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Chapter

Decolonized Human, Gender, and Environmental: HUGE Security and Peace

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Abstract

This article explores diverse peace paradigms from negative and realist to liberal, structural, and cosmopolitan peace. The liberal focus in a multi-diverse world with an occidental cosmopolitan pathway did not prevent global and regional wars, such as the present between Russia and Ukraine. The text focuses on a methodology of an open, dissipative, and self-regulating system on a decolonized bottom-up approach, where indigenous communities, representing 5% of the world population, conserve 80% of the remaining biodiversity. Women produce also half the food for their families and communities. Ethnic, economic, and gender discrimination are related to patriarchy that has devastated societies and the environment. Alternative HUGE (human, gender, and environmental) security is caring for vulnerable social groups and destroyed environments. Women's care economy, subsistence production, sorority, and social solidarity from the bottom up are transforming violence inside society and families, centering on well-being and not capital accumulation. Reinforcing regional autonomy, gender, and indigenous equity also reduces the impacts of environmental footprints. This decolonized understanding represents an alternative model of the way of life in the Global South, based on engendered and sustainable peacebuilding for a sustainable future.

Keywords: decolonized peace, HUGE: human, gender, and environmental security and peace, indigenous, engendered peace, bottom-up approach, women's care economy

1. Introduction

The present unipolar world order is shaking [1] the neoliberal economy, the Occidental model of development, the well-being of more than half of the population in the Global South, and increasingly also more poverty in the industrialized countries. Further, the management of extraction of minerals and land use change toward livestock, tourism, and urbanization is destroying ecosystems and its services. An alternative model for vulnerable people from the Global South should start not from the imperialist dominance of any country, but from a vision based on regional and culturally diverse interconnectedness, where minorities are included. Regional wars, particularly in Africa, the pandemic of COVID-19, and the high inflation of food

and energy, due to the conflict between Russia and Ukraine, are aggravated by the speculation of commercial multinational enterprises. All these processes are blocking an unachieved energy transition and are creating multiple instabilities, which are deepened by a severe climate crisis [2]. Hunger [3], water or food scarcity, and climate disasters [4] are fueling conflicts at the local and regional levels in the Global South, some of them with global repercussions due to international migration.

Revising the different approaches to peace, most of the irenology is based on occidental paradigms and patriarchal worldviews, mostly developed by Western academic men (Galtung; Boulding; Czempiel; Young; Oren; Paris). They did not understand the underlying patriarchal mindset of power, war [5], conquest, exploitation, discrimination, and environmental destruction [6], where women lost visibility inside their houses and were dominated by men [7].

The present chapter is first presenting a short methodological overview of interconnected, complex, and dissipative system processes [8], which are increasing multiple conflictive arenas, especially in the Global South. It is followed up with a synthetic review of the dominant peace approaches (realist, negative, positive, liberal or democratic, environmental, and cosmopolitan peace). The critics from the Global South are related to its colonial past, the extraction of natural resources, and the exploitation of human labor, including women and children [9]. These regions, especially Africa, are increasingly confronted with resource wars due to water and food scarcity, high indebtedness, and a lack of money for governments to satisfy public services for their fast-growing population [10]. Thus the chapter will also review the dominant food system by corporate enterprises, which are destroying in multiple regions the food sovereignty of poor people with unhealthy food or sweetened soft drinks.

Confronted with these complexities, Oswald & Brauch [9] proposed a decolonized peace approach. Oswald [11] further explored human, gender, and environmental security, an alternative HUGE security and peace. This approach explores a bottom-up indigenous polity within their telluric Cosmvision, able to save Earth and humanity. The conclusions integrate this alternative decolonized peace paradigm with a woman' care economy [12], centered on equity, humankind support, and nature, overcoming the accumulation of wealth for a small corporate elite at the cost of the destruction of Earth and human well-being [13].

Far from the dominant vision of peace of the dominant androgenic conceptualization, southern women [14], and institutions [12] have proposed a care or gift economy [15], taking into account the female unpaid labor force in the households and caring activities. Environmental concerns were absent in the realist political and peace sciences community until impacts of the Orange Agent did produce mutagenicity not only in direct affected Vietnamese people but also in the American soldiers [16]. Further, increasing climate disasters, pollution [2], and the loss of vital ecosystem services are forcing an alternative understanding of the change in the Earth era from the Holocene to the Anthropocene [17]. During this new Earth period unknown, dangerous, and complex interactions between human activities and environment are creating new risks for humanity and nature.

At the same time, as the NATO–United States management of the Russian–Ukraine war indicates, new arms, more destructive warfare and investments in the military sector are not only killing an increasing number of humans on both sides but also displacing one-third of the Ukrainians internally and outside their country. The destruction of the Ukrainian infrastructure is estimated to cost 600 billion dollars [18]. The imposed sanctions on Russia are further producing global inflation, economic recession, and new threats of a nuclear confrontation [19]. Unknown global

long-term risks, such as the potential destruction of a nuclear plant with radioactive clouds, can affect globally [20]. As a direct consequence, militarization has increased globally and armed expenditures have reached over two trillion dollars [21].

