological crises and environmental change processes from a socionatures-perspective means looking at the transformations of more-than-human-relations.

The third important category Harcourt and Nightingale mention in their article is the **body**. Not only is the body often the first and most direct place where power is exercised and felt, but it is also the place where resistance and transformation can emerge and start from. Conflicts over land and nature as well as other consequences of environmental change processes can most directly be felt – physically or emotionally – on or within the body, for example through infertile soil through chemicals, changes of working conditions, health or illness through food, etc. A focus on the body and thus the everyday embodied, emotional relations makes visible on the one hand the persistence of binaries such as masculinities-femininities, nature-culture, nature-society and on the other hand draws attention to the possibilities to imagine and construct counter-logics to that. As changes that result from climate change, extractivism, agrarian transformation and conflicts over land and nature are most directly felt on the body, it appears as an important starting point to analyze these processes as extended over the most local to the most global scale. Apart from that, looking at how these changes (re)produce inequalities within and through everyday embodied practices opens up ways to imagine and construct transformations towards more egalitarian worlds.

Recommended Preparatory Readings

- Hawkins, Roberta; Ojeda, Diana (2011): A Discussion. In: *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space* 29, 237-253.
- Moeckli, Jane; Braun, Bruce (2001): Gendered Nature: Feminism, Politics, and Social Nature. In: Castree, Noel; Braun, Bruce (eds.): *Social Nature. Theory, Practice, and Politics*. Hoboken: Wiley-Blackwell, 112-132.
- Nightingale, Andrea; Harcourt, Wendy (2020): Gender, Nature, Body. In: Akram-Lodhi, Haroon.; Dietz, Kristina; Engels, Bettina; McKay, Ben (eds.): *The Edward Elgar Handbook of Critical Agrarian Studies*. Cheltenham: Edward Elgar (forthcoming).
- Ojeda, Diana (2011): Género, naturaleza y política: Los estudios sobre género y medio ambiente. In: *Historia Ambiental Latinoamericana y Caribeña* 1(1), 55-73.
- Warren, Karen (2004): Feminismo ecologista. In: Vázquez García, Verónica; Velázquez Gutiérrez, Margarita (eds.): *Miradas al futuro: hacia la construcción de sociedades sustentables con equidad de género*. México: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 63-70.
- Warren, Karen J. (1994): Introduction. In: (ibid.) (ed.): *Ecological Feminism*. London: Routledge, 1-7.

2 Theoretical Approaches

2.1 Ecofeminism

Ecofeminism can be understood as a theory as well as a political strategy or movement which seeks to analyze and transform environmental crises and society-nature relations from interconnected perspectives on society, gender and nature. Challenging conditions of eco-social injustices, ecofeminism aims to end all forms of domination linked to environmental issues and patriarchal forms of gender oppression (Archambault 1993, 19).

Starting from this general objective, according to Puleo (2000, 2002) different trends can be detected in the current controversy of ecofeminism: Following the theoretical lines of what could be called classic ecofeminism, Vandana Shiva and Maria Mies (1993) challenge reproductive technologies and questions of bodily self-determination from a postcolonial perspective, highlighting the gendered forms of colonization that appropriate women*'s as well as environmental bodies (Gaard 2016, 71; Puleo 2002). In addition to Shiva, who illustrates ecofeminist thought by analyzing the Chipko movement in India, there have been several contributions from Latin America that understand ecofeminism as a political attitude of domination and point out the connection between social justice and environmental justice, especially where indigenous or rural women* become victims of environment destruction (Puleo 2000, 41 and 2002, 38). In doing so, the responsibility for environmental destruction is not anymore seen through the lenses of essential difference between women* and men*, but as a consequence of reductionist mechanisms of modernity spread through colonization and further sustained by a consumerist mode of development (Puleo 2000, 40). In accordance with constructivist approaches of ecofeminism, Bina Agarwal seeks to overcome the hierarchical dualism of nature and culture, suggesting an intersectional approach which does not reduce women* from the Global South to being embedded in nature, but takes into account their agency in (re-)shaping nature-gender-body relationships (1992, 124-125). The analysis of Archambault (1993) also accounts for female empowerment, the source of which she finds to be rooted not least in the historical experience of oppression.

Many ecofeminists have claimed a particular closeness between women* and the non-human world based on two main assumptions illustrated by Archambault (1993): Firstly, the "body-based argument" which seeks to explain women*'s closeness to nature in reference to important biological functions of reproduction and secondly, the "oppression argument" which sees the women*-nature relationship as a consequence of the sexual division of labor (ibid., 20). Hence, there is a consensus among ecofeminists that the experience of oppression is one shared by women* and nature, precisely because both have been exploited in multiple ways during the past. However, these arguments can be criticized for reinforcing the

patriarchal ideology of domination from an essentialist perspective which assumes women* in the Global South as living in harmony with nature (Archambault 1993; Agarwal 1992), as well as for claiming the existence of women* as a universal category and overseeing women*'s historical participation in processes of ecological destruction (Archambault 1993, 20). Therefore, Agarwal proposes an examination of the relationship of women* and nature not only on the ideological level but also inquiries into gender division of property, labor and power, as well as the material reality in which interaction with the environment takes place (1992, 124-126). Leff (2004) reminds us of the important role of social structure and ecological distribution, in which gender difference is inscribed, reproducing a certain pattern of significance and symbols.

Ecofeminists have argued that the overcoming of the environmental crisis requires a feminist perspective precisely because the oppression of women* and nature have occurred together (Agarwal 1992, 120). This becomes visible, for instance, in regarding the consequences of climate change for women* in the Global South who bear the main burden of environmental degradation and at the same time are often excluded from participation in decision-making processes (Gaard 2016, 70). Puleo depicts the goals of (eco)feminism in overcoming racism, androcentrism and anthropocentrism (2002, 39) and emphasizes the importance of a redefinition of our understanding of nature and human beings (2000, 45). It seems that women* become key actors in spreading grassroots resistance movements (Agarwal 1992, 152), seeking an egalitarian and nonhierarchical system.

Recommended Preparatory Readings

Archambault, Anne (1993): A Critique of Ecofeminism. In: *Canadian Woman Studies/Les Cahiers De La Femme* (13)3, 19-22.

Gaard, Greta (2016): *Ecofeminism: Keywords for Environmental Studies*. New York: NYU Press, 68-71.

Gaard, Greta (2011): Ecofeminism Revisited: Rejecting Essentialism and Re-Placing Species in a Material Feminist Environmentalism. In: *Feminist Formations* (23)2, 26-53.

