

# A Subsistence Perspective for the Transition to a New Civilization

---

## An Ecofeminist Contribution to Degrowth

VERONIKA BENNHOLDT-THOMSEN

*Après des décennies dominés par l'attitude qui a progressivement discrédité l'existence des autochtones, les paysans et les femmes à la maison, les choses finalement, changent. La perspective productiviste de la mondialisation sème le doute et on demande un nouveau respect envers la capacité de la nature. L'environnement et les désordres sociaux exigent un nouveau paradigme de la civilisation. Les féministes ont ouvert le débat éventuellement appelé l'écoféminisme dans les années '70. En Allemagne s'est enligné sur cette notion de "subsister" dans les pays du Tiers Monde. L'auteure a contribué au débat et présente quelques aspects cruciaux dans cet article.*

### We Cannot See The Future but We Can Dream It: A Fairy Tale

It was once upon a time, in the year 2,999. The millennium is approaching and all humanity is preparing for the celebration. In fact, there is much to celebrate. People are happy to have been living in such a long period of peace. There have been no wars or famines for hundreds of years. In the coming celebrations the people will re-affirm their commitment: to contribute to a situation where all people can be happy. The commitment is to the future, since they know that their present will be the past of their descendants. “It is important to have a good past in order to live well,” they say in concordance with the philosophy of the people of the Andes. It was the South American Andean communities that had declared the *Buen Vivir/Living Well* philosophy as a goal for the third millennium a thousand years ago. They managed to stop the crazy race in the name of the so-called *Vivir Mejor/Living Better*.

On the eve of the fourth millennium, people in the whole world live in villages or small towns, surrounded by gardens and orchards full of flowers, vegetables, and fruits, and further on by woodlands, fields, and meadows that do not belong to anybody as private property, but are instead owned by the whole community. Water is treasured as something very precious. Springs, streams, rivers, and lakes are cared for with love, as if they were grandmothers. Although desertification on the one hand and flooding on the other belong to the distant past, they are still remembered regularly with commemorative rituals. The great megacities are also a thing of the past, and their many buildings have either disintegrated, or have been transformed into village communities. This is because all humanity bases its existence on a fundamental moral principle: *to live on what the region I belong to can offer me*. This had not been possible in the megacities.

The prevailing conviction is that every region and every human being is able to give in abundance. The concept of scarcity is unknown. In this golden age, it is a pleasure and a source of satisfaction to give, or pass on, something of one's own to the others, be it material or immaterial. Commerce and money are unknown. The planet is populated by societies that circulate gifts among and between themselves.

Songs, dances, and delicacies are being rehearsed and prepared for the great celebrations and some people have already left on pilgrimages to places emanating a special energy. In Europe, many are on their way to Venice where, almost a thousand years ago in 2012, at a memorable encounter, the foundations were laid for the great transition to a civilization leading to true happiness for all times.

## The Foundations of the Great Transition

Reading the announcement of the Third International Conference on Degrowth for Ecological Sustainability and Social Equity (which took place in Venice, September 2012, under the title “The Great Transition: Degrowth as a Passage of Civilization”), made me think of the title of Karl Polanyi’s book, *The Great Transformation*, as the organizers no doubt intended. Polanyi’s famous thesis suggests that the ultra-liberal idea of a self-regulating market

from 44 countries, the future victorious powers, whose aim was to contribute to a structure that would guarantee world peace. In the same year, *The Great Transformation* by Polanyi was published, whose topic was a search for the reasons of the two world wars. It is more a tragedy than an irony when we consider that in that same year, peace was supposed to have been reached by the very means that Polanyi had meanwhile identified as the causes of the two previous wars, that is by postulating the predominance of economic market laws in society.

---

**The Politics of Development presents financial gain as the pivot  
of any decision and replaces subsistence with commercial consumer  
culture with its thirst for ever more and more to ostensibly  
live ever better, without consideration for one's neighbour,  
nor for the state of nature and the earth.**

---

disengages the economy from the society. According to Polanyi, this disembeddedness is a fundamentalist utopia in which the basic substance of society is destroyed and human values are undermined. For Polanyi, an attempt to put this utopia into practice was the principal cause of two world wars. Today, this process of decay has gone even further. The economy itself has become a war. Such a trajectory must be averted if we wish for peace. But how?

