

Research Paper

Queer Utopia for a Feminist Economics

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1 The Fable of the Mushroom Man (the Economic Agent) and His Extended Body (the Family)

In mainstream economics the individual is constituted by the concept of the *homo economicus*. The economic agent is envisioned as a free, autonomous identity, a separate self—like a mushroom he is “fully sprung from the earth” (Hobbes, 1651/1966) and not dependent on the care of others, not even a mother to birth him. In this way the economic agent is imagined as an independent adventurer, a Robinson Crusoe, shipwrecked on a lonely island (see Grapard, 1995). The *homo economicus* is dreamed of as a rational individual, a white man, with a strong mind to rule over his body—this ultimately sets him apart from *others* who are closer to an animal state or to nature than himself (women*, native populations of the colonies, sexual deviants, the poor...). *Homo economicus* is maximizing his happiness (which economists call *utility*), and he is fully informed by the signals of the market. His relationships are foremost formed with objects and based on ownership created by adding labor to those objects (in the state of nature) or by money purchases (Schönpflug & Klappeer, 2017).

Chicago economist Gary Becker expands the *homo economicus* concept with a household model (*New Home Economics*) which is based on marriage and describes how *homo economicus* exhibits altruism at home and selfishness in the marketplace: Becker models the gendered division of labor within a household in a standard heteronormative family, where it is a rational decision for the wife to focus on housework and children and the husband to specialize in paid work in the labor market (Becker, 1973). This gendered division of labor and

working spheres is seen to be a successful strategy, as it is based on the idea that the husband somehow completely merges with his wife and they only have common needs and wants. (Mathematically, this is shown by a combined utility function, which erases individual desires.) The wife (and the children) become a part of the husband; he does not actually *share* his market income, but rather indulges his extended body, the family.

2 Resistance by Feminist Economists and the Danger of Assimilation

Feminist economics has been deeply concerned with the presumptions and consequences of envisioning economic agents as “free” individuals (with extended family-bodies) and without personal relations, ties, responsibilities, emotional, spiritual or physical connections to other people, non-humans or the planet. That is because even though the *homo economicus* set-up does sound like an idea cut from a badly designed sci-fi story, it has functioned extremely well to justify today’s capitalist, patriarchal, colonialist economics and the notion of modernity in Western societies that is based on self-interest and the exploitation of *others*.

Per se, feminist economics is a relatively new branch of heterodox economics (Peterson & Lewis, 1999) and has, since the late 1980s, worked to find solutions to the most pressing flaws in current mainstream economics. To do so, feminist economists work on the re/organization of gender roles and family structures; the reshaping of working conditions in production, reproduction and childcare; an intersectional resolution of inequalities based on coloniality and racialization, the destruction of nature and the extinction of non-human beings; and the formation of new paradigms, ontologies and epistemologies in science and scientific approaches and within a visionary feminist economics¹. Interestingly, but maybe not surprisingly, the above-

¹ These issues are alive in economic literature, economic journals (such as *Feminist Economics*), are discussed at international conferences (such as the annual *International Association for Feminist Economics – IAFFE-Conference*) and are also employed by policy makers in national and international contexts.

mentioned issues are all echoes of the themes in feminist utopian literature that have been recurring since Christine de Pizan's inaugural *City of Women* (1405) (see Schönplflug, 2008).

While there have been recent discussions over whether feminist economics has lost its edge and has been assimilated into mainstream economics (Tejani, 2019) by “adding women and stir[ring],” visions for alternative economics are brought forth especially on the margins of the discipline, where queer theory, decolonial and postcolonial approaches, posthuman ideas, Marxist and some of Indigenous thinking meet with a revolutionary feminist economics. Resistance cannot be futile—as it is a dire necessity for queer people, colonized and Indigenous populations, poor women*, care givers and workers in global factories. Mainstream economics is decidedly dangerous for everyone. Its flawed models are based on un(der)valued, un(der)paid reproductive labor rendered invisible and the priceless exploitation and destruction of commons such as clean air, water, land and raw materials. This dominant economic system will not and “cannot respond to values it refuses to recognize. It is the cause of massive poverty, illness and the death of millions of women and children, and it is encouraging environmental disaster. This is an economic system that can eventually kill us all” (Waring, 1988 quoted in Grunes, 2009).