Leff, Enrique (2004): El ecofeminismo: el género del ambiente. In: *Polis* (3)9, <http://www.revisapolis.cl/9/ecofemi.htm>.

Mies, Maria; Shiva, Vandana (1993): *Ecofeminism*. London: Zed.

Molyneux, Maxine; Deborah L. Steinberg (1994): El ecofeminismo de Vandana Shiva y María Mies. ¿Regreso al futuro?". In: *Ecología Política* 8, 13-23.

Puleo, Alicia (2002): Un repaso a las diversas corrientes del ecofeminismo: Feminismo y ecología. In: *El Ecologista* 31, 26-39.

Puleo, Alicia (2000): Luces y sombras del ecofeminismo. In: *Asparkía* XI, 37-45.

Shiva, Vandana (1988): *Staying Alive: Women, Ecology and Development*. London: Zed Books.
Chap. 3: “Women in Nature”, 37-52.

2.2 Feminist Political Ecology

Political ecology is a normative research field that emerged in the 1970s as an answer to apolitical explanations of rising environmental degradation in the Global South and seeks both to explain the power relations inherent to environmental problems and to transform them. Hence, political ecologists position themselves against the dehistoricization of both society and of nature. Political ecology has been defined in various ways: as combining the “concerns of ecology and a broadly defined political economy” (Blaikie and Brookfield 1987, 17), as a study field which “seeks to understand the complex relations between nature and society through a careful analysis of[...] the forms of access and control over resources” (Watts 2000, 257), as “the study of power relations and political conflict over ecological distribution and the social struggles for the appropriation of nature” (Leff 2015, 33), and as an approach that “deals with the complex context in which gender interacts with class, race, culture and national identity to shape our experience of and interest in ‘the environment’” (Rocheleau et al. 1996, 5). The latter hints to a particular research strand within political ecology, that is feminist political ecology.

Feminist political ecology aims to bridge both an initial gender gap in political ecological analyses and the gendered binary codifications that link nature and emotions to femininity, and culture and reason to masculinity. Bina Agarwal (1992) emphasized the need to consider society–nature relations through the lenses of gender and class. She argues that poor women* in rural areas in the Global South are more often exposed to environmental changes and hazards, not because they are women* but because of socially produced (international) gendered divisions of labor and gendered environmental roles. Recent poststructuralist approaches to feminist theory have inspired new thoughts in feminist political ecology. Beyond class–gender relations, scholars place an emphasis on intersectionality. They explore how gender and gendered subjectivities are constituted alongside other identities and markers of difference (class, caste, race, ethnicity) through the material interaction with and the symbolic understandings of nature, as well as changes in and knowledge of the environment (Elmhirst 2015; Nightingale and Harcourt 2020).

Recommended Preparatory Readings

Agarwal, Bina (1992): The Gender and Environment Debate: Lessons from India. In: *Feminist Studies* 18, 119-158.

Elmhirst, Rebecca (2015): Feminist Political Ecology. In: Perrault, Tom; Bridge, Gavin; McCarthy, James (eds.): *The Routledge Handbook of Political Ecology*. London: Routledge, 519-530.

Rocheleau, Dianne; Thomas-Slayter, Barbara; Wangari, Esther (1996): Gender and Environment. A feminist political ecology perspective. In: *ibid.* (eds.): *Feminist Political Ecology: Global issues and local experiences*. London: Routledge, 3-23.

Ulloa, Astrid (2019): Ecología política latinoamericana. In: De Luca, Ana; Fosado, Ericka; Velázquez, Margarita (eds.): *Feminismo socioambiental*. Mexico: UNAM-CRIM.

2.3 Intersectional and Identity Based Approaches

In this section, we focus on intersectionality and identity-based approaches as, on the one hand, core concepts for questioning the construction of subjectivities and, on the other hand, as methodological tools for analyzing how categories of difference become significant in shaping environmental issues (Nightingale 2006). Previous studies have focused on the following questions: How are social identities constructed through practices, discourses, and performances in everyday life (Sundberg 2004, 44)? How do mutual interacting categories of difference determine the vulnerability of social groups to natural disasters (Chávez 2016, 23f.)? How can the theorization of race as mutual constitutive power of gendered subjectivity be integrated into feminist political ecology and how does an intersectional analysis of multiple axes of power contribute to climate change research and the understanding of politics of the environment (Mollett and Faria 2012, 116; Kronsell and Kaijser 2014, 418ff.)?

In exploring the social production of identities and inequalities, most authors refer to the concept of performativity, demonstrated profoundly by Judith Butler in *“Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity”* in 1990, who defines gender as a performed subjectivity, repeatedly contested and reproduced through social interactions within complex power structures (Nightingale 2006, 165 and 171). In accordance with this poststructuralist perspective, Sundberg (2004, 46) argues that gender and race are (re)produced as social norms within the construction of social identities and points to the complexity of systems of power which require an intersectional analysis and theory as provided by Crenshaw (1989), Hill Collins (2015), Choo and Ferree (2010), Christensen and Jensen (2012) and McCall (2005).

Emerged in the late 1980s and 1990s from critical race studies (Nash 2008, 2), intersectionality refers to “the critical insight that race, class, gender, sexuality, ethnicity, nation, ability, and age operate not as unitary, mutually exclusive entities, but as reciprocally constructing phenomena that in turn shape complex social inequalities” (Hill Collins 2015, 1). Crenshaw (1989) first used the term intersectionality to highlight the multiple dimensions of Black women*’s experiences, arguing that the interwovenness of racism and sexism is much more

complex than can be explained by adding single categories of social injustice (Nash 2008). Further developing Crenshaw's argument, Hill Collins (2015) reveals three interdependent sets of concern of the paradigm of intersectionality: intersectionality as a field of study, as an analytical strategy and as a critical praxis. Particularly the latter can be used in environmental studies for the benefit of a richer analysis of practices of resistance, calling for frontline actors in solving social problems linked to complex social inequalities and environmental conflicts (ibid., 15).

