

CARTHAGINENSIA

Revista de Estudios e Investigación
Instituto Teológico de Murcia O.F.M.
ISSN: 0213-4381 e-ISSN: 2605-3012

Volumen XLI
Julio-Diciembre 2025
Número 80

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CARTHAGINENSIA



ISSN 0213-4381 e-ISSN 2605-3012
<http://www.revistacarthaginensia.com>
carthaginensia@itmfranciscano.org

Instituto Teológico de Murcia O.F.M.
Pza. Beato Andrés Hibernón, 3
E-30001 MURCIA

CARTHAGINENSIA fue fundada en 1985 como órgano de expresión cultural y científica del Instituto Teológico de Murcia O.F.M., Centro Agregado a la Facultad de Teología de la Universidad Pontificia Antonianum (Roma). El contenido de la Revista abarca las diversas áreas de conocimiento que se imparten en este Centro: Teología, Filosofía, Historia eclesiástica y franciscana de España y América, Franciscanismo, humanismo y pensamiento cristiano, y cuestiones actuales en el campo del ecumenismo, ética, moral, derecho, antropología, etc.

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La suscripción de la revista impresa para 2025 en es de 40 € para España y Portugal, y 60\$ para el extranjero, incluidos portes. El número suelto o atrasado vale 20 € o 30 \$. Artículos sueltos en PDF 3 € o 5 \$.

Any manuscripts and papers intended for publication in the magazine should be addressed to the Editor at the following address: Cl. Dr. Fleming, 1. E-30003 MURCIA. Price for the printed magazine: Single or back issues : 20 € or \$ 30. Single article in PDF 3 € or \$ 5.

Antiguos directores

Fr. Francisco Víctor Sánchez Gil (+2019) 1985-1989. Fr. Francisco Martínez Fresneda, 1990-2016.

D.L.: MU-17/1986

Impresión: Compobell, S.L.

CHALLENGES OF JUSTICE AND PROPOSALS FROM ECOTHEOLOGY EUROPEAN FEMINIST PERSPECTIVES

RETOS DE JUSTICIA Y PROPUESTAS DESDE LA ECOTEOLÓGÍA PERSPECTIVAS FEMINISTAS EUROPEAS

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Recibido 10 de junio de 2024 / Aceptado 29 de enero de 2025

Abstract: Theology aims to serve humanity and its political bias is undeniable, as Catherine Keller states in her book: “Political Theology of the Earth” (2018). Feminist theological reflection, in turn, seeks humanitarian alliances beyond the religious sphere to fulfil its intersectional and interdisciplinary remit and aims – for some time now – at gyn/ecology (Mary Daly, 1978) and at being “Green Theology” as proposed by Trees van Montfoort (2019) or ecofeminist, according to the insistence of Alicia Puleo (2011). Current challenges include: extremist nationalisms that blur the feminist political image; the dispersion of the feminist movement; rethinking models of care; glocal (global/local) social gyn/ecological practices. The main results obtained from the analysis of the reflections point to the need to (1) recover the mystical origins of ecological inspiration in the theological tradition, (2) rethink the category of care and biophilia, (3) search for means of sustainable democracy, find languages capable of transmitting theological reflection, and offer the praxis of a socially relevant eco-theological model in alliance with other related platforms and movements.

Keywords: Justice; Ecology; Feminist perspectives; Biophilia.

Resumen: La teología tiene por objetivo estar al servicio de la humanidad y su sesgo político es innegable, según afirma Catherine Keller en su libro: “Political Theology of the Earth” (2018). La reflexión teológica feminista, a su vez, busca alianzas humanitarias más allá del ámbito religioso para cumplir con su cometido interseccional e interdisciplinar y apunta –ya desde hace tiempo– a la gin/ecología (Mary Daly, 1978) y a ser “Green Theology” como propone Trees van Montfoort (2019) o ecofeminista, según la insistencia de Alicia Puleo (2011). Entre los retos actuales se encuentran: los nacionalismos extremistas que desdibujan la imagen política feminista; la dispersión del movimiento feminista; el repensar los modelos del cuidado; las prácticas gin/ecológicas sociales glocles (globales/locales). Los principales resultados obtenidos tras el análisis de las reflexiones señalan la necesidad de (1) recuperar los orígenes místicos de la inspiración ecológica en la tradición teológica, (2) repensar la categoría del cuidado y de la biofilia, (3) buscar medios de una democracia sostenible; encontrar los lenguajes capaces de transmitir la reflexión teológica, y ofrecer las praxis de un modelo ecoteológico que sea relevante socialmente en alianzas con otras plataformas y movimientos afines.

Palabras clave: Justicia; Ecología; Biofilia; Perspectivas feministas.