Before starting with some methodological reflections, the research questions guiding this article are: Why have the many theories of peace and security developed by Western men failed to create a world of cooperation for the well-being of people and the care of nature? How can poor people survive with limited government support and in regions highly exposed to destructive climatic events? How can poor women and girls in the Global South cope with these conditions of adversity, not lose their lives and livelihood, and get prepared for an even more complex future?

2. Some methodological reflections

Analyzing these complex interrelations of multiple interrelated subsystems (hunger, disasters, poverty among women and girls, wars, resource conflicts, and environmental destruction), often interacting in a chaotic and unpredictable way, a methodological approach based on open, dissipative, and self-regulating systems is proposed [22]. Piaget formed interdisciplinary teams to analyze transformational processes in a processual way [23]. Physics brought in research not only the generality of potential laws but helped also to understand the underlying reasons for the dynamics of change. Transdisciplinary teams systematized a dual movement between assimilation and adaptation of new knowledge [24]. When the goal became more complex, processes of gradual integration and differentiation became more clearly structured in empirical research, allowing abstractions and then reflective dialogs [25] that helped to conceptualize a higher level of knowledge. From negative peace, concepts were replaced by positive, structural, liberal, environmental, and cosmopolitan peace and security [26]. The exploration of integrated boundary conditions and obstacles generated violence from the outside (socioeconomic growth or decline, public policies, crisis, violence, etc.) and from the inside (fear, coercion, corruption, exploitation, discrimination, etc.).

With this methodological system approach, the integration of different disciplines using their own methodologies was able to develop common research objectives. These are gradually deepened by an interdisciplinary dialog and dynamics between antagonistic systems and potential tipping points of rupture were detected [27]. Ulrich Beck [28] has shown in his theory of the global risk society that threats are no longer linear and predictable, but acquire complex, chaotic interactions, and unexpected tipping points. The analytical understanding of complexity is therefore related to systemic interactions: "A working definition of a complex system is that of an entity which is coherent in some recognizable way but whose elements, interactions, and dynamics generates structures admitting surprise and novelty which cannot be defined" ([29], p. 2–4). These authors insisted that each complex system differs from the other and the coherence or persistence depends on the multiple interactions among various elements, mostly far away from the equilibrium.

With these short explanations of an open, dissipative, and self-regulating system approach, feminists have analyzed the patriarchal worldview imposed by Occident [6] and also in the peace and security theories. In the Global South, multiple anticolonial and anti-white feminist approaches were developed, including analyses of (post-) colonialism, corporate abuse, unjust payment of corrupt debts on the cost of hunger of people, and occidental power relations [30]. With these short methodological

reflections, it is crucial to understand in the present violent global world order how peace and security theories evolved and justified the existing conflicts instead of promoting negotiation processes.

3. Conceptualization of dominant peace approaches within an occidental patriarchal worldview and a decolonizing alternative

Realist peace understanding continues to be the dominant peace approach until today. It promoted warfare, violence, and conquest and was unable to reduce the tensions at the global and local levels. It was wasting scarce natural and financial resources by concentrating wealth by a small Occidental elite on the costs of the well-being of poor people [31]. Military budgets have few limits and have increased by 0.7% in 2022, exceeding for the first time the 2.113 trillion expenditure. Together, the United States, China, India, the United Kingdom, and Russia account for 62% of the total military spending [21]. In Africa, multiple negative peace proposals [32] were applied by the former colonial powers and corporate enterprises, but could not stop the massacres among opposed warlords, ethnic groups, and power struggles among the local political elite.

After World War II, Galtung proposed positive peace efforts, [33], which were also unable to reduce the rate of homicides and violence, including in regions without a formal war such as [34] Latin America.¹ The violence and high homicide rate are related to the imposed drug war by North America, protecting the massive consumption of illegal substances among their citizens. This massive consumption of drugs in the United States, the illegal sale of weapons, and the related money laundering in the financial heavens are avoiding an efficient reduction of organized crime, enabling to reduce the high homicide rate in Latin America.

Confronted with increasing violence, Murshed [35] explored a liberal peace for development and democracy. He included Kant's eternal peace with a soft power method including culture and human well-being. Oren [36] returned also to the Kantian liberal peace approach within a European peace understanding. These ideologies were helping to increase the potential of the US after the dissolution of the Soviet Union to promote democratic globalization. However, the predominance of their transnational enterprises in production, commerce, and finance with few legal controls increased the conflicts, especially in the Global South, and produced global economic crises. The postcolonial Africa was exposed to multiple negative peace proposals [37] and military interventions, which could not stop the massacres among opposed warlords (Angola), ethnic groups (Ruanda), and power struggle between political elite (Kenya and elsewhere).