Besides the rich theoretical debate about the paradigm of intersectionality, some authors of feminist environmental studies have claimed that its methodological implications remain contradictory and undefined (Nash 2008, 9). Whereas it is certainly true that, empirical case studies often focus on gender as a single variable (Mollett and Faria 2012; Kronsell 2017) and thereby fail to consider how "inequality is intertwined and even reinforced by other structures of domination" (Kronsell and Kaijser 2014, 421), there have also been approaches about how to use intersectionality as a methodological tool within qualitative research (see Hancock 2013; Christensen and Jensen 2012; Choo and Ferree 2010). Examples of case studies from feminist environmental research scholarship, incorporating an intersectional analysis and situated within Latin America, have been the work of Chávez (2016) about the impact of hurricane flooding on social groups along different axes of power in the Mexican context, and the work of Sundberg (2004) about identity making through conservation projects in Guatemala. In addition, Mollett and Faria (2012) demonstrate that the relationship between gender and nature cannot be analyzed without thinking about race as a relevant category to understand narratives of modernization and progress and therefore suggest a postcolonial intersectional perspective which challenges the still understudied notion of race within feminist political ecology (2012, 116f.).

It could be argued that intersectionality has served as a tool for critical thinking, thus, making the following contributions to climate change research as demonstrated by Kronsell and Kaijser (2014): Firstly, an intersectional analysis perspective shows how social groups relate differently to climate change depending on their situatedness in power structures. Secondly, it highlights voices that are usually marginalized by generating alternative knowledge projects. Thirdly, it helps to explain constructions of individual and group subjectivities as well as the mobilization of existing categories in political projects and ultimately, enriches our understanding of the reproduction of power relations in everyday life and institutional practices concerning nature and the environment (2014, 419-428).

In conclusion, the outlined research approaches emphasize the necessity to look beyond women* as a homogenous group and to address gender and climate in terms of power (Kronsell 2017, 11). Thus, feminist ecological scholarship needs to move its single axis focus on gender to a more profound consideration of the multiple intersection of categories and its

effects on shaping identities. An intersectional perspective considers the social construction of differences within complex power relations and hence, provides a critical starting point to ask how subjectivities may shift in realities of climate change (Kronsell and Kaijser 2014, 421).

Recommended Preparatory Readings

Haraway, Donna J. (1991): *Simians, Cyborgs and Women: The Reinvention of Nature*. New York: Routledge.

Mollett, Sharlene; Faria, Caroline (2013): Messing with Gender in Feminist Political Ecology. In: *Geoforum* 45(0), 116-125.

Nagel, Joane (2012): Intersecting Identities and Global Climate Change. In: *Identities* 19(4), 467-476.

Nightingale, Andrea J. (2006): The Nature of Gender: Work, Gender and Environment. In: *Environment and Planning D, Society and Space* 24, 165-185.

Segato, Rita (2011): Género y colonialidad: en busca de claves de lectura y de un vocabulario estratégico descolonial. In: Bidaseca, Karina; Vázquez, Vanesa (eds.): *Feminismos y poscolonialidad: descolonizando el feminismo desde y en América Latina*. Buenos Aires: Godot, 17-48.

Sundberg, Juanita (2004): Identities in the Making: Conservation, Gender and Race in the Maya Biosphere Reserve, Guatemala. In: *Gender, Place & Culture* 11(1), 43-66.

2.4 Queer Ecologies

Queer ecology scholarship emerges in the mid-1990s as an approach to bring together queer theory and environmentalism (Sandilands 2016, 279; Schnabel 2014, 12). According to Sandilands, the term queer ecology can be defined as an “interdisciplinary constellation of practices” (2016, 169). In its criticism of divisions of human/non-human and modern/traditional spheres, queer ecology takes up arguments from feminist materialism and feminist postcolonial science studies (Schnabel 2014, 12). Furthermore, it is based on ecofeminism and environmental justice perspectives (Sandilands 2016, 170). Similar to the ecofeminist’s focus on gender in relation to nature, queer ecology scholarship claims sexuality to be a “significant factor in shaping perceptions of natural environments” (Sandilands 2005) linked to complex power relations. The theoretical basis of queer ecology draws back on the historical exploitation of nature and marginalized social groups, connecting struggles for environmental justice with struggles against sexual oppression. Consequently, queer ecology argues for an intersectional approach of ecology, sexuality and race (Sandilands 2016, 170).

Sandilands demonstrates the following key issues within the theory of queer ecologies: Firstly, she argues in reference to Donna Haraway that the articulation of notions of sex and nature have to be understood on the basis of “multiple trajectories of power and nature” (2016, 169). There is a consensus among queer ecology authors that power relations include sexism and racism as systemic forms of oppression (Sandilands 2005; Bauhard 2014, 369). Thus, queer ecology aims to “disrupt prevailing heterosexist discourse and institutional articulations of sexuality and nature” (Sandilands 2016, 169). The crucial point of queer ecology is its profound critique of notions of heterosexuality as ‘natural’, which is why previous research studies seek to articulate sexual and biological diversity and emphasize queer ecological possibilities (Sandilands 2016, 170; Schnabel 2014; Anderson et al. 2012, 90).

Secondly, there is a consensus in the queer ecology literature about the overall connection of cultural and material dimensions of environmental issues. Thus, according to queer ecology authors, economic conditions as well as social relations to nature become material, which implies a non-dualistic view of nature and culture (Sandilands 2016, 169; Schnabel 2014, 12; Bauhardt 2013, 362).

Thirdly, authors situated in queer ecology scholarship, seek to challenge critically the assumption of human exceptionalism which hierarchizes humans and devalues animals (Schnabel 2014, 12). In contrast to post-structuralist perspectives on queer identity as a particularly discursive practice, Schnabel highlights the embeddedness of human action in its relationship to the material world by stating that “human action takes place not within human cultures, but within inseparable ‘natureculture’ assemblages” (2014, 12). The concept of natureculture, introduced by Donna Haraway, aims to deconstruct popular assumptions and scientific explanations which assert the construction of gender and sexuality within a heterosexual matrix (Bauhardt 2013, 368f.).

The arguments given above show a critical perspective on how bodies and people move in natural environments and challenge our assumptions about what we consider to be ‘natural’ or ‘human’. Queer ecology calls for an inclusive approach towards marginalized groups as subjects and emphasizes sexual variability as an ecological concern (Schnabel 2014, 14). Thus, it completes existing theoretical approaches concerned with nature and society, by reimagining ecological interactions and environmental politics from a non-heteronormative perspective (Sandilands 2016, 169). On a practical level, queer ecology can contribute to the inclusion of queerness in environmental movements by drawing theoretic and activist connections between sexual and ecological politics (ibid., 170). In the sense of queer ecological politics, Sandilands (2005) points out that social actors might use ideas of nature as sites of resistance.