Polanyi’s metaphor of disembeddedness is, in fact, more potent if applied in the opposite direction: the economy in terms of a mainstream economic logic based on ever-continuing growth, calculation, and numerical rationality has penetrated society and is now embedded within it. In other words: the economic principles of growth have invaded people’s hearts and minds. Degrowth thus means, at the deepest level, a decolonization of the hearts and the minds, and a decolonization also of the economistic culture that has encroached on the daily life of ordinary people.

## The Subsistence Perspective<sup>1</sup>

The concept of subsistence has been pitted against the concept of globalization from the very beginning, that is ever since the idea of economic growth at a world scale was legitimized by the Politics of Development. At the end of World War II, the Bretton Woods system was created with its two Institutions, the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. The basic intention is clearly visible from the name of the bank: the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD). The Bretton Woods agreement was signed in July 1944 by emissaries

Fighting the subsistence economy has become the objective of the Politics of Development. Its aim was—and is—to tear the culture of subsistence from the common cultural heritage of humankind, to annihilate the human ability to do what is needed for oneself and one’s neighbour in order to live well. The Politics of Development, on the other hand, presents financial gain as the pivot of any decision and replaces subsistence with commercial consumer culture with its thirst for ever more and more to ostensibly live ever better, without consideration for one’s neighbour, nor for the state of nature and the earth. At the time of McNamara’s presidency, the World Bank stated quite clearly in 1975 that its aim was “to draw farmers from subsistence to commercial agriculture” (World Bank).

When I saw this phrase and read the programs of “investing in the poor” (Cheney et al.), I could see that this perspective, bent on commercializing all the aspects of subsistence, could prove to be fatal. I was not yet consciously an ecologist nor a feminist, but my apprenticeship as an anthropologist among Indigenous people in rural Mexico was enough to enable me to understand how dangerous such penetration by international capital and markets would be for the autonomous sustenance of millions of peasants, craftspeople, and sellers in local markets. I had already observed the first destabilizing effects on such sustenance caused by the Green Revolution with its hybrid seeds, fertilizers, and chemical pesticides, leading peasants deeper and deeper into debt, a process that was latterly misrepresented as “investment in the poor.”

Since the announcement of the era of development, the economy of sustenance, or, as it is now called in a tone of depreciation, the economy of “subsistence,” has become a

synonym for “underdevelopment.” The idea of overcoming the underdevelopment of subsistence and of bringing the entire world into the economy of development or, in other words, the economy of growth, is a manner of continuing the project of colonization after World War II. Racism is re-instated using a new formula: to be underdeveloped is to be inferior, to be developed is to belong to a superior race. The harm caused by this colonialist brainwashing remains substantial to this day and has had its effect on both sides of the globalization coin. It is perhaps more pernicious on the side of the countries labelled as “developed,” whose citizens proudly identify themselves with the mechanisms of the growth economy and of consumerism, and can see less clearly through the brainwashing they are victimized by than the people on the other side, who are branded as underdeveloped.

Once “subsistence” is equated with “underdevelopment,” the subsistence economy is presented as the synonym of poverty, scarcity, absence of markets, lack of social division of labour, a bad life, in fact a lack of everything. But this is a lie. To better understand why the proponents of a growth economy reject subsistence, let us have a look at its etymological meaning. “Subsistence” has roots in Greek and Latin philosophy and means *“that which exists by itself, through its own immanent strength.”* This is the principle of growth in nature, of emergence and of evanescence. It is the maternal principle, of nurturing and caring. It refers to the rhythm of life; it is an ecological principle. From the point of view of subsistence, human beings form part of the organic world process, of the living being that is the earth. In this perspective, suddenly the transition of the civilization of economic growth toward degrowth appears obvious, even easy: let us aim for subsistence, let us make our decisions in accordance with what is necessary for living, for living well, satisfied, happy lives, without the equivocal desire for having ever more, as described in the popular song... “I can’t get no satisfaction.”