3 Dystopia Has Reached the Global North

Feminist economist Marilyn Waring's prophecy of doom from 1988 seems to have been realized in the year 2020: At the brink of a global (climate) disaster a coronavirus, most likely caused by zoonosis, industrial livestock farming and species extinction, is politically met with recurring shutdowns on national and global scales which may be foreshadowing the largest worldwide economic depression ever known. The year 2020 has sparked a global, simultaneous demand and supply crisis. Huge fiscal relief programs financed by governments and international communities are linked with unprecedented monetary policies. Inequality has become rampant; the International Labour

Organization (ILO) estimates a 10 percent loss of global labor incomes in September 2020 compared to 2019, and the World Bank expects an additional 88 to 115 million people to be pushed into extreme poverty this year—while the richest stockholders and the most powerful global companies will manage to hugely increase their wealth during the crisis (Kelly, 2020). Also, in the US, race-based killings by the police that have long gone wild are once again met with civil protests; commentators are warning of a new American civil war (Purtil, 2020). With people confined to their homes, the failures of the patriarchal nuclear family became even more visible: Violence against women (and children) in private households has increased by roughly 30 % worldwide, which UN Women has termed the “Shadow Pandemic” (UN Women, 2020). Women have been further burdened with an increase in domestic work, homeschooling and job or productivity losses in their own careers. Also, the health effects of the Coronavirus crisis have been gendered, classed and highly racialized: BIPOC people in the US and the UK have death rates up to 3 times higher than whites (APM Research Lab, 2020; Razaq et al., 2020).

To put this into temporal perspective, from Indigenous perceptions, the Coronavirus crisis only further highlights the weaknesses of the current global economic system, which are normally concealed from the populations of the global North. The Coronavirus crisis only emphasizes how this system of colonialist patriarchal capitalism has always been a purely dystopian experience for those that were colonized and/or enslaved. Kyle Whyte reminds us that from a Native American perspective this is not an apocalyptic but rather a “post-apocalyptic Anthropocene . . . we already inhabit what our ancestors would have understood as a dystopian future” (Sprague quoted in Whyte, 2018, pp. 225, 227). While Whyte in 2018 is referring to species loss and the climate crisis, the Coronavirus pandemic is currently feared to have absolutely devastating effects for tribal nations and Native populations and may also increase environmental destruction, especially with extractivism in the US and also in the Amazon region.

4 Portal to Another World

While the apocalypse is seemingly on the loom, optimists have been hoping for the Coronavirus crisis to offer a turning point, a point of departure to a better world with an economic system that will serve the people as well as the planet. This is beautifully described in Arundhati Roy's literary nexus of April 2020, in which she suggests the disruptions of COVID-19 might offer a chance to break from global capitalism (Roy, 2020). I strongly agree with Roy that it is time for us to leave behind the cultural luggage that in our thingified culture is most often materialized in ridiculous amounts of short-lived, branded consumer goods produced in global exploitation processes. Therefore, it is necessary that we rethink ourselves as economic and social agents that primarily function because of our relationships with other people, non-humans and nature—rather than with commercial products.

5 Tools and Companions in the Scientific Travel to Utopia

When adventurers in utopian literature set out to encounter a better place, they may board a ship, a rocket, a time machine, walk through a dimensional gate or have drug induced visions. The feminist economist has none of these at hand; all there is for us in terms of tools is methodology. Also, an adventure always relies on companionship, so feminist economics has selected and befriended theories as fellow travelers: feminist utopias, queer theory, Indigenous research and posthuman thinking. While their tools, their methodologies, originate from very different vantage points, there are some parallels and definitely common goals. The next four sections first introduce the travel companions and then their tools (the methodologies that may become applications for the quest for an alternative system of economics), and finally offer a description of the outcomes of these collective travelling adventures.

5-1 Feminist Utopias

Literary feminist utopias since 1405 have been re-imagining human relationships with a focus on gender relations. The literature offers interesting options.

One branch of feminist utopias decidedly does away with gender binaries and declares that there is a) only one gender in the utopian setting. This has been common in mainstream settings, but contrary to Daniel Defoe's *men-only-world* in *Robinson Crusoe* (1719), feminist utopias of this type will be *women-only-worlds* (e.g. *Herland* by Charlotte Perkins Gilman, 1915). Other options are settings with b) gender equality (e.g. Marge Piercy's *Woman on the Edge of Time*, 1976), c) gender inequality with women on top (e.g. *Egalia's Daughters* by Gerd Brantenberg, 1985), d) utopias with fluid, non-binary conceptions of gender (e.g. Ursula K. Le Guin's *The Left Hand of Darkness*, 1969), or as e) cyborgs (e.g. in *The Female Man* by Joanna Russ, 1975).