Introduction

Theology aims to be at the service of humanity that encompasses believers and non-believers. Its political bias is undeniable, as Catherine Keller states in her book: “Political Theology of the Earth” (2018). Feminist theological reflection, in turn, seeks humanitarian alliances beyond the religious sphere to fulfil its intersectional and interdisciplinary remit and aims - for some time now - at gyn/ecology (Mary Daly, 1978) and at being “Green Theology” or ecofeminist as proposed by Alicia Puleo (2011) and Trees van Montfoort (2019) in texts that underline the link of women with nature in the effort against gender polarity.

We will follow the intuitions of these authors and compile the main points of interest of European feminists, whose reflections trace concentric thematic circles around ecology, politics and gender, to show the intersection of the three spheres and the need for minimum agreements among feminists in order to make ethical practices as coherent, relevant and meaningful as possible in the landscape of patriarchal regressive politics.

The text is structured in two parts: at the beginning we will find a brief enumeration of the main current challenges reiterated by numerous feminist thinkers in Europe, who link the theme of justice with that of ecology. We will then propose some eco-theological practices in terms of justice.

The interdisciplinary methodology applied in the text incorporates a series of texts by significant contemporary authors present at the ESWTR Congresses whose conclusions will map the challenges posed to and by feminist and gender theologies, and which point to a series of proposals for responding to these challenges. The analysis will focus on the reflections contained in recent papers and publications on the theme of eco-theology in the key of justice by the following theologians: the previously mentioned Catherine Keller and Trees van Montfoort, Linn Tonstad, and philosophers such as Alicia Puleo and Judith Ress, who seek common contexts among them, enriched by their own research on the theme.

Although the paper refers to the perspectives that come from the European feminist scholars, the global vision requires the research of international sources that extend to the other continents. Due to the extension of the paper and the aim to challenge the extreme right wings politics with the gender and ecofeminist methodological devices, we shall not manage to focus, although we cannot cease at least to mention, the recent contributions to the topic on behalf of ecofeminist scholars in the USA and

Europe: Carol Adams,¹ Vandana Shiva,² Val Plumwood,³ Lori Gruen⁴, Greta Gaard,⁵ Catriona Sandilands⁶ and, specifically ecofeminist and theological researchers in Spain and Latin-America: Geraldina Céspedes Ulloa,⁷ Yayo Herrero,⁸ Marilú Rojas⁹ or Patricia de Sousa¹⁰ who show the entanglement between occupied and exploited gender-sex spaces and environmental matters including political critics.

Among the challenges we will mainly list: (1) extremist nationalisms that blur feminist political facets and efforts, (2) the dissipation of the forces of the feminist movement and the need to “raise disagreements better,” as suggested by Linn Tonstad,¹¹ (3) to discover models of care and lay alliances for a reflection that (4) has an impact on glocal (global/local) social gyn/ecological practices.

¹ Among the selected publications we would mention: *The Sexual Politics of Meat: A Feminist-Vegetarian Critical Theory*, 1990. *Ecofeminism and the Sacred*, 1993. *Neither Man nor Beast: Feminism and the Defense of Animals*, 1994. *Woman-battering: Creative pastoral care and counseling series*, 1994.

² Some of the titles are the following: *Stolen Harvest: The Hijacking of the Global Food Supply*, 2000. *Earth Democracy: Justice, Sustainability, and Peace*, 2005. *Soil Not Oil: Environmental Justice in an Age of Climate Crisis*, 2008. *Making peace with the earth*, 2013. *Creative Civil Disobedience*, 2018.

³ Let us mention some of her most famous books: *The Eye of the Crocodile*, 2012 edited by Lorraine Shannon. *Environmental Culture: The Ecological Crisis of Reason*, 2002. *Feminism and the Mastery of Nature*, 1993.

⁴ To name a few of her works: *Ethics and Animals: An Introduction*, 2011 (second edition 2021). *Entangled Empathy*, 2015. *Animal Crisis*, 2022 co-authored with Alice Cray, *Carceral Logics*, 2022 co-edited with Justin Marceau, *Critical Terms for Animal Studies*, 2018, *Ecofeminism: Feminist Intersections with Other Animals and the Earth*, 2014, second edition 2022, co-edited with Carol J. Adams.

⁵ Some of her recent publications: *Critical Ecofeminism. Ecocritical Theory and Practice*, 2017. «International Perspectives in Feminist Ecocriticism» in: *Routledge Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Literature*, 2013. *Ecofeminism. Ethics And Action*, 2010.

⁶ *Queer Ecologies: Sex, Nature, Politics, Desire*, 2010. *The Good-Natured Feminist: ecofeminism and the Quest for Democracy*, 1999.

⁷ The recent publication in Spanish: *Ecofeminismo. Teología saludable para la tierra y sus habitantes*, 2021.

⁸ Some of her widely recognized texts are: *Ausencias y extravíos*, 2021. *Educación para la sostenibilidad. Una mirada ecofeminista a la educación*, 2022. *Toma de tierra*, 2023.