The subsistence perspective is a politics from the bottom-up, from the majority, from civil society; it does not rest on decisions by centralized power, but can “change the world without taking power,” as John Holloway would say. To aim for subsistence rather than profit is the parameter for the cultural change we need today.

### Some Steps Already Happening

I live in Germany and can tell you with some pride that the new thinking is already gaining ground. Not so long ago most people at the university, at conferences, or after I gave a talk would say: “Subsistence? What do you mean?” Or, “That’s something for Third World Countries,” or maybe, “Do you want us to return to the stone age?” Today, the

subsistence discourse is present even in the most prestigious public spaces. The main theme of the 2013 biennial conference of the Evangelical Church in Germany, always a grand event with thousands of participants, was: “Take only what you need.” The main question was: “What is it that we really need?”

I might also mention the famous exhibition of modern and contemporary art, *documenta*, which takes place in Kassel, Germany, every five years: a friend brought me a work of art, a little envelope with seeds saying: “Subsistence is resistance, is existence, is autonomy.” Many parts of the exhibition were designed in a similar spirit. There were 850,000 visitors, a third of them young people under 25 years old, and it was the most visited “edition” of the *documenta* since its inception in 1955.

In the whole country, “transition town” initiatives are being formed, based on the philosophy that towns can flourish quite well based on local resources in terms of food provisioning, building materials such as clay or straw, providing clothing, or listening to music. Transition town members show that we can ride a bicycle instead of driving a car, and generally try to behave responsibly face to face with the peak oil crisis. They embrace themes such as art, health, and biodiversity. There are groups whose members teach each other to sew, to cook, etc. (see also works by Rob Hopkins). In Germany, Austria, and Switzerland there are now around 80 transition town initiatives (see [www.transition-initiativen.de](http://www.transition-initiativen.de)).

Another related movement is the movement of community gardens, known as urban gardening, which is multiplying rapidly. There is a network that joins approximately 200 community gardens in Germany; we have 135 “intercultural gardens,” and since 2009 a new type of mobile garden has emerged, with plants cultivated in containers, or in squares, and other public areas. The motto of a group from Munich: “The city is yours, cultivate it!” has been gaining popularity (see Anstiftung).

The antecedents of the projects discussed above, that taken together can be seen as forming a new social movement, are the communities/communes and eco-villages. For the last 30 years or so, they have been living and promoting a culture of subsistence and of equitable conviviality, often growing their own food, with economic models ranging from the co-operative to the common pot. Most have a left-wing orientation, some follow Christian or Buddhist teachings. But all of them, some 60 in total, espouse an ecological vision (see Eurotopia). For many years they had been objects of defamation and ridicule. Today, however, there is a new wave of people wishing to live in community and experimenting with novel forms of conviviality.

In the cities, community dining halls are beginning to

emerge. One can be found in the city of Bielefeld where I live. For the past two years,<sup>2</sup> we have been preparing a delicious meal with organic ingredients once a week for whoever turns up. The idea emerged within the local Social Forum. With the new social legislation, implemented between 2003 and 2005 by the Social Democratic government along with The Greens, the number of people who need to eat at food-banks to survive keeps rising. In the Forum, we discarded the notion of demanding money, adequate premises, etc., from the State, since

ization, very necessary for degrowth. It is an integrated politics in the sense that it supports the integration of the mind and the body. One learns by doing, by getting one's hands in the soil; it is a concrete, lived experience, and it is autonomous: one does not depend on financial and market abstractions. It is learning by doing: Yes we can! This time it really is so!

It is true that the action radius may encompass not more than one village, a group of neighbours, a city area, a town or city. But that's just it. Let other similar groups

---

## The idea of overcoming the underdevelopment of subsistence and of bringing the entire world into the economy of development or, the economy of growth, is a manner of continuing the project of colonization after World War II. Racism is re-instated using a new formula: to be underdeveloped is to be inferior, to be developed is to belong to a superior race.