- a) **One-sex-worlds:** The idea of simplifying the world by metaphorically reducing the population to one sex has been greatly endorsed by economic theory. The model of *homo economicus* is most often illustrated by Robinson Crusoe and Friday, who are seen as perfect examples for two people engaging in simplified trade models with comparative advantages. (The fact of one being the master and the other his slave, as well as the racialized stereotyping are omitted from the models. See Grapard, 1995). Charlotte Perkins Gilman in her utopian eugenics-based *Herland* community chooses to eliminate men in order to point out the inefficiencies of competition, industry and growth as key motivations in human economic interaction in capitalist, androcentric societies.
- b) **Gender equality:** Gender roles and parenthood are established in *Woman on the Edge of Time* by removing maternity from the womb. Babies grow in breeders, which are aquarium-like devices that raise

babies for nine months. Every child has three parents of various gender and race, where diversity is most preferred. With medical aid, breast feeding can then be conducted by men and women. Friendships, parenthood and sexual partnerships are non-monogamous (as is the case in nearly all feminist utopias). Child-care and education are always a communal, never an individual or family project. These thought experiments completely do away with the nuclear family and Gary Becker's household model.

- c) **Gender inequality, with women at the top of the hierarchy:** are but a mere satire-of-the-sexes; they are a critique of the status quo but do not directly propose better alternatives.
- d) **Utopias with fluid, non-binary conceptions of gender:** Here, the sex-gender link no longer exists as a binary opposition, based on only two sexes. As in deconstructive feminist or queer theory, sex/gender (and therefore also sexual desires) are seen to be more complex than commonly assumed and also more fluid than the rigid opposition of the binary. The earliest European example for sex/gender-fluid feminist utopias is Gabriel de Foigny's *La Terre austral connue* of 1676. The androgynous fantasy makes fathers into mothers and supposes the existence of only one sex as a starting point, which is here the key to sexual equality. This idea is picked up by Ursula K. Le Guin in *The Left Hand of Darkness* (1969), where unisexed people temporarily morph into another sex to allow mating and reproduction. In *Rad van avontuur* (1995), Alkeline van Lenning designs a utopia where race and gender are made non-permanent. The Rawlsian veil of ignorance in the novel functions with the aid of biomedical technology to force everyone to change their bodies once in their lifetime to an unforeseeable but completely different persona, changing skin color and gender etc. Another possibility is the imagination of a multitude of sexes. On the titular planet in Samuel Delany's *Triton* (1976), about

40 different sexes exist and therefore maleness and femaleness as we know it have completely disappeared. People can change their sex when they want; they live in communities, either mixed or unmixed with different sexes. Parenthood is shared by all members of the commune. Utopian theorist Saskia Poldervaart concludes that in “most feminist utopias, fixed relations between men and women are rejected. The norm of such exclusive relationships is seen as a crippling and unsatisfying construction” (Poldervaart, 1997, pp. 186-187).

Whatever solution feminist utopias offer to gender relationships, the issues of parenthood, work distributions, and household design are reformed by all. These ideas have been picked up in feminist economics, especially those concerning the organization of households (Ott, 1997; Agarwal, 1997; Charusheela & Danby, 2006); the provision of caring labor; child care and reproduction (see e.g., Folbre, 1995; Himmelweit, 1995; Hewitson, 2003); care for the elderly (see e.g., the works of Stark et al., 2007); communal ownership (see the works of Federici, 2012 and Agarwal, 1997); and the distribution of labor between the sexes and equal pay (see the works of Barbara Bergmann, Lourdes Beneria, Heidi Hartmann and many more), but also the destruction of livelihoods and the environment and the planet as a habitat (see Mies, 1986; Mies & Shiva, 1993; Nelson, 1995 and 1997; Lucas, 2000; Mellor, 2005; Agarwal, 2010; Biesecker & Winterfeld, 2011). Feminist economists have been calling for a reconsideration of the current conceptions of prices and value (e.g., Waring, 1988), money and other institutions (e.g., Jennings, 1994) that are the foundations of androcentric and anthropocentric economics and which have been discussed at length in feminist utopias, such as by Le Guin, Piercy, Russ, Starhawk and many more.

Regarding gender relations, a gynocentric economics has been mentioned in feminist economics, but the view of social construction of gender and

economics has mostly been adopted (Nelson, 1993). Social equality can therefore be created via a process, which Hewitson describes as “degendering society” to eliminate all gendered aspects (Hewitson, 1999, p. 10). One interesting example of gender fluidity in econometrics is introduced by Esther Redmount: gender is a choice variable to econometric modeling (Redmount, 1995). Still, (hetero)normative sexualities are generally considered a given and promoted by most feminist economics.