⁹ The latest book is gender-queer oriented: *Ecofeminismos Queer*, 2023 whereas «La pertinencia de la teología ecofeminista y su incidencia política ante el feminicidio y el ecocidio actual», *RIBET* Vol. XVI, 30 (2020) explains the “eco-sophia” and “ero-eco-sophia” terms.

¹⁰ The latest book: *Ecofeminismo decolonial y crisis del patriarcado*, 2018.

¹¹ Linn Tonstad, «Everything Queer, Nothing Radical?», *STK* n.º 92 (2016): 119.

The main results obtained from the analysis of the reflections point to the need to (1) recover the mystical origins of the ecological inspiration in the theological tradition, the urgency to continue revising the symbolic implications between soteriology and Christology transversally to their anthropological and ecological assumptions, (2) rethink the category of care and biophilia, (3) seek means of a sustainable democracy that reinforces the interdependent relationality of citizens, and (4) find the languages and means of transmission of the advances of theological reflection to different scientific fields, (3) to search for means of a sustainable democracy that strengthens the interdependent relationality of citizens and (4) to find the languages and means of transmitting the advances of theological reflection to different scientific fields, together with (5) the determination of concrete praxis of the implementation of a socially relevant eco-theological model in alliances with other like-minded platforms and movements.

1. European and global framework

The history of feminism often determines its stages in waves, referring to the metaphor that accompanies the movement's progress: the rising and falling tide, governed by the lunar rhythm and rich in ecological and mythological evocations, combining the imaginary of divinity (the moon goddess) and wild nature.

Mary Daly, for example, explains in "Pure Lust"¹² that the:

"Rhythms of Deep Memory are very different from the tedious ticking of patriarchal clocks. The rhythms of re-membering are proper to the Tides. They are in harmony with the elements within and around us, and are expressed in the Elemental sounds. The complexity of these rhythms can be intuited by reference to the tides".

¹² Mary Daly, *Pura Lujuria. Filosofía Feminista Elemental*, trans. Antonina Wozna (Madrid: Cátedra, 2022. 1st Ed. 1984), 239.

Rachel Carson¹³ explains:

“The tides present a striking paradox, the essence of which is this: the force that sets them in motion is cosmic, lies entirely outside the earth and presumably acts impartially in all parts of the globe, but the nature of the tide at a particular moment is a local affair, with startling differences occurring within a very short geographical distance”.

Therefore, the concept of the “wave” of feminism must be placed in its vital context, and we must try to discover its rhythm in order to assess whether it keeps pace with other tides. In order to situate the European context, it is useful to compare it briefly with other feminist nuclei, such as the “fourth wave of Latin American feminist theology (2000-2010)”. This term is explained and developed by Mary Judith Ress in her article entitled “A ball of wool in multiple colours”¹⁴.

Firstly, she argues that the diversity and multiplicity of approaches makes it impossible to draw a map with clear coordinates and requires a path on many fronts, patched together like a weaving. Among the main milestones of diversity, she lists: the variety of contexts, methodologies and feminist theologians, the diversity of denominations and traditions. She also mentions the disconnection of feminism (and even feminist theology) from religious institutions and the multiplicity of points of reference in thought.

From the social-economic-political contexts, she underlines the growth in the sense of autonomy in terms of the relationship with the sacred, accompanied by the recovery of ancestral memory and wisdom which - at the anthropological level - is reflected in the unity of body-mind-spirit in order to create spaces of belonging and orientation. This is combined with the crisis of reference of churches and communities that do not respond to the concerns of today's women.

Earthquakes, the exploitation of forests and rivers to secure oil, and the existence of popular (right-wing) neo-liberal governments leave the land without resources, impoverishing indigenous communities and citizens on the streets. Responses emerge from liberation, ecofeminist, black and indigenous theology, which often challenge each other, placing themselves on

¹³ Rachel Carson, *El mar que nos rodea*. Trans. Rubén Landa. (Barcelona: Planeta, 2019. 1ª Ed. 1961):144.

¹⁴ Mary Judith Ress, «Un ovillo de lana en múltiples colores. La cuarta ola de la Teología Feminista Latinoamericana (2000-2010)», *Carthaginensia* n.º 72 (2021): 411.

the margins and periphery of the church at a time when globalization favors the growth of mega-institutions,¹⁵ even mega-churches.

Against this background, Judith Ress proposes to continue building feminist consciousness (1), to search for hermeneutics that allow us to remember the memories of forgotten women and the politics, doctrines and experiences that pass through the body without violating it (2) in order to recover spirituality and psycho-somatic balance in women and - by means of inclusive language that generates ecological alliances - to gain political weight and relevance (3).