Recommended Preparatory Readings

- Anderson, Jill E.; Azzarello, Robert; Brown, Gavin; Hogan, Katie; Brent Ingram, Gordon; Morris, Michael J.; Stephens, Joshua (2012): Queer Ecology: A Roundtable Discussion. In: *European Journal of Ecopsychology* 3, 82-103.
- Bauhardt, Christine (2013): Rethinking Gender and Nature from a Material(ist) Perspective: Feminist Economics, Queer Ecologies and Resource Politics. In: *European Journal of Women's Studies* 20(4), 361-375.
- Sandilands, Catriona (2016): Queer Ecology. In: Adamson, J.; Gleason, W. A.; Pellow, D. N. (eds.): *Keywords for Environmental Studies*. New York: NYU Press, 53-54.
- Sandilands, Catriona (2005): Unnatural Passions?: Notes Toward a Queer Ecology. In: *InVisible Culture* 9, http://www.rochester.edu/in_visible_culture/Issue_9/title9.html.
- Schnabel, Landon (2014): The Question of Subjectivity in Three Emerging Feminist Science Studies Frameworks: Feminist Postcolonial Science Studies, New Feminist Materialisms, and Queer Ecologies. In: *Women's Studies International Forum* 44, 10-16.

2.5 Masculinities

The study of masculinities emerged in the 1990s based on the critique that the majority of gender studies and feminist scholarship has nearly exclusively focused on the marginalization of women* and their low access to power and resources, and doing so perpetuated gender roles and stereotypes alongside two essentializing categories. Scholars of masculinities point at the tendency of gender studies to focus on differences between women* and men* and to overlook extensive similarities between the sexes and even the extensive variation within each sex. Those scholars, therefore, study the social and historical construction of masculinities and emphasize the importance to look at differentiated masculine identities. They argue that an adequate understanding of the whole field of gender *relations* requires the intersectional analysis of differentiated and hierarchically structured masculinities and femininities as well as changes over time (for a broad overview see Kimmel et al. 2005).

Susan Paulson (2016, 2017) who studies the construction and changes of masculinities and femininities in Latin America that are provoked by conservation and other environmental policies as well as by programs related to gender and development understands masculinities as “constellations of qualities, behaviours, attitudes, and accomplishments that – within particular communities of interpretation – are associated with the gender category ‘man’.” (Paulson 2017, 208). In one of her studies, she identifies two central gender norms which developed throughout the last century where mainly men* from that region participated in

work that degrades environments and endangers men*'s health. The first is a symbolic binary which identifies masculinity with earning money in activities identified as productive labor and associates femininity with activities labeled as reproductive and inferior that are not valued in the modern market. The second is the construction of hierarchies between different masculinities with subordinate masculinities (mainly performed by non-white poor rural men*) measured by dangerous and brutally hard work of mining, agroindustry, etc. that puts health at risk (ibid., 212).

Looking at the construction and changes of masculinities and femininities in environmental and development studies reveals how certain aspects of gender identities and relations function to marginalize each group as well as to exploit the environmental resources they manage. Thus, changes in gender norms in Latin America during the last centuries, foster the possibilities for the expansion of commercial production and the increasing commodification of nature – processes that contribute to the endangering of the sustainability of rural socioecological systems (Paulson 2017, 209). The analysis of multiple gender identities in processes of environmental change not only visualizes hierarchies within those categories but can be seen as an attempt to “forge socioecological systems that are more satisfying and sustainable for more people and for more ecosystems.” (ibid., 221).

Recommended Preparatory Readings

Paulson, Susan (2017): Power and Difference in Conservation Policy: Changing Masculinities and Andean Watersheds. In: *Brown Journal of World Affairs* 23(2), 207-224.

Paulson, Susan (2016): La (re)producción socio ecológica en América Latina con masculinidades cambiantes, emergentes, estrategias y acciones. In: Vélazquez Gutiérrez, Margarita; Vázquez García, Verónica; De Luca Zuria, Ana; Sosa Capistrán, Dulce María (eds.): *Transformaciones ambientales e igualdad de género en América Latina: Temas emergentes, estrategias y acciones*. Cuernavaca: UNAM, 91-118.

2.6 New Materialism

New materialism emerged at the millennium as an interdisciplinary, theoretical and politically committed field of inquiry at the interface of feminist natural- and social science. Scholars of new materialism draw on combinations of feminist theory, science studies, environmental studies, queer theory, cultural theory, biopolitics and critical race theory reacting to the accelerated ecological crises, environmental changes as well as changes in global economic structures and technologies. The revival of materialist ontologies is based on a critical engagement with the limitations of the linguistic turn and social constructivist approaches, that focus on language, consciousness, subjectivity, etc. without taking into account the

influence of matter in general. In a rapidly changing physical and biological world new materialist theorists devote themselves to the exploration of the political and ethical significance of the material dimensions of social existence such as “climate change or global capital and population flows, the biotechnological engineering of genetically modified organisms, or the saturation of our intimate and physical lives by digital, wireless, and virtual technologies” (Coole and Frost 2010, 5).

Thinking about “the nature of matter and the matter of nature” (ibid., 6) from the perspective of new materialism challenges the popular imaginary about the material world and its social structure. Thus, some central ideas within new materialisms can be identified. The first is the posthumanist idea of matter itself. Matter is conceived as “lively or as exhibiting agency” (ibid., 7; see Braidotti 2017, 87). Some scholars use the concept “thing-power” to outline the ability of things to produce effects and act as lively entities (Bennet 2010, 5). Directly related to that is the second central assumption that humans do not inhabit essentialist qualities and do not exist independently from their interactions with their material surroundings. Thus, humans are one – but just one – integral part of “processes of materialization” (Coole and Frost 2010, 8). What follows is the overcoming of an anthropocentric worldview. Thirdly, seeking to move beyond the constructivist-essentialist impasse, new materialist theorists assume an inseparability between ontology and epistemology that brings up new ethical questions and responsibilities. Donna Haraway (2003) proposes the concept ‘naturecultures’ to overcome the binary opposition and hierarchy between these two concepts and to acknowledge their interconnections. As Harcourt and Bauhardt (2019, 10) argue, the concept of ‘naturecultures’ helps us to “understand how humanity is part of nature, and therefore if we exploit nature we are directly exploiting ourselves, our health, our well-being and our future.”