---

this would once again mean asking for something from "above," and we would remain trapped within a system of power and of economic reasoning that we, in fact, reject. All of us are affected by the situation, not only those who are homeless or badly paid within the system. The aggressive economic culture and the atmosphere of anxiety affects us all. They create a climate of hostility, envy, and confrontation. We, on the other hand, wish for a culture of conviviality, of equality, and of trust, where everyone has not only enough food to eat, but has enough good food to eat, and above all where nobody has to eat on their own. Loneliness is the greatest problem of our society. An easy and pleasant remedy is to sit together at a table, eat well, and in company, where those who have share more, while others share less or nothing. Some offer the kitchen and seating space, others play music or tell fairy tales. It has worked well, and similar initiatives are underway in other parts of the city.

### You Cannot Eat Money<sup>3</sup>

There are many critics who say, "This is not politics," or else, "This kind of activity has a minimum action radius." I have also heard the following many times, "It is only a question of food, not of the economy."

I believe that this kind of activity *is* politics, though not in the sense of politics as hierarchical power, where a great number of people and votes accumulate in order to obtain the necessary weight to instigate centralized top-down policies. It is politics in the sense of a changing of attitudes and of patterns of thinking, a drawing back from the *homo economicus* culture. It is a politics of decultur-

of people with a new way of thinking appear. Let them be similar because they tug in the same direction. But may they be diverse as well, in tune with their specific context, just as plants need to be diverse in order for biodiversity to flourish. The ideology of growth tends towards the uniform, the monoculture, towards megalomania. Look at what happened to organic agriculture. Let us step out of our niche markets, said the farmers. Let us grow, let us sell our products in the great national and international supermarket chains. The result today is that they have to adjust to a pattern of cheap prices for an ever-increasing amount of units, be they tons of monoculture vegetables, units of chickens or of pigs. A reduced action radius on the other hand, local or regional, enables the closeness and warmth of human relationships, and of relationships between humans, animals, plants, and landscapes. And, finally, many niches, one next to the other, taken together can have quite a wide action radius.

The objection that "It is only a question of food, not of the economy" is perplexing. ONLY? Isn't food the basis of the economy? We all know that in this world more than a thousand million people, especially mothers and their small children, go hungry, suffer from malnutrition, and die prematurely. To paint a less abstract image: it is one seventh of all humanity and many more people than all the inhabitants of Europe combined.

It is precisely in this context that the globalized growth economy with its principles of financial calculation and numerical rationality demonstrates its disfunctionality most and drastically. The Millennium Goals, adopted by the 189 countries who were members of the United Nations in 2000, express as their first objective:

Target 1.A: Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people whose income is less than \$1.25 a day.

Target 1.C: Halve, between 1990 and 2015, the proportion of people who suffer from hunger.

I ask myself: what do the members of the respective UN assembly think will happen to the other half? It will still be more human beings than the population of the United States together with the rest of the North American continent. In any case, 16 years after the famous Millennium Goals have been announced, it is clear that they have failed. The number of people suffering hunger in the world has not diminished, instead it keeps rising day by day.

Let me now pose a question: What appears to be less real: my fairy tale at the beginning of this text, or the Millennium Goals of the UN?

### **The Subsistence Perspective: An Ecofeminist Contribution to Degrowth**

The theory of the subsistence perspective arose out of the indignation we felt when faced with the ideology of development. Those were the years at the end of the sixties and the beginning of the seventies when the theories of development and its approaches were first formed and expressed. From the beginning we, the German sociologists and anthropologists who were beginning to elaborate on the feminist theory of subsistence, rejected both the theory and the development practices that were then beginning to be implemented, for their inherent *colonialist racism*. We had already spent many years in regions of the third world. Our sensations when facing development racism were similar to what we felt in relation to the sexist racism confronting women in our own society that we were beginning to see at almost the same time. The women's movement (*Frauenbewegung*) was born, the journal *Beiträge zur feministischen Theorie und Praxis* was launched, with the first issue appearing in 1973, and in 1983 we published a collection of articles, *Women: The Last Colony* (Bennholdt-Thomsen, 1992, 1988), with 17,000 copies at its third printing in German in 1992.