Webel and Galtung, understanding the growing inequity between North and South and inside each society, proposed a structural peace [38]. They insisted in equal access to natural, socioeconomic, cultural [39], and natural resources in the world, however corporate interests transformed this approach into a utopia. Small economic elite and financial tycoons were able to extract the surplus of economy, limiting the increase of wealth in most countries and among the lower social classes [13]. The high concentration of wealth in the United States among this corporate elite has produced greater inequity and limited the opportunities for equity and sustainable global

¹ Latin America has the highest homicide rate and violence in a region without a formal war (World Bank 2022).

development. Globally, these transnational enterprises and financial holdings own and control world wealth, where speculation, induced economic crises, and extraction of natural resources are appropriating the profit of workers and peasants from the world and especially, from the Global South.

Environmental peace [40] failed due to the high volatile prices of natural resources. IPCC [2] indicated potential tipping points on the stability of Earth's climate, affecting especially the Global South due to its location in the tropics. In this region, also increasing autocratic governments, often highly corrupt, are additionally extracting wealth from their citizens, limiting a potential increase in well-being for poor people.

Unequal access to health services prolonged the crisis of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) and produced varied mutations of the virus, due to the lack of vaccines. Multinational pharmaceutical firms insisted on high prices and lack of medical tools for everybody, which increased the number of diseases in the whole world and converted SARS CoV-2 into the deadliest pandemic [41]. Poor educational systems in the Global South have further enlarged inequality and limited the development of modern technologies in poor countries required for their economic development. As the sole scapegoat for improving the livelihood of poor people from the Global South exists a high emigration rate to industrialized countries, where militarized borders are increasing the risks of these migrants.

Cosmopolitan peace is often criticized by realists as a utopian ideal with multiple failures from the Kantian liberal peace approach to the inefficiency of the United Nations. All these peace understandings were unable to prevent the Russian invasion of Ukraine and today to negotiate a dignified outcome for everybody. The lack of food and fertilizers has increased global inflation, affecting again poor countries in the Global South, where hunger hotspots are appearing [3]. The destructiveness of modern warfare, but also the pressures from the Bretton Wood organizations for repayment of debts of highly indebted countries, inefficient and corrupt governments, and the increasing climate impacts in the Global South are creating conditions of permanent risks. The multiple economic crises [43] and recent high inflation with economic crises are further limiting the prosperity, development, and well-being of the global population.

Reviewing all these peace analyses, created by Western men, who did not deepen on the root causes of violence and exploitation, were unable to offer alternative paradigms for different world orders. None of these peace concepts deepened nor in the origin of violence. Patriarchy was created thousands of years ago. Violence, conquest, and slavery were able to develop big empires in the past and present, always at the cost of people and the environment. Today, modern slavery in sweatshops, exploitation of human beings with low salaries, and abuse of nature have concentrated wealth into a limited occidental elite [13]. Thus, these Western male researchers have not understood that survival means a daily practice of a "democratic, multiracial, multilingual, and multicultural society" ([44], p. 49).

Confronted with these theoretical limits, Oswald [8] proposed an engendered-sustainable peace to end patriarchal violence and environmental destruction within a framework of diverse and multicultural efforts from the bottom up. This HUGE security includes different objects of reference: instead of the state, it prioritizes humans, women, and vulnerable people, together with natural, agricultural, and urban ecosystems. The values of risk go further than sovereignty and territory by the military security and analyze national unity, gender relations, and sustainability. The threats are not only related to other countries, but to internal terrorism, migrants,

patriarchal relations of elites, governments, and churches, poverty, economic crises, and more severe disasters related to climate change. This approach allows the prevention of potential threats and establishes processes of adaptation and resilience not only from the top down but especially at the local level from the bottom up.

4. HUGE-security and the women's care economy

The concept of HUGE-security or grand-security responds to a double function: a) as a tool of scientific analysis to study global problems, and b) as a guide for action for governments, social movements, humanitarian organizations, and poor or exposed people. The concept integrates human, gender, and environmental security, in order to eradicate poverty, guarantee food aid in times of crisis, combat gender discrimination, promote equity, care for refugees and forced climate migrants, as well as restore environmental balance to improve free ecosystem services [45].

Each of these securities had developed its own conceptual understanding. The analysis of human security is based on five pillars. (1) Absence of fear related to the lack of physical threat to life and livelihood; (2) absence of needs, enabling people to cover their basic needs in food, shelter, education, and health; (3) absence of disasters, where adaptation and resilience allow people to survive during extreme events and recover fast, avoiding that the event may transform into a disaster; (4) living in a state with rules of law, where human rights are respected and the state is reinforcing a transparent legal system [46]; (5) living in a multicultural world with full respect for cultural diversity, where ethnic, religious, and racial minorities obtain the same rights without any discrimination. Gender security [8] was inspired by the currents of empirical, epistemic, standpoint, and postmodern feminism [47], where the object of reference is the equity of genders. The values of risk are related to the loss of equity, equality, identity, social representations, and empowerment of women and the vulnerable [48]. The threats are coming from the patriarchal violent mindset in society and work, where totalitarian institutions, churches, elites, and intolerance are the main sources of risk.