5-2 Queer Theory

Queer theory (as the scientific side of the activist emancipation processes of the LGBTIQ community) is like feminist utopias concerned with gender-based relations. While starting out with a focus on analyzing cracks of subjectivity in relation to understanding the political conditions of human sexuality and desire, it has become a practice of questioning all types of norms (McBean, 2019). This makes queer theory an interesting travelling companion for feminist economics, as mainstream economic theory, be it neoclassical or Marxist, has “constructed analytical methods which ignore ‘desiring bodies’ and instead model the interaction in markets of bodiless actors whose ‘desires’ have been largely erased” (Cornwall, 1998, pp. 78, 81).

Queer theory has also been questioning care and social configurations, outside of family settings, such as the ones based on friendship and desire (Foucault, 1981). Queer theory is in this way a powerful engine focusing on interpersonal relationships based on desires, rather than the fetishization of consumer objects that has been established for the *homo economicus* in the marketing processes of industrialization (McClintock, 1994). This market focus on consumption, object-subject relationships, also goes hand in hand with a weakening of solidarity within a society where sexual emancipation (and civil rights such as “gay marriage”) might become exemplary of individual freedom and private responsibility.

In this way “queer” as a political project has been travelling on two roads

after a hefty bifurcation: a) assimilation on the one road and b) utopia on the other:

- a) Richard Florida (2002) describes a queer politics that follows a strategy of empowerment filled by a desire to fully belong to the free market. Lisa Duggan calls this process “new homonormativity” (Duggan, 2002) where borders and strategic barriers between marginalized groups in political theory and practice have long been shifted along the new demarcation lines of good and bad neoliberal “consumer-citizens” regardless of their status of sexual dissidence or of other minority identities (sex, gender, race, class, religion) they might inhabit. In the field of development in North-South interactions of LGBTI groups, queer theorist Andil Gosine speaks of a “normalization of same-sex desire” exporting a pink-washed consumer-citizen concept (Gosine, 2015, p. 3). Elizabeth Whitney in “Capitalizing on Camp: Greed and the Queer Marketplace,” contemplates whether the cooptation of queer identity and cultural practices is liberating or oppressive. She looks into “the camp element that is so appealing to heterosexist efforts to reframe queer cultural practices [and] the role that capitalist economics plays in leading to a potentially false sense of civil liberties for queer individuals and communities” (Whitney, 2006, p. 36).
- b) In light of such de-politicization of queerness that goes along with a focus on property, private civil liberties for “queer” nuclear families, discourses of being “normal,” diversity for enhanced production or consumption, and exports of the “new homonormativity” to countries that are depending on foreign aid, queer as a concept may be considered as far from useful for utopia. But queer still bears a promise of living alternative conceptions of solidarity and creativity, powerful relationships and the creation of alternative economics

where it is considered a utopian project rather than a status quo. José Esteban Muñoz's concept of "queer futurity" resists the present, and "reject[s] ... a here and now and ... insist[s] on potentiality or concrete possibility for another world" (Muñoz, 2009, p. 1):

Queerness is not yet here. Queerness is an ideality. Put another way, we are not yet queer. We may never touch queerness, but we can feel it as the warm illumination of a horizon imbued with potentiality. We have never been queer, yet queerness exists for us as an ideality that can be distilled from the past and used to imagine a future. The future is queerness's domain. Queerness is a structuring and educated mode of desiring that allows us to see and feel beyond the quagmire of the present. [...] we must dream and enact new and better pleasures, other ways of being in the world, and ultimately new worlds [...]. Queerness is a longing that propels us onward, beyond romances of the negative and toiling in the present. Queerness is that thing that lets us feel that this world is not enough, that indeed something is missing. [...] Queerness is essentially about the rejection of a here and now and an insistence on potentiality for another world. (Muñoz, 2009, p. 1)

For feminist economics a non-coopted queerness linked to a queer theory that focuses on utopian potentialities is a worthwhile travel companion to alternative economics. Feminist economics is to a large scale operating on the androcentric divide in economic theory and from a heteronormative perspective "queer political economy shares with feminist and race theory interest in the social articulation of ... a circle of interdependence between how perceptions of the body—these constructed, overlapping differences (by sexuality, gender, race, and class)—affect markets and, in turn, how markets affect our perceptions of the body" (Cornwall, 1998, pp. 78, 81). And this is not confined to *national* markets. The utopian oriented queer "consumer-

citizen” not only refuses to consume but rather engages in interpersonal acts of solidarity based on desire that do not allow protagonists to remain in national boxes. Shane Phelan’s “queer citizenship,” based on political participation and alliances formed along different axes of “strangeness” suggests pragmatic coalitional politics without borders and forcing the economic as well as the “political and legal systems to stretch and re-form to do justice to our lives” (Phelan, 1995, p. 344). Along that line (feminist) border studies also try to focus on the deconstructive elements of the border concept. The crossing of borders and the establishment of subjectivity related to borders and hybrid identities make for a more complex analysis and, at the same time, they serve as a source of power. Queer policy might therefore also follow Emma Goldman’s suggestion to forego governments, private property and religion (Goldman, 1910) and instead adopt a sense of community that focuses on the development of social and communal groups, which are supposed to thrive outside of hierarchical and centralized political structures, disabling neocolonialism as well as nationalist wars. This is displayed in Marge Piercy’s utopia, where people live in small villages as it has been found that large systems do not work, since people lose their sense of responsibility and hierarchies replace a feeling of communal existence (Piercy, 1976).