The assumptions within theories of new materialism lead to an opening for a huge variety of non-human objects of inquiry, such as animals, plants, minerals, technological or extraterrestrial matter. Furthermore, they propose some general changes in perspective: With the de-centralizing of the ‘human’ from modern philosophy and politics new materialists visualize that historically the anthropocentric perspective never characterized all people equally ‘human’. As this concept is tightly interwoven with the distribution of power and the hierarchical structuring of the world, new materialists propose a perspective that includes varieties of knowledge and embodied experiences from different locations of human and non-human entities.

Recommended Preparatory Readings

Braidotti, Rosi (2017): Critical Posthuman Knowledges. In: *South Atlantic Quarterly* 116(1), 83-96.

Coole, Diane; Frost, Samantha (2010): Introducing the New Materialisms. In: *ibid.* (eds.): *New Materialisms: Ontology, Agency and Politics*. Durham/London: Duke University Press, 1-43.

3 Studying Current Ecological Crises and Conflicts over Nature from Feminist Perspectives

3.1 Gender and Climate

The consequences of climate change such as droughts, floods, sea level rise and extreme weather events can be felt all over the world. However, depending on gender positions and other layers of social inequalities (class, ethnicity, race or caste) the effects of these changes are felt differently. As the impacts of climate change interact with social and economic contexts, unequal vulnerabilities arise along north-south power structures and social axes of differences. Therefore, a range of authors within social sciences call for the need of a gendered and feminist perspective on climate change and climate change policies (Ulloa 2017, Kronsell 2017, Gonda 2019, Pearse 2017). Within feminist climate change scholarship, different approaches and topics exist, focussing either on climate change adaptation and vulnerability along intersectional axes of inequality, power relations and knowledge production, gender representation in climate change policy making or the connection between migration and climate change (Radel et al. 2016, 50; Kronsell 2017).

Previous studies on climate and gender found that the possibilities of climate change adaptation are unequal due to social inequalities and that women* are more frequently affected by climate extremes. Even though gender plays a relevant role as an inequality-constituting category, scholars criticize that in international debates on climate change, women* are often depicted as “victims” and vulnerable due to biological and cultural reasons. Besides the questionable view of the masculine as the social norm, this is especially problematic because it naturalizes the social conditions which shape vulnerability. In this sense, Ulloa (2017) asserts that “climate change policies have come to ‘naturalize’ gender relations and localized forms of knowledge and identity, generating geopolitical perspectives on the environment, territorialization, and climate change itself that exacerbate inequalities and exclusions” (Ulloa 2017, 111f.). Another persistent narrative within climate debate and gender is the view of women* in the Global South as main actors for saving the environment. This becomes visible by concrete UN measures such as the distribution of energy-efficient cookers, apparently to “empower” women* but resulting in the reproduction of gender stereotypes and inequalities. Thus, it can be maintained that gender mainstreaming in climate politics, contributes to heteronormative and modernization-theoretical ideas of *women* in development* (Bauriedl and Hackfort 2015, 97f.).

Ulloa (2017, 112) has shown that climate knowledge itself is masculine, scientific, and white, produced in western universities but implemented throughout the world, thus ignoring indigenous perceptions and relations to nature. One of the main challenges of critical

scholarship is therefore to break with the eurocentric universalism of climate research and to ask for the dynamics of exclusion along the lines of patriarchal, capitalist, and postcolonial structures (Bauriedl and Hackfort 2015, 95). This is where a feminist perspective can make an important contribution, allowing us “to see how climate change policies reproduce a system of knowledge and power that has an impact on gendered positions and identities” (Ulloa, 2017, 112f.).

Examples for research in Latin America on gender and climate can be found especially in Nicaragua, the fourth most affected land by meteorological phenomena worldwide (Radel et al. 2016, 47). Gonda (2019) investigates the workings of power in the feminist political ecology of climate change adaptation and Radel et al. (2016) point out the interrelation of climate change and migration processes and argue that its complexity requires a gender sensible and intersectional lens.

Regarding the outlined problematics, different authors speak up for alternative approaches: Feminist political ecologists call for an analysis of structures, representations, and identities to capture different constitutional levels of intersectional inequalities, including gender as a relevant but contextualized category. Furthermore, Ulloa (2017, 177) emphasizes the need to critically examine inherent exclusions in dominant discourses on climate change and suggests to further develop strategies for making the mentioned discourses more inclusive and heterogeneous, also considering the political and cultural realities of indigenous people. However, the latter can be perceived as a remaining challenge as the recognition of indigenous knowledge of nature and human-nonhuman relations are still lacking integration into climate policies (ibid. 115f.). Furthermore, an intersectional perspective needs to be adopted for a differentiated analysis of gender relations and climate change which seems to be a consensus between feminist scholars (Pearse 2017; Kaijser and Kronsell 2013). Another remaining but important question is how discourses and representations of gender and nature reproduce certain cultural ideals and unequal gender relations (Ulloa 2017, 115; Bauriedl and Hackfort 2015, 100). Finally, it remains crucial to pay attention to the alternatives formulated by local actors, making visible practices of resistance existing on individual and collective scales (Ulloa 2017) and to formulate a new agenda of climate policies which parts from diverse perspectives instead of a top-bottom approach permeated by power relations.

Recommended Preparatory Reading:

Aguilar Revelo, Lorena (2009): *Manual de capacitación en género y cambio climático*. San José, Costa Rica: International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) and United Nations Development Program (UNDP).

Röhr, Ulrike (2007): *Gender, Climate Change, and Adaption: Introduction to the Gender Dimensions*. Background paper prepared for Both Ends Briefing Paper “Adapting to

Climate Change: How Local Experience Can Shape the Debate.” Berlin: Genanet-Focal Point Gender, Environment, Sustainability.

Skinner, Emmeline; Brody, Alyson (2011): Género y cambio climático. In: *Género y desarrollo en breve, informe BRIDGE 22*, <https://www.bridge.ids.ac.uk/ids-document/A59290?lang=es#lang-pane-es> [28.01.21].

Ulloa, Astrid (2017): The Geopolitics of Carbonized Nature and the Zero Carbon Citizen. In: *South Atlantic Quarterly* 116(1), 111-120.

Velázquez Gutiérrez, Margarita; Vázquez García, Verónica; De Luca Zuria, Ana; Sosa Capistrán, Dulce María (eds.) (2016): *Transformaciones ambientales e igualdad de género en América Latina: Temas emergentes, estrategias y acciones*. México: UNAM, Centro Regional de Investigaciones Multidisciplinarias.