Environmental security initially analyzed the prevention and repair of military damage caused to the environment, where the damage in mutagenicity among the Vietnamese population and American soldiers indicated the damage in future generations by the use of defoliants such as Orange Agent [16]. In the second phase, studies on the generation of conflicts, due to natural resource scarcity were scrutinized, and water continues to play a crucial role in violence [49–51]. A third pillar analyzes the capitalist development linked to environmental deterioration and conflicts generated by pollution and abuse of natural resources, where climate change disasters [20] and global environmental change [52] have allowed a systemic analysis of the complexity of the intervening socioenvironmental factors, going beyond environmental care and restoration. In a fourth phase, Dalby et al. [53] evaluated the emerging factors of conflict and reconciliation, where social and environmental vulnerabilities are limiting the adaptation processes in the face of increasing and more adverse socioenvironmental conditions of risks, and where dominant interests in mining and land use change have accelerated the destruction of natural resources, especially water for human consumption. Crutzen [17] has proposed a new era of Earth's history, the Anthropocene, where no more natural phenomena (Holocene), but human activities are producing environmental destruction, the loss of ecosystem services, and the pollution of air, soil, and water.

Based on the intersection between human, gender, and environmental security, an integrated HUGE-security and peace, Oswald [8] suggested conceptually to reduce threats from poverty, patriarchal institutions, and extreme natural events [2], often aggravated by failed human interventions and the dominance of the financial system [24]. These complex feedbacks were worsened during the last seven decades of capitalist acceleration, where Moore [54] insisted that it was not the environmental change [52], but the capitalist system that has produced human destruction of natural resources and the concentration of wealth by a small elite. He called the new phase Capitalocene.

Confronted globally with a process of social and environmental destruction, critical social groups, indigenous, and environmentalists have explored alternatives to the maelstrom of capitalism with 'good living' [55]. These changes should be able to reduce emissions of greenhouse gases, eliminate waste, and restore polluted water and soils in a natural way, often also called the Principle of Subsidiarity. It is the application of solidarity and gift economy [15] with humans and nature, in this complex physical-psychological reality, where a Concordia economy may build "bridges to unify the work of physicists, ecologists, and economists" ([56], p. 4). Indigenous people, with a telluric understanding of the interrelation of nature and humankind, have developed during thousands of years of sustainable management of their resources for granting food and livelihood, often in highly complex environmental regions such as the Atacama Desert or the high mountains of the Andeans or the Himalaya. The next part looks at bottom-up alternatives for people who do not have adequate support from their governments and whose lives are at risk by increasingly more severe climate events.

5. Bottom-up indigenous livelihood with a telluric cosmovision

The dominant exploitive management of the environment and humankind, related to the realist peace approach [31] is based on a patriarchal worldview [6]. This policy did not include indigenous people or when they are taken into account. It only took away their territory by exploiting mines, land, and water resources. Today, indigenous groups represent globally 5% of the world's population, and they continue to conserve about 80% of the biodiversity in the world [57].

The Aymara and Quechua indigenous in Bolivia and Ecuador have systematized a process of complementarity between human activities and nature, called '*sumak qamaña*' (living well) or '*suamk kaway*' (good living) [55]. Their good living includes happiness as a guiding principle of life and encompasses the personal, family, and community spheres, as well as work and care or restoration for nature. Social integration, dancing, and moderation in food intake, drinking, and work have created a life of happiness and social solidarity at the local level. Emphasis is placed on respect and cares for the elderly and children [48], as well as the protection of nature and its mineral resources. Living well also represents a telluric approach to socio-political and ecological content, where Bolivia has included the right of nature and environmental care in their national constitutions. This constitutional change implies political, economic, judicial, cultural, and linguistic pluralism to integrate different ethnic, racial, and social groups within one nation.

Living well represents a complementary relation between Mother Earth, the agricultural cycles, and the cosmic cycles, where the cosmos has historically its own course enabling to produce in just time the food crops in complex environmental

conditions [58]. The history of Earth and humans with periods of rising and fall, including patriarchal violence [59] had phases of activities and other times of moderation are reflected in working periods and relaxation. The concept of living well [55] implies not only violence but also food sovereignty, solidarity, nonviolent conflict resolution, and working together, helping the most vulnerable, where women played a crucial role to help affected people. These indigenous people are protesting or trying to limit the destruction of the natural resource by multinational enterprises and local landlords with cattle growing. They reinforce regionally and globally human solidarity and care about nature and humankind by creating associations of indigenous people, in order to strengthen globally the protests against the dominant exploitation of mines, water, mountains, and soils [60].