Feminist economics has been inspired by two notions of utopian queer theory: 1) the fluidity of gender identities/gender as performance and intimate partnerships outside of the heteronorm as well as 2) the deconstruction of a national lens. Regarding the former, Charusheela (2008) has published on the stability of consumption where she discusses how essential it is for a Post-Keynesian economics where gender functions as performative, with households as the effects and heteronormativity as the essential structure

organizing consumption behavior in the way it is assumed by Keynesian demand-side economic policies. She bases her analysis on historical examples of heteronormativity being enforced via biopolitics to ensure “orderly” consumption processes. Danby (2007) and Barker (2012) have showed how the heteronormative essentializing of care in economics contributes to a binary framing of market/household and economic/noneconomic that privileges and naturalizes capitalism at the expense of other processes. Badgett has worked most prominently on LGBT economics (see Badgett, 2001), questioning how LGB households fit into micro economic theories of intra-household work distribution and discrimination in the labor market. Schönpflug et al. (2018) are analyzing the prevalence of socioeconomic data on LGB(TI)Qs in national and international statistics and household surveys. Hewitson (2013) has reflected on the connections of heteronormativity and colonial biopolitics manifested in the refusal of citizenship to Australian Aboriginal people because they were not organized in household systems as described in *New Home Economics*.

Concerning the second notion of the deconstruction of the national, Patel (2012) and Lind (2012) have called attention to the imperatives of theorizing sexuality in relation to the structures and discourses of the state, finance, and agendas of national development; and Danby (2007) stresses the need to unravel heteronormative foundations of what constitutes the realms of the economy, sociality, and hierarchy of also nations. He has published on issues of nationality and its connection to gender performance. He discusses how the heteronorm was at work in the making of national income and population statistics in the years after World War II. In “Global Justice and Desire: Queering Economy” (Dhawan et al., 2015) economics is explicitly combined with queer theory, and in this volume Klapeer and Schönpflug (2015) request queer commons and “transgressing the fiction of self-ownership, challenging Westocentric proprietism” (p. 136).

Finally, in acts of introspection, Danby (2007) and Cornwall (1998) have

looked at heteronormativity in feminist economics and Bergeron (2009) has discussed how to “move caring labor off the straight path” (Bergeron, 2009, p. 55).

To conclude this section: queer theory on its journey towards utopia is a wonderful companion for feminist economics; both in questioning the microeconomic foundations of the heteronormative family and its effects on macroeconomic policy as well as the notion of nationality that is deeply embodied in all mainstream economic theory.

5-3 Indigenous Research

Māori theorist Linda Tuhiwai Smith (2012) uses the term “Indigenous research” to talk about knowledge creation from a perspective of Indigenous peoples with their experiences under imperialism and more specific forms of colonialism (Smith, 2012, p. 24). Indigenous research is not research about Indigenous populations but rather the voices of researchers with a historical background of imperialism and colonialism; it focusses on questioning the inequality between Western and Indigenous societies. Utopian thinking and Indigenous realities collide in an uncanny, uncomfortable way. Western imaginations of better worlds have been the blueprint and justification for the enslavement and colonization processes of modernity; Thomas More’s 1516 *Utopia* contains a theory of colonization and the creation of utopian “New Worlds” in the colonies that has had devastating, entirely dystopian effects for Indigenous communities (Hardy, 2012). Utopia, a location in Australia’s Northern Territory houses some of the poorest First Nations populations. This ambivalence is also a theme for feminist utopian studies, as men’s utopias are rarely good places for women and feminist utopias have often not been considerate of Indigenous perspectives and coloniality.

Queer theory with its questioning of all types of norms differs substantially from Indigenous research as it is deeply anchored in Western discursive production processes of sexuality, subjectivity and sociality (Sullivan, 2003).