To continue with the simile of the fourth wave - or perhaps already the fifth (?) in Europe, we should first of all ask ourselves whether it is the advancing or retreating wave, the high or low tide and - in any case - where it is taking us. For the last seven years or so, the European feminist theological concern has been traced by the titles of a few congresses and publications. Not all activities, regional congresses and publications are represented here, but only a few examples that point out the axes of interest.

European Society of Women Theological Research (ESWTR)

Congress 2022: Confronting Gender Polarity and Nationalism and the association's journals:

2021 Women's Religious Leadership in Conflict and Crisis

2020 Gender, Race, Religion. De/constructing Regimes of In/visibility

2019 Terror, Trump & Trauma

2018 Translation - Transgression - Transformation

Coordinamento Teologhe Italiane

2022: Eco-Teologia delle Donne

Spanish Women Theologians Association

2022: Synodality and women

2021: Genealogies of Trauma. Abused bodies, reconciled memories.

2020: The salvation we women believe in.

¹⁵ More bibliography from the Spanish-language perspectives: Nuria Alabao, *Transfeminismo o barbarie*, 2021. *Alianzas rebeldes*, 2021 or Maria Eugenia Rodríguez, *Revolución feminista y políticas de lo común frente a la extrema derecha*, 2019. The book with the contribution of both authors: *La reacción patriarcal. Neoliberalismo autoritario, politización religiosa y nuevas derechas*, edited by Cristina Vega Solís and Marta Cabezas Fernández, Bellaterra, 2022.

2019: God, Desire and Subversion

2017: Treading Sacred Ground. Ecology and justice.

2016: God and violence against women.

2021: *IAPT* Coping with crisis: hospitality, security, and the search for faithful connections <https://www.pastoralezorg.be/page/theopraxis/>

2021: Dissenting Church: Exploring the Theological Power of Conflict and Disagreement (KU Leuven Encounters in Systematic Theology XIII)

We could focus on several themes, but we would highlight several cross-cutting themes covering the following areas of interest:

- Gender still matters.
- Crisis and conflict within institutions.
- Trauma and the body.
- Life-threatening policies in their multiple facets.

It is important to underline that these themes are intertwined, they are not treated independently or separately, but are intersectional. That is to say, regressive gender policies cannot be approached but dealt with in their political contexts, without placing them outside the real (economic) conditions of women's lives.

While it is true that the ecological issue is not a priority, it underlies all issues and is evoked in titles or subtitles, such as the recent ESWTR conference series that aims to confront nationalisms and gender polarity in order to generate sustainable democracies from the horizons of Northern Europe.

Furthermore, it should be noted that Europe, from its linguistic and climatological, cultural and philosophical diversity, stands at the crossroads between the East (China) and the West (the United States) and - in contrast to these huge territories of immense density that are currently home to the world's major economic powers - being a relatively small territory, plays a role of "balance of power" in the international political arena, a role weakened by the war in Ukraine.

The very face of the dependence on Russian-Ukrainian energy resources (gas, wheat, raw materials for construction) that Europe has recently discovered makes it clear that political attempts at peace and democracy are in deep crisis, heralding a shift in global strategies and alliances, a change in the axes of power and the displacement of "peripheral" issues such as women's rights. Let us not forget that the country with the most oil resource-

es in Europe is Norway, which is not in the European Union, although it does belong to the European Economic Area, given its energy importance. In this sense, the position of Spain, for example, as a country with a linguistic openness towards Latin America and not so dependent on Russian gas (gas flows from Morocco and Algeria) is different from that of the rest of Europe, without reducing inflation as a result.

This small picture of the geo-economic-political context reveals the European framework as “glocal”. That is, Europe - however small - functions locally and as a mediator between the Russian-Chinese East and the American “West” obeys globalist rules. This intersection is important for understanding the challenges and proposals of eco-justice, because it will share some of the concerns raised by Catherine Keller (in American vision) and others, more local, that seem to question both neo-liberal and right-wing conservative policies.

2. Challenges of eco-theological justice from feminist perspectives

The challenges we will focus on are: (1) extremist nationalisms that blur feminist political facets and efforts, (2) the dispersion of forces in the feminist movement and the need to better frame our internal debates, (3) discovering models of care and secular alliances for a reflection that (4) impacts on glocal (global/local) social gyn/ecological practices.

How do nationalisms affect feminism and feminist theology? First, as Catherine Thorleifsson argues, far-right parties use Christian signs eclectically, to seek common reference points in the Christian religion. This is a “cultural Christianity à la carte” that seeks to cohere the state’s agenda against immigrants (who often come from the Muslim religion) under the populist slogan of “work and bread for the citizens”. It is an abuse of Christian religious signs per se, since these only serve as a political manoeuvre of unity “against” outsiders, while “insiders” neither profess Christian ethics nor practice Christian spirituality in an effort to conform to the atheistic neo-liberalism reigning in Europe¹⁶. In other words, religious sentiments are manipulated to serve as a pretext against outsiders (from other religions), but policies that have little to do with Christian values are promoted.