Another radical model of indigenous disengagement from the capitalist system occurred on January 1, 1994, when the Mexican government signed the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) with the United States and Canada. “Command by obeying” was the key call of the Zapatistas, when the indigenous uprising occurred in the mountains of Chiapas as a protest against the “disease called capitalism.” They addressed their request to all the families of the world, who suffered from capitalist exploitation. “We only want to live in peace and without exploitation of man by man, with equality between men and women, with respect for what is different, and to decide together what we want in the countryside and in the city” [61].

The empirical examples of how these indigenous groups have reorganized their life and livelihood are related to the Mayan indigenous cosmovision, organized in the EZLN (Zapatista Army of National Liberation). In 1994, the EZLN declared first to the Mexican government the war against capitalism, exploitation of humans and nature, and proposed an alternative way to understand the sociopolitical organization of indigenous people. With creative management of communication networks and the internet, indigenous were able to document globally the violence, abandonment, and exploitation they have been submitted by local landlords, national government, and multinational enterprises [62].

After a few days of armed struggle, the Mexican government was internationally forced to propose a cease-fire and on February 16, 1996, the government and EZLN negotiated and agreed on a peace negotiation in San Andrés Larrainzer, which included the recognition of indigenous collective rights on land and their independent local political administration. The Mexican government did not respect the agreement and on December 22, 1997, over 100 armed men from Máscara Roja, a paramilitary group, massacred 45 Tzotzil (Mayan) indigenous women, children, and some few men inside a chapel, while they were praying for peace in the region. The army did not intervene despite the fact that it was next door and the shooting with heavy arms lasted for more than seven hours [63]. The lack of respect for this indigenous agreement indicates that the government from 1992 to 2018 was not interested in the well-being of these poorest people in the country, but has authorized about one-fifth of the national territory for mining activities, destroying sacred mountains, polluting water streams, and preventing the local population from the access to their basic needs and their religious beliefs.

Based on the war on low intensity in the Chiapas region for almost three decades, the EZLN decided to delink from the Mexican government, when they did not respect the signed agreements. They dismissed the negotiated constitutional change for an alternative indigenous legal system and allowed armed groups in the region to maintain unequal access to land and water, killing indigenous defending their territory. Given the extreme poverty and abandonment of these indigenous populations,

they developed a proper local policy of “work, land, shelter, health, food, education, independence, freedom, democracy, justice and peace” [64].

Politically, the EZLN created Caracoles (shells) and Good Government Councils at the local level, where the principle of “ruling by obeying” was reinforced with participatory governance among women and men. Their decision-making processes were taken in a consensual way and agreements were reached through large and inclusive debates, where women, men, young and old are equally elected as leaders for one year of leadership without payment, where the community cares about their family [61].

“Women are exploited by the government, they are poor, but also in the community, by men” ([65], p. 44) was the understanding of gender discrimination among women globally and also from the EZLN. To eradicate this patriarchal mindset, the Zapatista communities trained women and young girls in equity and empowerment. During the last three decades, no femicide has occurred among the Zapatista, while in Mexico every day at least ten women are murdered, mainly by their intimate partners [66]. The Zapatistas have also converted extensive cattle ranching into staple crops and vegetables for improving their food security and nutrition. Transparent health, education, and justice systems are allowing access to all people in the region, independent of being members of the EZLN.

To achieve food security, they developed subsistence agriculture and are producing their own food. They developed a transparent judicial system, and an inclusive educational model with gender equity. They are raising awareness among the global population in the face of the ongoing disastrous and exclusive globalization processes. In June 2021, five women and two men arrived on a raft trip of a 47-day journey to the Azores Islands in Portugal. They symbolized ‘a reverse crossing’ through the Atlantic, exposing with visibility the culture of conquest and exploitation in the minds of people, which the Spaniards had imposed 500 years ago when they invaded the American continent [67]. Their effort against exclusive globalization did not bring great wealth to their associates, but each member obtains enough food, safe education, a transparent judicial system with conflict prevention, and basic health services, where everybody is treated with dignity and respect. Thus, the basic services of the Zapatistas are granted and during a climate disaster or violence from paramilitary groups, they get solidarity from the rest of the members and often from abroad. They have also helped with food, water, and medical support to the indigenous community during the severe earthquake in Juchitan, Oaxaca in 2017 [61].

In other countries in Latin America, Africa, and Asia with numerous indigenous groups and elsewhere with an important number of poor people, the consciousness-raising against the dominant model of economic exploitation and climate disasters has produced changes. Their understanding of development and globalization suffered daily from low salaries, lack of social security, and missing governmental support, which has increased the opposition globally against the exploitive and patriarchal model of globalization [68]. Especially, the pandemic of COVID-19, with a lack of solidarity from the transnational pharmaceutical enterprises, has not only increased the death rate in the Global South and North but has also produced the emergency of mutagenic new versions of the virus SARS COV-2. The propagation globally of new varieties have increased death rate and diseases, only because these multinational enterprises did not open their patents and copyrights on vaccines for the whole world [41].