Still experiences of discrimination and oppression result from similar oppression strategies, as the fetishization of exoticized sexualities of the racialized “others” in the colonies is crucially intertwined with the creation of homosexual (and heterosexual) bodies in the West (Shamira et al., 2019; Lugones, 2007). Therefore, there is not only a cross-over between queer and Indigenous research for Indigenous LGBTIQ activists and researchers, there are also some similar questions regarding research methodologies or the choice of qualitative methods considering the relationship between researcher and researched (Detamore, 2010); similar research methods: e.g., autoethnography (Whitinui, 2013; Holman & Adams, 2010), challenging biased ways of collecting, analyzing, and presenting data (Walter & Andersen, 2013).

Specific to Indigenous studies is the establishment of paradigms that rely on principles not present in Western science (see Dawson et al., 2017; Mertens et al., 2013; Chilisa, 2012; Smith, 2012; Kovach, 2010; Lincoln et al., 2008; Brown & Strega, 2005), such as the interconnectedness of all living things, the impact of motives and intentions on people and community, the foundation of research as lived Indigenous experience, the groundedness of theories in Indigenous epistemology, the transformative nature of research, and the sacredness and responsibility of maintaining personal and community integrity (Weber-Pillwax, 1999), with knowledge not being individually owned but resulting out of relationality (Wilson, 2008).

Kyle Whyte discusses Indigenous perceptions of intergenerational time in different global settings: an Anishinaabe perspective on time sees “intergenerational time as a perspective of a spiraling temporality, where it makes sense to consider ourselves as living alongside future and past relatives simultaneously” (Whyte, 2018, p. 228). Māori planning processes reach over a horizon of future multiple generations that is “mokopuna” (Scheele et al., 2016). Australian peoples “can be connected in the same way to something that is over 30,000 years old as they are to something that is a couple 100 years old” (Koolmatrerie, 2019).

Also, the perception of land is a key difference from Western conceptions. In mainstream economics, land is a factor inherent in production functions. At the same time, it is implicitly considered as an unlimited given, a gift of nature, productive soil, but also a sink for pollution, filter for drinking water, and habitat. Indigenous conceptions of land are those of a relationship between people and land (Tuck et al., 2014): Land may be teacher, partner, extension of the self, or deity. (Hubacek & van den Bergh, 2006). The Māori concept of *Taonga tuku iho* (intergenerational resources) is concerned with effective relations between tribes and land to manage natural resources across generations (Scheele et al., 2016).

Feminist economics has much to learn from Indigenous research: foregoing the Western perspective as the epicenter of all theory building, considering colonialism as a core problem in capitalism and patriarchal structure, and opening epistemology to non-Western paradigms. Decolonial thinking has already proceeded in building knowledge that encompasses Indigenous thinking; feminist philosopher Maria Lugones has explained the “relation of the birth of the colonial/modern gender system to the birth of global colonial capitalism [...and she is] investigating the intersection of race, class, gender, and sexuality in a way that enables [...] to understand the indifference that persists in much feminist analysis” (Lugones, 2007, p. 187). Charusheela and Zein-Elabdin edited a volume called *Postcolonialism Meets Economics* (2004) that is not explicitly focused on feminist economics but seeks to “trouble” economics (in the Butlerian sense), which the editors consider a “hegemonic discourse of modernity” (p. 1).

Core themes of Indigenous theory have only been partially discussed in feminist economics: Personal ties and intentions remain mostly central for feminist engagement with care work (“intrinsic motivation”). Relations with production factors (especially land and nature) have been discussed in ecofeminist economics generally from European or Western backgrounds (see Mies, 1986; Dankelman, 2010; Biesecker & Winterfeld, 2011, Nelson, 1995 and

1997; Lucas, 2000; Mellor, 2005); exceptions are the research of Indian thinker Vandana Shiva or the work of feminist economist Bina Agarwal.

A closer interlinkage with Indigenous and decolonial thinkers was planned for the IAFFE conference of 2020 that was scheduled to take place in Ecuador but has been postponed to a virtual session to be held in 2021. Rauna Kuokkanen, an Indigenous scholar with Sami backgrounds, is one of the few doing cross-over research of feminist, Indigenous and economic subjects (Kuokkanen, 2011). Another recent example is the “Feminist Economic Recovery Plan for COVID-19” launched by the State of Hawai’i (2020), which is a very hopeful example of feminist economics becoming manifest in economic policy making—especially in times of crises.

An issue that is extremely helpful for an expanded vision of feminist economics is the non-linear perception of time and generational connectedness in Indigenous thinking. Postcolonial theory has already commented on Western conceptions of panoptical time, i.e., the image of global history consumed at a glance in a single spectacle from a point of privileged invisibility, where Indigenous history appears “static, fixed, and covered in dust” (McClintock, 1994, p. 40). Space is in that respect anachronistic: “prehistoric, atavistic and irrational, inherently out of place” in a time of modernity (McClintock, 1994, p. 40). Western chrono-normativity of individual lifestyles has recently also become of great interest to queer theory (McBean, 2016; Gould, 2016; Chakrabarty, 2018; Colebrook, 2017) including concepts of life-cycles and intergenerational time.