3.2 Gender and Mining

The environmental and socio-political impacts of mining in Latin America – referred to as artisanal/small-scale mining, large-scale mining, and illegal mining activities – have widely been studied during the past two decades (for an overview see Bebbington and Jeffrey 2013; Conde 2017). However, a remaining question is how gender becomes relevant in the context of mining and its inherent conflictive dynamics between neoliberal processes, territory, and human beings? Following the latest research within Latin American Feminist Political Ecology (LAFPE) from decolonial, communitarian and territorial feminist perspectives, an intersecting triad of gender construction, gender relations and mining processes comes into view.

Especially poor and marginalized populations in mining regions are likely to be confronted with the exploitation of their territories, displacement of housing and living space as well as threats to cultural practices and security (Deonandan et al. 2017). It can be stated that women* bear the main burden of the negative effects of mining on the environment and the community (Deonandan et al. 2017; Lahiri-Dutt 2015, 162). Svampa demonstrates in “*Las fronteras del neoextractivismo en América Latina*” how the invisibility of women* as active players in mining, an incremented violence against women* and forced prostitution at sites of illegal mining become core problems in relation to the intersection of gender and mining (2019, 76f.).

However, authors within LAFPE argue that women* are not passively exposed to these threats, rather they raise their voices and resist (see Deonandan et al. 2017). In this sense, feminist scholarship does not only ask about the expression of gender constructions and the reasons for the incrementation of violence against women*, but additionally analyses the diverse alternatives and resistances that women* generate in the context of mining (Ulloa 2016).

Deonandan et al. have shown through extensive field research on anti-mining activism in Guatemala, how women* develop specific strategies such as female solidarity, consciousness building and bridge leading (2017, 9).

To address the question of territory itself, Ulloa (2016) proposes the concept of territorial feminism which from a vertical perspective includes various dimensions of territory and aims to make visible women*'s political dynamics in the defense of territory, autonomy, and ways of living. Ulloa (2016) highlights the importance of subaltern feminism, stressing that indigenous women*'s movement draw back on autonomous and communitarian feminist perspectives and hence, offer alternative proposals for extractive and patriarchal mechanisms from decolonial perspectives. Ulloa's paper (2016) sets out the demands of women* which include: the local control of mining linked to the soil and resources, different relations between men* and women* in the defense of territories, alternative visions of development that defend everyday activities and subsistence, and environmental justice.

Besides the work of Astrid Ulloa on gender and mining, the research of Barrientos et al. (2009), Svampa (2019), Jenkins et al. (2017) and Lahiri-Dutt (2012, 2015) have been crucial for the understanding of complex relations between gender and mining. Barrientos et al. (2009) analyze the construction of hegemonic masculinity in Chilean *shoperias* and demonstrate the sexualization of women* in mining culture. Jenkins et al. (2017) illustrate the incorporation of activism and resistance into everyday lives and practices of women* in the Andean region by examining two empirical examples in Peru and Ecuador. Lahiri-Dutt (2015) emphasizes in "*Gender in and Gender and Mining*" the often neglected significance of gender in and around mining, as mining is accompanied by gendered labor processes and thus, has gendered effects on communities.

Even though it remains problematic that in mining, male presence and participation is widely privileged and women* are still made invisible in decision-making processes (Ulloa 2016), the mentioned studies remind us of the urgency to shift from a victimization of women* to an emphasis on women*'s activism and participation in social movements. This would address the concern that women*, even though on the one hand certainly affected by mining in a particularly gendered way, on the other hand, must be acknowledged as political subjects who are actively integrated into processes of mining and resistance (Lahiri-Dutt 2015). According to Jenkins, the aim of a feminist methodology lies in politicizing everyday practices and the shaping of identities by making "audible the voices of [...] women activists, and to value these experiences in their own right, rather than in relation to men" (Jenkins 2007, 1444). Thus, future research on mining, as a complex and specific cultural setting (Barrientos et al. 2009), is advised to incorporate an intersectional approach and to analyze the role of gender in mining processes in interaction with other categories of difference such as class, race and ethnicity. Besides that, Ulloa (2016) states that further exploration of the effects of increased

criminalization of protest and pressure on women* who question large mining projects is needed.

Recommended Preparatory Reading:

Colectivo Miradas Críticas del Territorio desde el Feminismo (2017): (Re)patriarcalización de los territorios: La lucha de las mujeres y los megaproyectos extractivos. In: *Ecología Política* 54, 65-69.

Deonandan, Kalowatie; Tatham, Rebecca; Field, Brennan (2017): Indigenous Women's Anti-Mining Activism: A Gendered Analysis of the El Estor Struggle in Guatemala. In: *Gender & Development* 25(3), 405-419.

Jenkins, Katy (2017): Women Anti-Mining Activists' Narratives of Everyday Resistance in the Andes: Staying Put and Carrying on in Peru and Ecuador. In: *Gender, Place & Culture* 24(10), 1441-1459.

Lahiri-Dutt, Kuntala (2015): Gender in and Gender and Mining. Feminist Approaches. In: Coles, Anne et al. (eds.): *The Routledge Handbook of Gender and Development*. London/New York: Routledge, 162-172.

Lahiri-Dutt, Kuntala (2012): Digging Women: Towards a New Agenda for Feminist Critiques of Mining. In: *Gender, Place & Culture* 19(2), 193-212.

Sebastián-Aguilar, Erika (2019): Mujeres me'phaa, resistencia y sentido del lugar ante los despojos del extractivismo y el narcotráfico. In: *Íconos* 64, 69-88.

Svampa, Maristella (2019): Las fronteras del neoextractivismo en América Latina Conflictos socioambientales, giro ecoterritorial y nuevas dependencias. Bielefeld: Bielefeld-University-Press.

Ulloa, Astrid (2016): Feminismos territoriales en América Latina: defensas de la vida frente a los extractivismo. In: *Nómadas* 45, 123-139.

3.3 Gender and Water

Water is central to human development. The whole process of food production, sanitation as well as health heavily depend on access to water. In 2010 the United Nations considered clean drinking water and sanitation to be human rights (UN 2010). Nevertheless, access to clean water is not guaranteed for everyone and very challenging for many people worldwide.

As water is closely linked to social dynamics, it is also interwoven with gender roles and societal divisions of labor. In regions where water is not available on-premises, in 80 percent of the households women* are the main water collectors. They are held responsible for the

preservation and usage of water in the private sphere (López García 2019, 7). In contrast to that, within higher levels of water governance – e.g. planning and building water infrastructure, distribution of water and access regulations or decisions on privatization – women* are underrepresented. A report by the International Union for Conservation (IUCN), for example, outlines, that in 2013 only 35 percent of countries had included gender considerations in their water-related policies and programs (Fauconnier et al. 2018).