Further, the exploitation and discrimination of women and young people are creating alternative ways of restoring social relations, self-respect, and an environmental understanding of life. Globally, women’s movements emerge and protest against gender violence, discrimination, the disappearance of women, and femicides [69].

Their protests include the telluric understanding of indigenous communities, who have integrated nature with sustainable human activities [70].

Nature and ecosystem services are part of our life cycle and cannot be exploited, polluted, and destroyed, but requires an alternative approach to extraction [71] with care and redistribution of profits for all humans and the restoration of nature. Precisely, the complex emergency of COVID-19, as a zoonotic disease, indicates that new pandemics may soon emerge, affecting further humans, as SARS COV-2 has proven in the past [72]. Without any doubt, we need to care about nature, understanding its free ecosystem services to humans and nature. They provide us food, fibers, and water, and additionally, they protect humans and animals from excess heat and cold, restore and disintegrate waste, and offer cultural services for everybody [73]. A new understanding within this alternative approach put in the center of human activities a care economy, where women have historically done the major unpaid domestic labor globally and continue to care about babies, ill people, and the elderly.

6. Women's care economy

To return to the research questions, climate change, greater inequity, inequality, discrimination, raising poverty, hunger, and violence were not addressed within the existing theories of positive [74], liberal [35], democratic [36], environmental [53, 75] and cosmopolitical peace [26], because they were developed by Western men. None of these theories has deepened in the root causes of patriarchy, which has produced violence, original accumulation of wealth, dominant power relations, and exploitation of people and nature. All these theories are maintaining the occidental understanding of dominance, power relations, and control, forgetting the exploitation in Global South, especially the vulnerable and poor women, girls, and old people [8]. After more than 500 years of colonialism and seven decades of neoliberal capitalism with an acceleration of the destruction of nature, climate change in the Anthropocene is again affecting highly the Global South. Poor indigenous, women and girls do not account for efficient governmental support. These social groups have learned that in conditions of adversity, they must get better prepared alone to deal efficiently to survive in a complex future. Resilience and resistance were their tools in the past to care about their lives and livelihoods.

These vulnerable groups are finding radical alternatives to the ongoing social and environmental destructive processes with an increasing concentration of wealth among a small elite. Taking into account the traditional survival strategies of these exposed social groups, CEPAL [12] proposed a women's care economy for the discriminated people globally (**Figure 1**). In the world and also in Mexican society, discrimination, racism [76], and external and internal colonialism [77] are fighting for the preservation of ecosystem services. The present crises of pandemic, war, and inflation are especially affecting the middle class and their acquired, but often also unachievable desired privileges.

This middle class does not take into account the structural mechanisms of the rampant existing inequality, where the Gini Index in Mexico got reduced marginally during the COVID-19 pandemic from 0.512 to 0.503, thanks to governmental support between 2000 and 2021 [13]. The inequality index is still very high, due to the limited increase in salaries and the governmental support to needy and poor people. On the contrary, "the world's ten richest men have more than doubled their fortunes from \$700 billion to \$1.5 trillion—at a rate of \$15,000 per second or \$1.3