Sustainability and time are key factors when it comes to feminist economics: The up and down swings of business cycles with a 4-5-year altitude and the same short-run time goals of policy makers do not add up to the needs of an ageing population and climate change affecting the future for new generations and the planet. The prevalent overlapping-generation-models are completely useless for these problems, as they are based on the assumption of time per se being productive, that is, “biological interest rates” (Samuelson,

1958, p. 467). There has been very little work on alternative feminist economic perceptions of time.

While feminist economics will definitely profit from broadening its perspective, it is highly questionable whether Indigenous research will embrace feminist economics as a worthwhile travel companion. All too often, white feminists have exploited Indigenous and BIPOC women* in projects based on “sisterhood,” so racism and sexism need to be very carefully negotiated as they are structures enabling a coloniality of power in a capitalist economics. A strategic essentialism that is not blind to colonialism, classism, institutionalized racism or anthropocentrism, but is fit to engage with global problems with local and trans-local networks, needs to be established and the work for it and the profits from it need to be shared fairly.

5-4 Queer Ecofeminism and Posthumanism

Posthumanism is a funky traveler that can more eagerly jump on board the feminist vessel. Drawing on feminist, queer, postcolonial and anti-racist theory, posthumanism proposes alternative views of the constitution of subjectivity, the production of knowledge and global biopolitics as it is argued that “the human” was never a neutral category but one always linked to power and privilege (Braidotti, 2013). Queer ecofeminist and posthumanist thinkers are questioning the *homo economicus* as an independent entity based on the anthropocentric (rather than just the androcentric) postulate in modern epistememes which position a binary where humans are at the center of all scientific modelling, reasoning and political organization and the rest of the world is “nature” — and declared largely irrelevant. Similar to Indigenous thinkers, but from their disciplinary standpoints, posthuman thinkers have been explaining the active connectedness of all life, such as humanity’s symbiogenetic genealogy with microorganisms or the dependence of humans on an autopoietic system, which is a system capable of reproducing and maintaining itself. Donna Haraway beautifully describes the symbiogenetic

dependence in microscopic settings that may serve as a brilliant tool to dismantle the *homo economics* concept as well as ideas of a free and autonomous individual:

I love the fact that human genomes can be found in only about 10 percent of all the cells that occupy the mundane space I call my body; the other 90 percent of the cells are filled with the genomes of bacteria, fungi, protists, and such, some of which play in a symphony necessary to my being alive at all, and some of which are hitching a ride and doing the rest of me, of us, no harm. I am vastly outnumbered by my tiny companions; better put, I become an adult human being in company with these tiny messmates. To be one is always to become with many. (Haraway, 2008, p. 3)

From a posthumanist perspective the key to recreating another version of economics lies with a transgression of all established dualistic thinking (such as mind/body, human/animal) and overcoming of those dichotomies which provide the basis (and legitimization) for modern capitalism, nation states, and many other unequal/exploitative relationships—quite similar to queer approaches. These dualistic categories are intrinsically interlinked with capitalism and modern conceptions of (holding) property (see also Klappeer & Schönflug, 2015 and 2016) where it is reasoned that the rational mind holds property over the self and maintains self-control over his body and desires (self-ownership); and that rational (white) men acquire property over non-rational others, such as women, Indigenous people, BIPOCs, sexual deviants,² rational humans transform nature, land, animals, the planet into (private) property. Greta Gaard summarizes this from an ecofeminist point:

[A]ll categories of the other share these qualities of being feminized,

² Gary Becker reminds us that sexual deviants are not organizing their lives as efficiently as they could be, therefore they are not fully rational. (Becker, 1993, p. 40).

animalized, and naturalized, socialist ecofeminists have rejected any claims of primacy for one form of oppression or another, embracing instead the understanding that all forms of oppression are now so inextricably linked that liberation efforts must be aimed at dismantling the system itself. (Gaard 1997, p. 117)

At this point feminist economics has not drawn much from posthuman thinking. From a political-economic perspective, the core of Gibson-Graham's feminist political imaginary is the vision of a decentralized movement that connects globally dispersed subjects and places through webs of signification. The 'arrival' of the Anthropocene and feminist critiques of hyper-separation are pushing their theories beyond the divisive binaries of human/nonhuman, subject/object, economy/ecology and thinking/acting (Gibson-Graham, 2011).