The similarity between the colonialist approaches to communities labelled as primitive, on one hand, and the oppression of women on the other, was an eye-opener for us, and remains an important guide for our analysis. Women as "the last colony" is more than just a metaphor. The concept expresses the situation and the process that establish the inferior social position of women. It expresses both the *economic and material* and

the *ideological and cultural* (racist and sexist) levels of exploitation and oppression that accompany the inferior position of women in our societies, as well as pointing to the hidden *violence* behind women's subjugation. The image of woman as colony also captures the anticapitalist impetus of our feminist theory. But, of course, there are many types of anticapitalism. Our perspective, focused on subsistence, is directed against the capitalist growth imperative. While seeing ourselves as left-wing and Marxist, we unsurprisingly also perceive the developmentalist (growth-oriented) and productivist aspects of the socialist vision, criticizing it in its turn.

We realized that the ideological-mental foundation of the two colonialisms, both regarding the communities and their lands, and regarding women, is a depreciation of the natural, of the organic, of that which germinates, is born and lives of itself, in sum a depreciation of that which has, and those who have, the capacity to give and reproduce life. Seen thus one can understand that colonizing bodies and land is in fact just one sort of colonialism, as both spring from the mindset that energizes the patriarchal system. This is apparent already from the etymology of the concept "*pater arche*": first the father, originally the father, precedence of the father, juridical power emanating from the father. There is no respect nor recognition of existence and life itself; instead, what counts is control over it. Value is ascribed only to that which is produced, manufactured, that which is constructed using materials that are assumed to be dead and that are seen to be imbued with a life value only after the act of production.

It can be seen that the subsistence perspective has since its beginnings in 1970-1975 been in fact ecofeminist, although it was not called that at the beginning. It was only in 1993 that the theorists of subsistence, Maria Mies and Vandana Shiva, used the term "ecofeminism" as a title for a collection of articles. In 1980, Carolyn Merchant published *The Death of Nature*, which helped disseminate the term "ecofeminism" to denote the kind of thinking that we, the authors writing on subsistence, shared. Merchant however concentrated on an analysis of European philosophy and values accompanying the onset of the Age of Reason and of Natural Sciences that led to "the death of nature" and to the deaths of millions of women designated as witches, without particularly taking into account the conquest of the colonies that took place simultaneously. On the other hand, our group, concerned with the third world, focused on the violent patriarchal impetus of European colonialism that has been attacking the natural and social foundations of the reproduction of life itself in the whole world: of Indigenous cultures, of mountains (mines), of plants, soils, lands, crops, waters, fish, genes, etc. We have analyzed how, through the violation brought about

by colonialism, the world has gradually been evangelized until the point when faith in Development and Growth seems to have been implanted as the global civilizing religion of our time.

### **Subsistence Perspective Feminism Within the Feminist Discourse**

Subsistence has never been a perspective coming only from women or meant only for women, rather it has

social position, or lack of equal opportunities, had much in common with the causes of environmental destruction, both being connected with patriarchal subjugation of all that sprouts and grows autonomously.

Our focus is often labelled as “biologistic” or, in the gender studies jargon, as “essentialist.” The depreciating tone coming as it does from gender studies is not surprising. Gender studies theory itself is constructed around the assumption that there are no natural differences between the sexes, but rather that the characteristics of each sex are

---

**The ideological-mental foundation of the two colonialisms, both regarding the communities and their lands, and regarding women, is a depreciation of the natural, of the organic, of that which germinates, is born and lives of itself, in sum a depreciation of that which has, and those who have, the capacity to give and reproduce life.**