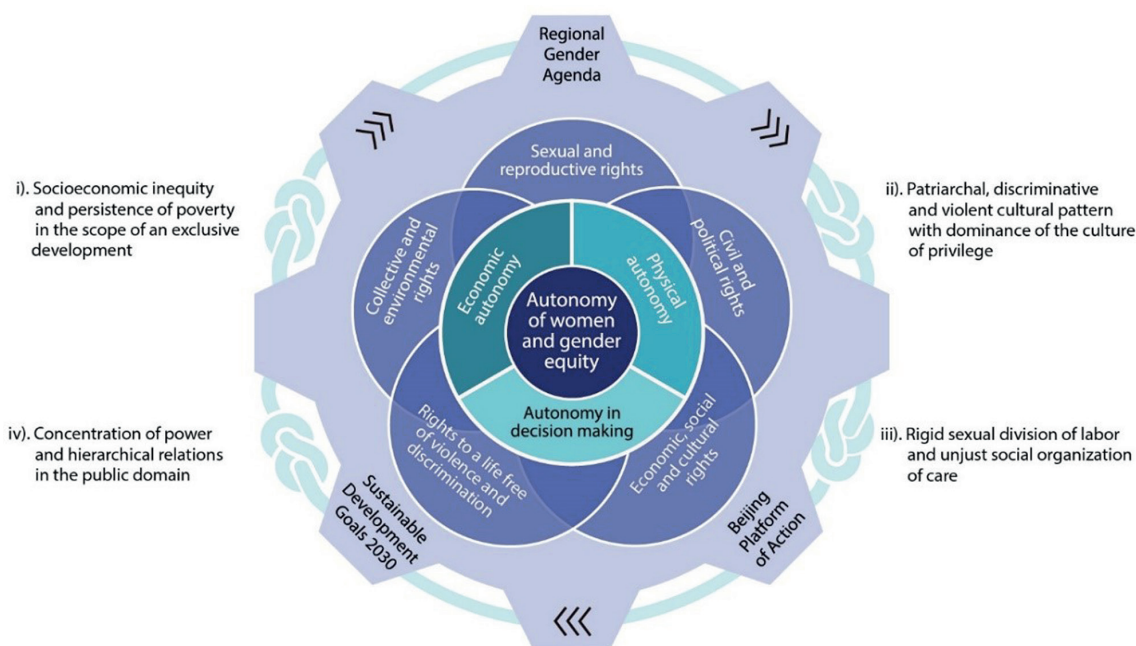


Figure 1.
Women’s care economy. Source: CEPAL ([7], p. 3) (translated by the author).

billion a day—during the first two years of a pandemic that has seen the incomes of 99 percent of humanity fall and over 160 million more people forced into poverty” [47]. American billionaires have gotten 12 trillion richer during the pandemic and in his night address to Congress, President John Biden remarked “Twenty million Americans lost their job in the pandemic. At the same time, roughly 650 billionaires in America saw their net worth increase by more than \$1 trillion [..] and they’re now worth more than \$4 trillion” [78].

Thus, to find an alternative model of development and humans’ living together, to overcome the ravages of the pandemic of COVID-19 and climate change disasters, where gender discrimination and now inflation with the invasion of Russia to Ukraine have increased inflation and poverty, alternative models of economy are emerging. They should improve the living conditions of poor women, men, children, and indigenous peoples and empower them. Care economy starts with the physical, economic, and decision-making autonomy for everybody to achieve civil, political, economic, social, cultural, reproductive, sexual, and environmental rights in social life without violence. These rights were developed in the past by women in the Beijing Platform for Action, reinforced by the Sustainable Development Goals of the Agenda 2030, and by Belem do Parra in Latin America. National and regional gender agendas, policies of equity in political and executive jobs, and laws against gender violence are basic political tools to limit the patriarchal and violent behavior against women, elderly, and youth, deeply embedded in the cultural patriarchal understanding and reproduced inside the families by men and women. Particularly, the so-called ‘machismo’ or patriarchal behavior in Latin America and elsewhere has reinforced in crisis moments the social discrimination against women. Judicial persecution is still traditionally under-emphasized and politically gender violence is dramatically underestimated. During the pandemic, the help calls related to gender violence in Mexico, due to the down lock inside the houses, have increased by 300% [66]. Thus, in this precise moment of economic, social, and cultural crisis, an alternative paradigm of women’s care economy should increase the recognition [7] and the empowerment of women [79].

This women's care economy in the most remote mountainous areas is nothing new for indigenous women and men, who have been able to resist capitalist extermination by keeping alive their traditions and their civilizing vocation. By freely associating women and socializing with the coming generations, it was possible to transform locally the deeply rooted neoliberal processes of capitalist accumulation imposed over the last 500 years. Understanding the present model of exploitation by multinational enterprises and their financial system, which is highly sophisticated and complex, it is impossible for the poorest people to create alternatives within the capitalistic system. Promoting local empowerment of women is crucial to avoiding future food crises. Women grant half of the food supply to their families in small orchards and corals [80]. They use environmental protective methods in only 4% of the land, where they recycle organic waste and gray water. Expanding this model, it may be possible to reduce hunger and undernourishment among people without access to imported food or no money to buy it, especially when climate change is increasing drought in all continents.

On the contrary, the multinational food companies (Nestlé, Archer Daniels Midland Company, Cargill, Sysco Corporation, JBS, George Weston, Tyson Foods, Danone, PepsiCo, Mondelez, Kraft Foods, Unilever, PepsiCo, Mars, Danone, Cadbury, Kellogg, General Mills, and Ferrero) are using the basic food for biofuel, animal feed, and industrial processes, but are destroying water resources, polluting soils with toxic agrochemicals, and destroying the native seeds diversity with genetically modified organisms. Lowder et al. [81] asked who is producing the world's food and found the high concentrated large territories for unsustainable production. The Foundation of Bill and Melanie Gates and other multinational enterprises are supporting this unsustainable food production at the cost of environmental destruction and hunger for the poorest people.

Only understanding of the profit hunger of multinational enterprises and additional efforts from the bottom-up experimented with the indigenous EZLN or Aymara have increased food and educational security with livelihood. Conscious raising is crucial in the present crises to understand the complex interrelations of ideological mass media, propaganda of junk food, bottled soft drinks, and transformed food rich in sugar and calories. These industrialized food items are increasing weight and combined with lack of exercise, are producing obesity or high malnutrition among the poorest people, who prefer to buy this rapid junk food, instead of cooking their own traditional food. Cardiovascular diseases, diabetes mellitus, and cancer are the most frequent outcome of this unhealthy food culture, where only education and public policy may limit the promotion of junk food. Further, the labels of nutrition content explain the damaging food intake on human health and well-being.