¹⁶ Catherine Thorleifsson, *Defending the Endangered Nation: Nordic Identitarian Christianism in The Age of Migration* (London: Routledge, 2019), 58.

Feminists and feminist theologians are confused. On the one hand, in pursuit of parity and equal rights, they want to occupy more public spaces. Right-wing parties seem to profess Christianity and therefore, for some, this is the path of transformation and militancy. However, the shortcomings of Christianity denounced by feminists (abortion issues, recognition of women, etc.) confront feminists who seek recognition of differences in a neo-liberal style. The risk of political confrontations between women weakens the force of representation and the rupture takes place in a religious key. Nancy Fraser illustrated this conflict when she spoke of the unfortunate marriage between feminism and postmodern liberalism, especially in the Bush decade (US elections 2006). “The confrontation of liberal and radical feminists on the basis of convictions regarding motherhood and the family sphere was used in political struggles”¹⁷, “the strategy of gender manipulation served Bush’s victory because it invoked a gender-coded politics of recognition to conceal regressive distributional politics”¹⁸.

In this scenario, it seems that women will never get it right: either we deny belonging to the Church (which seems akin to right-wing parties) by conceding to “women’s rights downgrades” or to progress (coded as neo-liberal atheism). Thus, in the absence of consensus, common interests: social security, employment, education, reproductive rights, women’s work, maternity are relegated to distant positions on political agendas concerned with “the common good” of everyone but women.

The second challenge: the dispersion of feminist energies in disputes has become evident in the point above, because it serves to manipulate and disintegrate rather than enrich us. In the face of this challenge, Linn Tonstad forcefully states that “gender matters”¹⁹, that means that gender studies should be still considered as important and the systematization of different hermeneutics to describe singular identities is necessary to overcome the universalism of science, since this procedure absorbed and neutralized the experience of women and the earth, as an “other” different from the male-norm of the universe.

¹⁷ Antonina Wozna, «Panorama de las políticas regresivas actuales y las visiones utópicas feministas», *ESWTR Journal* n.º 27 (2019): 63.

¹⁸ Nancy Fraser, *Fortunas del feminismo. Del capitalismo gestionado por el estado a la crisis neoliberal* (Madrid: Traficantes de Sueños, 2015), 198.

¹⁹ Tonstad Linn. *Queer Theology: Beyond Apologetics* (Eugene: Cascade Companions, 2018): 32.

The queer perspective has managed to break with the dualisms and binary oppositions on which modern religion (higher-lower planes), philosophy (essence-form; nature-culture; male-female) and science (empirical-spiritual or non-material) are based. However, this methodological approach that we call queer must not be essentialized or ontologized at the expense of its initial purpose: the visibilisation and recognition of differences within the human race so as not to discriminate against singular experiences by excluding them from the academy as non-normative or particular, exceptional.

The current policy of the state of emergency, alarm and sovereign exception²⁰ keeps us in a state of temporariness, uncertainty and dispersion from the slogan “every man for himself”, just when - on the contrary - in the face of the complexity of reality we must strive to seek the collective principle (“collective inception”) of certain common references. Among such a diversity of singularities, it is easily possible to fall into individualism and - in the face of the unexpected multiplicity of differences - into indifference. The American theorist draws a parallel between the behavior of the protagonists of the Cold War and today’s extreme right-wing rulers (including Trump) and Putin: those who decide on exceptions in laws are the ones who can really impose their criteria and outside, above the sovereign democratic authority of a nation. Moreover, he sees in this legislative loophole, reflections of the fascist totalitarianisms of 20th century Europe (Hitler, Mussolini, Stalin).

As never before, it is necessary for women to stand in solidarity with each other, and to support each other in the common cause of social visibility (parity-justice), awareness of the critical points of patriarchy in academia (glass ceiling) and political-business-economic responsibility, together with the recognition of diversity. Achieving certain rights and enjoying them has led women to embark on often lonely paths to set an example that it is possible to develop as a woman in the patriarchal world, paying “tolls” or having to negotiate between conforming to patriarchy, being faithful to her family or children etc.²¹ Today, a great deal of tolerance is needed among women who continue to strive to open up new paths, even if some of them are dead ends.

²⁰ Catherine Keller, *Political Theology of The Earth. Our Planetary Emergency and The Struggle for A New Public* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2018), 21.

²¹ Antonina Wozna, «Mary Daly sobre las hermenéuticas y gramáticas de la opresión de las mujeres en las religiones», *Aposta. Revista de Ciencias Sociales* n.º 82 (2019):117.