Also, Schönplflug and Klapeer (2017) have extended Becker's household model to fit a posthuman perspective. By doing so playfully, they argue that the privileged concept of self-ownership and property appropriation based on usage rather than preservation needs to be swiftly abandoned to make room for alternative economic systems oriented towards abundance, sustenance and efficiency. A posthumanist economics can successfully replace the idea of the autonomous economic agent and his limited organization in nuclear families with an understanding of a human economics that is subordinate to a planetary autopoietic system with "multispecies ecojustice" (Haraway, 2015, p. 161) of humans and other species. It should be encouraged to envision the key economic agents rather than mushroom men, but truly as mushrooms, as fungi (beings outside the binary of animal or plant) that are all connected by their mycelium, forming a biological web of decomposing and rebirthing, helping trees to exchange nutrients and providing healing substances to humans.

6 Conclusion

I want to conclude by positing that a feminist economics inspired by utopia

does need queer approaches as well as Indigenous research and posthuman thinking to truly leave the realm of androcentric and anthropocentric economics that is threatening the survival of all of us, including the planet - as has become even more visible in the dystopia of the COVID-19 crisis. A utopian oriented feminist economics will pick up the lessons from the theories it has befriended during its adventures of searching for a better world. From queer theory it can adopt the notion that relationships and families need not be heteronormative, monogamous and forever, but that there can be fluidity, and that there must be a responsibility for a greater community and certainly no national boundaries. From Indigenous thinking, feminist economics can learn to decenter its dependence on paradigms of Western modernity, a different sense of time, long-term sustenance and respectful, reciprocal and responsible relationships with land and nature. From posthuman theories we can learn to question anthropocentrism based on presumable facts of biology and other natural sciences. All these will help with the strict recreation of harmful institutions such as systematic individualism, racialization, gender-roles, families/households, nations, money, chrono-normative time and competitive markets. In this sense the current crisis is a “portal” (Roy, 2020) for imagining feminist economic alternatives to the prevailing order. As dystopia expands, it is time to learn fast.

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Abstract

フェミニスト経済学のためのqueerユートピア

カリン・シェーンプフルーグ

新古典主義経済理論における経済人は、自由で自己中心的で自律的なアイデンティティであり、地面から完全な形でキノコのように現れて育っていく、独立した自己として想定される。家族関係は夫、妻および子供の完全な併合体として考えられており、それぞれの機会と結果が同一でないことを無視している。個人と家族についてのこれらの概念は、次にフェミニストユートピアが提案し、フェミニスト経済学に組み込まれた人間の相互作用のビジョンと並置される。これらのビジョンは、ミクロレベルではジェンダーアイデンティティやジェンダー関係の再考と、仕事や家庭内のケア関係の再編を含む。マクロレベルでは、自己利益と他者の支配に基づく経済システムこそが、潜在的に致命的な資本主義、家父長的、植民地主義経済を支えてきたことが強調される。このシステムは、無報酬の家事労働や自然の影響など、システムが認識しない価値に対応できないため、非常に危険である。

本論では新型コロナの危機は、グローバルノースに到達する致命的な不平等というディストピアの一部として解釈される。しかし本論の後半では、この危機が新たな認識の始まりとしても議論される。フェミニスト経済学がとりうるユートピア的な旅は、道連れとしてクィア、先住民族、およびポストヒューマン理論を伴うだろう。進化系のフェミニスト経済学は、これらの分野のインプットに助けられつつ、男性中心主義かつ人間中心主義の経済学を克服し、クィアや被植民地人および先住民族、貧しい女性*、介護者、グローバル企業の工場労働者などにより多くの正義を可能にするだけでなく、環境および地球自体の破壊を防止する経済政策を生み出すことができる。クィア理論とその遊び心のある未来の概念は、恋愛関係や家族がヘテロ規範的である必要はなく、流動性があること、より大きなコミュニティへの義務があること、国境はないことを指摘している。先住民族の考え方からは、フェミニスト経済学は、西洋近代のパラダイムへの依存をいかにして脱却するかや、異なる時間感覚、長期的にサステナブルなあり方、敬

意と相互性と責任のある大地や自然と関係を学ぶことができる。ポストヒューマン理論からは、生物学や他の自然科学で事実とされていることに基づいた人間中心主義に疑問を呈することを学ぶことができる。これらの思考実験に続く次のステップは、体系的な個人主義、人種化、ジェンダーの役割、家族/世帯、国家、お金、クロノ規範的時間、競争市場などの有害な制度を作り直し、現在の危機を利用して、支配的な経済秩序の代替となるフェミニスト経済学を想像することである。

キーワード：

フェミニスト経済学、ユートピア、クィア、ディストピア、COVID-19