As **Figure 1** exposes, there is an intimate relationship between economic autonomy and human rights, where precisely an alternative education and health care may limit poverty, diseases, and lack of income. Integrated management of education, gender equity, health, food intake, and political autonomy is crucial to understand how the present model of capitalism is promoting an unhealthy development process. Official Bretton Wood organizations are actively involved in the promotion of transnational junk food.

To avoid that the poorest people can get healthy food and overcome the extreme misery, models from the Aymara, EZLN indigenous people, and critical social groups may help to understand the complex interrelations of economic, political, and cultural exploitative processes. Instead of accepting the global model of economy and policy, which is also promoted by most national government, the analyses indicate that their so-called model of development is producing globally, greater underdevelopment or development toward underdevelopment [82].

The reinforcement of internal normative systems, the capacity for analysis, training in critical understanding, and overcoming gender discrimination and exploitation, not only these indigenous societies and women organizations, but globally societies may survive in the Anthropocene. The organization of smaller and bigger groups may prioritize a post-capitalist model based on the right of people for safe food, care about natural resources in their territories, and cultural autonomy with self-determination for their life and cosmovision related to deep an indigenous and telluric culture [83]. All these activities are allowing to integrate the most vulnerable, especially small children, girls, and fragile elderly. This model of care economy could facilitate a sustainable transition of the Earth and the human society, eliminating the present exploitation, violence, and discrimination. On the contrary, it is oriented toward an alternative model of well-being. There will be no accumulation of capital, due that the exploitation of other humans and nature is eradicated and solidarity and sorority² are caring about the most necessitated and younger girls, children, and old people.

7. Conclusions

In the present geopolitical and climate conjuncture, research for peace should overcome the occidental patriarchal approach and promote HUGE security and peace [8], based on women's and men's care economy. This global approach may be able to weave new alliances in favor of human welfare and the recovery of Mother Earth in critical moments of negative impacts of climate change. New alliances among local and regional social organizations are forcing governments to reduce the concentration of wealth among the elite by charging progressive taxes and redistributing this income to the neediest, whenever the opposition of multinational enterprises and financial tycoons is dramatic. Transparency in the present corrupt world financial system with the eradication of tax havens, especially dominant in the United States, may generate the resources to overcome globally the COVID-19 pandemic and limit the related rising poverty and forced migration. Paying decent salaries to workers, granting them social security, and the improvement of healthy and natural food for everybody may generate alternatives for the present and the next generation. Environmental restoration and limiting the exploitation of natural resources –especially open-pit mining- allow the recovery of the necessary and free ecosystem services. Time is pressing and we have only three decades left to reverse the ravages caused by the acceleration of the Capitolicene [54] of the last 70 years of corporate exploitation, where uncontrolled market forces of small elites have destroyed the bases of survival of humanity and the environment. The negative feedback processes produced by the pandemic has shown clearly, that the destructive model of corporate capitalism is affecting the whole planet and destroying justice and well-being all over [54]. It destroys especially the abundant natural resources in the Global South, where their governments account for limited resources to deal with basic services such as health care, access to vaccines, food production, and education. Without a care economy, the full involvement

² Sorority helps women to care about other women within a highly discriminative environment. It promotes their leadership skills, produces solidarity in case of disasters or losses, and promotes greater social identity inside women groups. Women learn to detect discrimination and exploitation and how to limit it. Sorority helps young women and girls to empower by cultivating leadership skills inside a protected environment by older and experienced women. They learn to distinguish between false promises and unsustainable solutions. Sorority promotes intellectual and personal development, solidarity, leadership, friendship, human rights, knowledge, and cooperation.

of women [84], and a HUGE-security and peace, the planet may turn into irreversible tipping points [27]. New pandemics [85] and unknown risks may involve the disappearance of the entire humanity on Earth. In the longer turn, nature will recover from the present destructive processes as it has occurred during the past five great extinctions [86]. However, there exist less destructive alternatives. The Global South is exploring multiple examples of care [12] or gift economy [15] and sorority. The Global North, especially poor people, should follow these efforts, transforming the violent patriarchal behavior of multinational enterprises and allied governments into a HUGE security and peace before it is too late. Timeframe remaining is less than four decades before irreversible processes can eliminate important groups of people and valuable ecosystems with unpredictable loops of global destruction.

Acronyms


CEPAL	Economic Association for Latina America and the Caribbean
COVID-19	SARS COV-2 pandemic
EZLN	Zapatista Army of National Liberation
Gini	Index or Gini index
HUGE	Human, Gender, and Environmental Security and Peace
INMUJER	National Institute of Women
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
NAFTA	North American Free Trade Agreement
OECD	Organization of Economic Cooperation and Development
SIPRI	Stockholm International Peace Institute
<i>suamk kaway</i>	good living
<i>sumak qamaña</i>	living well

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