Discovering models of care and alliances that impact on glocal (global/local) social gyn/ecological practices is a multifaceted challenge in Europe. Although the continent projects the image of sustainability and good working, economic and social conditions, there is a large population at risk of social exclusion. In the European Union there were 96.5 million people at risk of poverty or social exclusion in 2020, representing 21.9% of the population, according to data published by Eurostat. Spain ranked as the fourth most at risk out of the 24 countries that provided data to the EU statistical office, with 27% of its population on the brink of poverty or exclusion, of which 28.1% were women and 25.9% men²².

Thus, the alleged social equality remains a mirage and the alleged sustainability: the ecological trend of hybrid or electric mobility, cycle paths, the use of trains instead of cars or planes, clashes with the non-recyclable waste dumps of European waste in India, with manufacturing for welfare in exchange for very low wages in China, Vietnam, Morocco, the dependence on polluting maritime logistics, the investments in nuclear power (with the use of nuclear energy), pornography and prostitution among teenagers, the consent of the Bank of Europe to the impoverishment of the mortgaged population through currency inflation and rising interest rates, on the scale of the world stock exchange.

To sum up: locally Europe benefits from being the corner of the privileged, while globally it exploits the most impoverished countries. This glocal context, care policies, focused on improving the living conditions of women are still in force and must be reinforced. In the pyramid of the privileged in Europe are those civil servants whose working and social conditions allow them to reconcile motherhood with professional performance. However, private companies, the driving force of the countries, lack such policies, starting with the terminology used to describe the period of prenatal care: "sick leave". The base of the pyramid continues to be made up of women in jobs caring for the elderly because the demographic pyramid is already inverted in Europe²³, without social security, without employment contracts, promoting an economy without taxes and making it impossible procedures to obtain citizenship in the case of foreigners, house or industrial cleaners, cooks in roadside restaurants, or even the precarious, immigrants.

²² Journal "El periódico", 15 May, 2021.

²³ Source: Eurostat 2017.

3. New paradigms from ecotheology

Faced with this complex and diverse framework, where it seems that women would have one more concern as oppressed: that of their own fate, it is worth remembering that - although Christianity reminds us (from the creaturely condition) that we need salvation, critical feminist theological reflection, shows that we do not need just any kind of savior. What is more, we trust that Christ has already saved the universe and that is why women must take our destiny in our hands.

How can we stay sane and with some joy in the face of such a complex and difficult to manage panorama? European theologians propose to persevere in the effort to (1) recover the mystical origins of ecological inspiration in the theological tradition, the urgency to continue reviewing the symbolic implications between soteriology and Christology transversally to their anthropological and ecological assumptions, (2) seek means of a sustainable democracy that reinforces the interdependent relationality of citizens and (3) rethink the category of care and biophilia to find the languages and means of transmitting the advances of theological reflection to different scientific fields, together with (4) determine the concrete praxis of implementing an eco-theological model that is socially relevant in alliances with other platforms and related movements.

Firstly, it would be about recovering the mystical origins of ecological inspiration in the theological tradition, the urgency to continue reviewing the symbolic implications between soteriology and Christology transversally to their anthropological and ecological assumptions, as Tress Montfort suggests.

Next, with the help of Catherine Keller, we would look for means of a sustainable democracy that reinforces the interdependent relationality of citizens. Between melting glaciers, rising waters and spreading droughts, the Earth has stopped tolerating our claim to dominance over it. But how can we confront climate change when political crises continue to explode in the present?

Feminist ecotheologist and philosopher of religion Catherine Keller (2018) interprets the feedback loop of political and ecological predation as a secularized apocalypse. Carl Schmitt's political theology of sovereign exception sheds light on today's ideological warfare, racial, ethnic, economic, and sexual conflicts, and arrogant anthropocentrism. If the politics of exceptionalism are theological in origin, he asks, should not we enlist the world's religious communities as part of the resistance?

Keller calls for dissolving the opposition between the religious and the secular in favor of a broad planetary movement for social and ecological justice. When we confront the populist and authoritarian right founded on white male Christian supremacism, we can fight back with an often unspoken, messianic-laden theology of the present moment that calls for a complex new audience. This political theology of the earth activates the world's populations, united in solidarity and committed to revolutionary solutions to the intertwined crises of the Anthropocene.

Thirdly, we know that languages mark the coordinates of the maps of representation and social relations. The concepts of biophilia and ego-ecology are an invitation for women to become aware of their importance and responsibility in the creation of a new world and its transition towards feminist-style justice.

On the one hand, Daly defines biophilia as “the original lust for Life that is the core of the Elemental E-motion; the Pure Lust that is the Nemesis of the patriarchy and the necrophilic state”²⁴ that points out the aspects of justice in the framework personalized by the divinity Nemesis, since the struggles for “justice”, be from the right to the left have become barren and the concept “justice” no longer inspires women, its tradition being too distorted in patriarchy.