As water is one of the central resources through which humans feel climate change and the consequences of ecological crises, feminist theorists are interested in the interrelations between gender and water in times of ecological degradation and resource crisis. There is a wide range of research projects which outline the unequal access to clean water between men* and women* and the disproportionate consequences climate change has for women* in many parts of the world. Those studies and reports formulate demands and policy recommendations – for example, they highlight the need for the inclusion of women* and their demands in water governance decisions (i.a. Fauconnier et al. 2018; López García 2019; Nelson et al. 2002). Other studies focus on the gendered dimensions of privatization and marketization processes in water governance (Harris 2009). Analyses, which are grounded in feminist political ecology perspectives, try to understand “how feeling subjects relate to water and how water mediates social relations of resource management” (Sultana 2011, 164). From that perspective, exploring embodied subjectivities and emotions in a given context becomes central for understanding struggles over water as well as nature-society relationships more broadly (ibid.).

As water scarcity will be a central future challenge due to climate change as well as to the expansion of global water-intensive production processes such as agroindustry or mining, research on the interlinkages between water and gender will remain very significant.

Recommended Preparatory Reading:

Ahlers, Rhodante (2005): Gender Dimensions of Neoliberal Water Policy in Mexico and Bolivia: Empowering or Disempowering?. In: Bennett, Vivienne; Davila-Poblete, Sonia; Nieves Rico, María (eds.): *Opposing Currents: The Politics of Water and Gender in Latin America*. Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburgh Press, 53–71.

Harris, Leila M. (2009): Gender and Emergent Water Governance: Comparative Overview of Neoliberalized Natures and Gender Dimensions of Privatization, Devolution and Marketization. In: *Gender, Place & Culture* (16)4, 387-408.

Laurie, Nina (2011): Gender Water Networks: Femininity and Masculinity in Water Politics in Bolivia. In: *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 35(1), 172-188.

Sultana, Farhana (2011): Suffering for Water, Suffering from Water: Emotional Geographies of Resource Access, Control and Conflicts. In: *Geoforum* 42, 163–172.

3.4 Gender and Land

In the context of the recent ‘land rush’, often referred to as ‘land grabbing’, the access to the land of many rural women* and men* worldwide is threatened. Through the expansion of global capital and control over territories, rural communities face dispossession, food insecurity and (sometimes violent) conflicts over rights over land (Peluso and Lund 2011; White et al. 2012). Land is often the most important household asset for rural people to support agricultural production and thus to provide food security, nutrition and livelihoods (FAO 2018, 1). While, in many parts of the world, both men* and women* have inadequate access to land and face dispossession, women* are especially disadvantaged in this regard. Globally, the share of female landholders is much smaller than that of male ones. For example, in Latin America and the Caribbean only 18 percent of landholders are female, and women* are less likely to have their names on ownership documents than men* (ibid.).

Whereas conflicts over land between companies, social movements, local communities and states have increasingly gained attention, the gendered implications of land politics and processes of dispossession only recently became a scholarly concern (Radcliffe 2014, 854f.). From a more essentialist approach to gender, feminist scholars for example analyze and compare land reforms and their *de facto* consequences for the sexes in different regions (i.a. Deere 2016). Furthermore, they ask what role women*’s movements play in the process of the implementation of those legal changes (ibid.). Scholars from the field of feminist political ecology focus on socially produced gendered divisions of labor and gendered processes of decision making. They analyze the extent to which those gendered societal relations are (re)produced or challenged in contexts of land dispossession and corporate control over territories. In many cases, negotiations about compensation payment for land dispossession are held between representatives of the company and male elites, while the development of infrastructure projects is often raised as a central demand. Women*’s demands on water security or health systems are often neglected. Here, questions on what is defined as ‘public’ need or ‘public’ demand and who defines it become important (Großmann 219, 105). Some feminist scholars also outline the need for future research on different kinds of dispossession provoked by different actors involved and different forms of industry developed on the land (large dams, mining, agroindustry, etc.) (Levien 2017).

Literature on Latin American land grabs and struggles over land calls for the need, to look at the intersection of gender inequalities with racialized hierarchies and post-colonial histories (Radcliffe 2014). When the concept of ‘land’ is not only used in the sense of property but also

in the sense of territory as “the spatial basis for constructing meanings of cultural-racial difference” (ibid., 855), analyses – more than visualizing the unequal distribution of land between the sexes – focus on the deconstruction of gendered relations with land.

Recommended Preparatory Readings

Deere, Carmen Diana (2017): Women's Land Rights, Rural Social Movements, and the State in the 21st-Century Latin American Agrarian Reforms. In: *Journal of Agrarian Change* 17(2), 258-278.

Levien, Michael (2017): Gender and Land Dispossession: A Comparative Analysis. In: *The Journal of Peasant Studies* 44(6), 1111-1134.

Radcliffe, Sarah A. (2014): Gendered Frontiers of Land Control: Indigenous Territory, Women and Contests over Land in Ecuador. In: *Gender, Place & Culture* 21(7), 854-871.

3.5 Gender, Care and Ecology

Questions of care and debates around reproductive work have been elementary aspects in feminist scholarship from all theoretical strands. Care work, performed both as waged work in hospitals, childcare facilities, etc. and as unpaid work in households, communities and elsewhere is mostly done by women*, socially and symbolically assumed as ‘women*’s work’ and rarely valued in capitalist and patriarchal societies (Budlender 2010).

Recent feminist scholarship, bridging the fields of political ecology and political economy, offers broad concepts of care as a tool to understand nature, society and economy as inseparable spheres. Care in these debates means “looking after and providing for the needs of humans and non-human others; it is about the provision of what is necessary for the health, welfare, maintenance and protection of humans and the more-than-human world” (Tronto 1993 in Harcourt and Bauhardt 2019, 3). Caring for the own body, caring for the environment and caring for the community become deeply interconnected. Concepts of care help to imagine how to go beyond the global capitalist economic system aware of its social and ecological limits (Bauhardt and Harcourt 2019; Harcourt 2014, 1324). These post-capitalist concerns are also formulated in the concept of ‘living economies’ which proposes “that we redesign our economies so that life is valued more than money and power resides in ordinary women and men who care for each other, their community and their natural environment. The challenge for the future is to build a broad platform for living economies or alternatives building from community needs, which are inter-generational and gender aware, based on an ethics of care for the environment” (Harcourt 2014, 1325).

Whereas questions and debates around care are central in the search for economically, socially and ecologically just futures, looking at the organization of care and reproductive work in

current societies also helps to shed light on complex and multiple inequalities. For example, looking at recent trends in medical science and reproduction technologies leads to new questions on care work, the reproduction of life, female bodies and multiscale power relations. Assisted reproductive technologies (ART), such as in-vitro fertilization, the generation and conservation of egg cells as well as surrogacy, reconfigure socio-nature relations and bring about new ethical questions. Following Haraway's (2003) notion of 'sociocultures', Christa Wichterich (2019, 212), in her case study on surrogate mothers in India, asks how patriarchal, class, racial and colonial power relations co-construct new forms of reproduction and of control over women's bodies. In feminist scholarship, reproductive technologies are highly debated. On the one hand, scholars highlight the denaturalization of reproduction. From that perspective ART can bring about women's liberation from motherhood and fertility and thus open up ways to imagine reproduction beyond heteronormative logics. On the other hand, scholars identify repro-technologies as part of new bioeconomic structures, the commodification of women's bodies and the reinforcement of the idea of one's 'own' child as the ultimate form of reproduction (ibid., 213f.). Based on her case study, Wichterich argues that surrogacy and other repro-technologies developed on the female body have to be seen in their exploitative as well as emancipatory dimensions (ibid., 212 and 223). Even though repro-technologies form part of market expansion into earlier non-commercialized areas, surrogate mothers should not solely be recognized as "powerless objects or only a bodily resource in the context of neoliberal globalization. Rather, being agents and victims at the same time, the women form new subjectivities through their agency, motivations, perceptions and dreams in these asymmetric power relations and structures of inequalities." (ibid., 224).

This example highlights how advances in technology and medical science reshape our understanding of women's/gender and nature as well as different forms of care work. As Wichterich's (ibid., 211) analysis shows, it is important to accompany these changes with a critical lens raising ethical questions about the "growing hegemony of ART" and its implications for care. Furthermore, in a world with ever-advancing technologies that enter all parts of human and non-human lives and bodies, it becomes even more urgent to get involved in feminist conversations on "how [...] we [can] learn to care for each other and non-human others in increasingly unequal, politically toxic and deteriorating natural environments" (Harcourt and Bauhardt 2019, 2).

Recommended Preparatory Readings

Harcourt, Wendy; Bauhardt, Christine (2019): Introduction: Conversations on Care in Feminist Political Economy and Ecology. In: Bauhardt, Christine; Harcourt, Wendy (eds.): *Feminist Political Ecology and the Economics of Care*. London/New York: Routledge, 1-15.

Wichterich, Christa (2019): Transnational Reconfigurations of Re/Production and the Female Body: Bioeconomics, Motherhoods and the Case of Surrogacy in India. In: Bauhardt, Christine; Harcourt, Wendy (eds.): *Feminist Political Ecology and the Economics of Care*. London/New York: Routledge, 211-229.

4 Recommended Introductory Readings

Bauhardt, Christine; Harcourt, Wendy (eds.) (2019): *Feminist Political Ecology and the Economics of Care*. London/New York: Routledge.

Harcourt, Wendy; Nelson, Ingrid (eds.) (2015): *Practising Feminist Political Ecologies: Moving Beyond the "Green Economy"*. London: Zed Books.

MacGregor, Sherilyn (2017): *Routledge Handbook of Gender and Environment*. London: Routledge.

Ojeda, Diana (2011): Género, naturaleza y política: Los estudios sobre género y medio ambiente. In: *HALAC* 1(1), 55-73.

Rocheleau, Dianne; Thomas-Slayter, Barbara; Wangari, Esther (eds.) (1996): *Feminist Political Ecology: Global Issues and Local Experiences*. London: Routledge.

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- Bauriedl, Sybille; Hackfort, Sarah K. (2015): Geschlechtsspezifische Verwundbarkeit. In: Bauriedl, Sybille (ed.): *Wörterbuch Klimadebatte*. Transcript, 95-102.
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- Bennett, Jane (2010): *Vibrant Matter: A Political Ecology of Thing*. Durham: Duke University Press.
- Blaikie, Piers; Brookfield, Harold (1987): *Land Degradation and Society*. London: Methuen.
- Braidotti, Rosi (2017): Critical Posthuman Knowledges. In: *South Atlantic Quarterly* 116(1), 83-96.

- Budlender, Debbie (ed.) (2010): *Time Use Studies and Unpaid Care Work*. London: Routledge.
- Butler, Judith (1990): *Gender Trouble: Feminism and the Subversion of Identity*. New York: Routledge.
- Chávez, Libertad (2016): La importancia de la interseccionalidad en la vulnerabilidad social ante eventos hidrometeorológicos extremos en Yucatán, México. In: Velázquez Gutiérrez, Margarita; Vázquez García, Verónica; De Luca Zuria, Ana; Sosa Capistrán, Dulce María (eds.): *Transformaciones ambientales e igualdad de género en América Latina: Temas emergentes, estrategias y acciones*. México: UNAM.
- Choo, Hae Yeon; Ferree, Myra Marx (2010): Practicing Intersectionality in Sociological Research: A Critical Analysis of Inclusions, Interactions, and Institutions in the Study of Inequalities. In: *Sociological Theory* 28(2), 129-147.
- Christensen, Ann-Dorte; Jensen, Sune Qvotrup (2012): Doing Intersectional Analysis: Methodological Implications for Qualitative Research. In: *NORA – Nordic Journal of Feminism and Gender Research* 20(2), 109-125.
- Colectivo Miradas Críticas del Territorio desde el Feminismo (2017): (Re)patriarcalización de los territorios: La lucha de las mujeres y los megaproyectos extractivos. In: *Ecología Política* 54, 65-69.
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trAndeS is a structured postgraduate program based at the Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú (PUCP) that contributes to sustainable development in the Andean region through its research and training activities. The project partners are Freie Universität Berlin and Pontificia Universidad Católica del Perú (PUCP).

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The objective of **trAndeS** is to create and promote knowledge that can contribute to the achievement of the United Nations Agenda 2030 with its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) in the Andean Region. It focuses its efforts on identifying how the persistent social inequalities in the region present challenges to achieving SDG targets and how progress toward these targets can contribute to the reduction of these inequalities.

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