On the other hand, Zavalloni (1987) raises the question of how a woman, a member of a specific society and culture and who operates in a specific environment, develops an image of herself, of others and of society. Representations are not just ideas, a mental translation of a perceived external reality, but rather they refer to an entire imaginary and symbolic space, to a creation that simultaneously expresses values, a conception of oneself and the world. It is this imaginary and symbolic space that underlies and accompanies, as background thought, the representations that a person or a group gives to themselves that ego-ecological analysis sets out to explore. These representations are expressed in words, themes that have a particular resonance to the extent that they capture some aspect of identity, are loaded with experiences, personal memories and images.

It is about the proposal of rethinking what it means to be a woman in the context of each one and orienting ourselves to biophilia, rather than to “life” (a term that has been very ambiguous in Christian social doctrine and even conflictive among feminists) and to the Nemesis in this construction of women's identity (once again and in great detail) so that we can dream (even

²⁴ Mary Daly, *Pura Lujuria...*, 30.

if just a little) beyond the juices and political-economic ins and outs that seek to absorb creativity, energy and the joy of women's lives. Daly allows the use of new terminology and new language that releases the burdens of patriarchal verbiage to explain to ourselves, as women, since biophilia does not fit into traditional forms of expression.

What we in Europe - often - theorize from the category of the "body" following the thread of Latin America (Lagarde, Gebara) is intended to be deepened from the ego-ecological interior space, or the primary psychosomatic coexistence that generates symbolic references and connects beliefs, experiences, visions, myths and psychological states that contribute to generating personal and social representations that modify relationship patterns.

The fourth proposal consists of outlining some specific lines of praxis for the implementation of an eco-theological model that is socially relevant in alliances with other platforms and related movements. It seems evident that women's alliances with socialist branches are logical for the feminist movement. However, many businessmen reflect the hegemonic right-wing mentality, which promotes the wealth of oligarchs through collective effort. Furthermore, patriarchal bourgeois society allows itself to be fooled by biased public opinion media, spending money on "bread and circuses", that is, on alcohol and football. It is interesting to discover that, after discovering the manipulative political background and faced with the disenchantment of democracies, women seek the third way: precisely hand in hand with non-governmental organizations dedicated to promoting sustainability and care for the common home, independently. Where does the funding for these organizations come from? It is still surprising that the majority of organizations subsidized by the European Union are from the Netherlands, Belgium, Germany, Austria or France, while - for example - Spain, so rich in sun, recently ended up repealing the tax on solar energy (a sign of hegemonies and energy lobbies). Isn't it absurd that solar panels come from China?

Another network system is municipal women's movements, the Ministry of Equality which receives an ambiguous journalistic headline: "Equality in Europe: Irene Montero's counterparts (Spain) are needed"²⁵. In 2014, an educational platform fuhem.es published an article with the selection of feminist organizations in Europe, including UN Women, European Institute for Gender Equality, Research Center for Feminist Action, Popular Education Network among Women, the Editorial "The Feminist Press", IANSA Women's

²⁵ Journal "El Mundo", November 28, 2020.

Network, National Organization for Women: “The Women’s Room”, FEMEN, Feminist Coordinator in Spain, redfeminista.org, AHIGE etc.

These associations, organizations connect with ecological groups and networks, seeking alliances beyond manipulative policies, which can make visible the connection between the care of life, women and the planet. As can be seen in the documentation of the European Green Deal, the sustainability that involves eliminating air, soil and water pollution is projected as the next bubble, given that it will be necessary to invest more than €200,000M in the coming years²⁶. The EEA, the European Environment Agency, defines several axes of its work, as stated in the “ministry for the ecological transition and the demographic challenge”: from environmental education, sustainable tourism, environmental law, natural heritage, marine, parks, mobility to participation and volunteering. The fact of connecting the demographic aspect with sustainability is a step, which also has several readings: it is not only about what we are going to eat but who will have the right to food and who will choose the criteria of price and rights to survive²⁷.

Feminist theology connects with these reflections in part, precisely as a critical instance that seeks a balanced reflection on eschatology and creation, beyond androcentrism and anthropocentrism, from care for the common home motivated by a “mobilizing dream”²⁸ that social cooperatives of ecological consumption generate alternative financing methods, platforms for those affected by mortgages, slow movements, ethical banking, platforms for welcoming immigrants in order to crack the “globalitarian” system. Carmen Magallón²⁹ proposes an ecofeminist consciousness that points out the intersection between the oppression of the planet and women, while indicating that there will be no true care as long as the well-being and rights of women are not the priority and testimony of real progress.

These multifaceted alliances are strategies that will prevent the feminist cause from being eclipsed by the urgency of “peace” in the face of war or food in the face of “famine.” Ecofeminism demands a focus on patriarchy as the evil to uproot, in order to plant a biophilic future. And ecofeminist theol-

²⁶ Accessed 30 May, 2024. <https://cor.europa.eu/es/news/Pages/zero-pollution-stakeholder-platform-.aspx>

²⁷ Nancy Fraser, *Fortunas del feminismo. Del capitalismo gestionado por el estado a la crisis neoliberal* (Madrid: Traficantes de Sueños, 2015), 85.

²⁸ José Laguna, «Pisar la luna. Escatología y política», *Cuadernos Cristianisme i Justícia* n.º 195 (2015): 18.

²⁹ Carmen Magallón, «Una conciencia ecofeminista», *Cuadernos Cristianisme i Justícia* n.º 209 (2018): 23-28.

ogy influences that patriarchal religious imaginaries do not eclipse women behind the “perfect man/god” or prioritize the human race over the “life” of the planet and the cosmos. That is why the presence of ego-ecologically conscious women is needed on different platforms, groups and alliances, to better debate and not lose representation in currents, not only of trends but of the future.

Finally, we would compile the nine strategies that Alicia Puleo proposes around the proposal of ecofeminism for another possible world. The author proposes an intersection of content that concerns the care of the planet and people, providing a critical vision of anthropocentrism and androcentrism. She suggests that we make a critical reading of the attitude of Modernity and Enlightenment towards the animal world and the position of the first European systematizer of feminism: Simone de Beauvoir. We must not forget that sexual morality is conditioned by the corporeality and reproductive capacity of women and that notions such as pleasure and freedom are not applied - nor legislated - equally with respect to men and women.

We must rethink queer theories from Linn Tonstad’s premise that gender matters, without ignoring the uniqueness she advocates. Women must position ourselves as leaders and protagonists of this new world from green empowerment, where the care of animals and plants results in other vital, non-androcentric or anthropocentric eating habits. The anti-bullfighting political position, in the Spanish environment, is not an easy task to debate, since - as in so many other areas - the principle of parity (reaching the heights of a profession) collides with the cruelty of the act of killing to animals for a scenic purpose. The problem of work, the double-triple shift of women and the social circumstances of precarious care of children by grandparents and the elderly are also raised by nursing homes, while there is a “zeal strike” against patriarchy³⁰, with women being the main caregivers of pets, for whom they must find time.

Conclusions

In bringing these theological resources to bear on political and ecological crises, we can follow Keller’s advice to reject “both the chilling optimism of any technological solution and... the surrender to all that is too late (...) Both

³⁰ Alicia Puleo, *Ecofeminismo para otro mundo posible* (Madrid: Cátedra 1ª Ed 2011, 10th Ed. 2021), 396

optimism and pessimism knows the outcome”³¹, while hope is based on possibility. With honesty and from the open, women must recognize that we live through crises and act without guarantees. It is precisely the theological motivation, given the state of provisionality of manipulative policies, that aims to help us “take risks that matter”³².

The political crisis we experience is unfolding in the midst of an ecological crisis. We find ourselves as a human species within the same “planetary oikos of our ecosociality”³³ and understanding this tangled materiality and the identities they make up requires a wide range of theoretical resources. The challenge of the contemporary moment is the growing awareness that racial, gender, ecological, economic and political issues cannot be addressed in isolation from others but rather at the intersection, at the crossroads of multiple political perspectives, linguistic approaches and economic alliances, where the ideas of: eco-“oikos” point out the primacy of care understood from the feminist key and of “nomos”- habit allow new practices that weigh the rules of pyramidal distribution in favor of the women who continue to support it.

Ecological environmental citizenship³⁴ requires pacts and alliances between ecofeminism and the social environmental movement, so that the empowerment carried out is green and sustainable and is based on environmental androcentric education. In short, the vision of justice from the ecofeminist perspective must be based on critical thinking that advocates for legal and de facto equality and the autonomy of women in a context of technocracy and science oriented towards the profit of its sponsors (mostly males) whose interest is short-term and maximum performance, not maximum sustainability.

Citizenship must go hand in hand with the universalization of care not restricted to women, from whose exercise men are self-interestedly deprived and from which they constantly benefit at the expense of women’s energy and time. Interculturality and networking with women and associations from different countries and continents will allow us to generate a broad and unbiased vision (Europeanized-Westernized-colonialist-white) of the reality in which we often lose sight of the fact that the oppressed can and often are oppressors, although this fact does not always imply their domination. This position balances the opposites of a naive multiculturalism founded on tra-

³¹ Keller, *Political Theology*..., 59.

³² Keller, *Political Theology*..., 160-168.

³³ Keller, *Political Theology*..., 72.

³⁴ Puleo, *Ecofeminismo*..., 270.

dition and Darwinian fanaticism or fundamentalism. It is about developing an empathetic and compassionate attitude towards living beings, without neglecting the demand for the rights of women and minorities, combining it with general ecological practice.

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