---

aspired to be holistic. Our approach is to analyze the world from the perspective of having been born and having the capacity to give life, or in other words from the perspective of recognizing human beings as part of the reproductive process of nature. At the same time it is a perspective involving action to make possible another future. It has an antipatriarchal and antimonotheistic focus that opposes the colonialist mandate to “have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the heavens and over every living thing that moves on the earth” (Genesis, 1. Mose, 1:28) “subjugate the earth,” in all its aspects and whomever by, men or women. In the formative stages of the German feminist movement, we lived under the illusion that due to its character of being a movement to liberate women, its spirit would naturally be anticapitalist and oppose the growth economy. But this was not to be. Soon the perspective of equal opportunities prevailed, supported among others by Marxist arguments coming from socialist feminists. Great was the scandal when, in a speech in Zürich in 1989 on Women’s Day, I had the temerity to say that the only thing that most women in the movement aspired to was an equal share in the booty. My talk had the title: “To What Extent is the Women’s Liberation Movement Truly Liberating?” There was a similar scandal in Cologne in 1986, after my contribution at a big conference on “Women and Ecology.” Its title was: “The Ecological Question is a Question Intrinsic to Women” (see Bennholdt-Thomsen 1987; 1988-89). Many women, though seeing themselves as environmentalists, wanted to have nothing to do with their own human feminine nature. They did not wish to even consider the fact that the causes of their inferior

scripted exclusively by the norms of a given society. On one hand, the impulse to develop this approach is understandable, as it is a reaction to the patriarchal biologistic sexism that in effect says, “she is a woman, so she must wash the dishes.” Less understandable however is the solution that gender theory proposes: so as not to be obliged to wash the dishes, it is denied that there is such an entity as a woman. In effect, this position is just as fundamentalistic. It pays homage to biologistic fundamentalism by denying the existence of natural pre-conditions, paradoxically giving them more weight through such denial. Nature is here once again separated and isolated from the social process; it is once again declared to be dead. But nature is not a static entity, separated from the historical and social process. Nature and human society are continuously transforming each other through mutual influence, with no clear signs of whose impulse came first. A case in point would be the long-term development of the species *homo sapiens* within its territorial and climatic environment: where is the cause, where the effect?

It is no coincidence that the concept of “gender” has dominated feminist discourse in the era of neoliberal globalization. “Gender” is an ultraliberal philosophical reflection similar to the “level playing-field” of neoliberal economic theory. According to the concept of “gender” there are no sexes, all is naturally homogenous in the sense of being at one and the same level, enabling unbridled development from this level, free of any limitations.

From a subsistence perspective, we oppose this modernist secular transcendence with its ever-present assumption that the future will bring unlimited liberty in every respect. It is faith in development and growth that feeds this hope.

From our perspective, it is on the contrary important to respect, estimate, and appreciate the spirit immanent in the world. The subsistence perspective recognizes the unlimited diversity existing on the planet: the diversity of sexes, of seeds, of human beings, of landscapes, and of cultures. It searches for cooperation and complementarity within this diversity. It can help us in the transition to a civilization of peace between men and women, between the generations, and between human beings and the other beings on our planet.

*Translated from the Spanish by Nadia Johanisova, 2014.*

*This article is a slightly expanded version of my keynote speech: "The Subsistence Perspective: The Great Transition Can Be Gained With Small Steps" (in Spanish), presented at the Third International Conference on Degrowth for Ecological Sustainability and Social Equity, "The Great Transition: Degrowth as a Passage of Civilization," held in Venice, Italy, in September 2012.*

*Veronika Bennholdt-Thomsen is a social anthropologist, university professor, feminist activist, co-founder of German Women's Studies, and an important contributor to feminist subsistence theory. She has done extensive research and been published on peasant societies (Mexico, Bolivia, Germany, Austria), among them the matriarchal community of Juchitán (Mexico).*

<sup>1</sup>See Bennholdt-Thomsen (1981; 1987; 1997; 1999).

<sup>2</sup>Meanwhile in 2016 the project functions well since four years.

<sup>3</sup>See Bennholdt-Thomsen (2010). Available as a free download since 2011 at <[www.wloe.org/English.en.0.html](http://www.wloe.org/English.en.0.html)>.

## References

- Anstiftung Foundation. Web.
- Bennholdt-Thomsen, Veronika. "Die Ökologiefrage ist eine Frauenfrage. Zum Zusammenhang von Umweltzerstörung, Kapitalakkumulation und Frauenverachtung." *Beiträge zur feministischen Theorie und Praxis* 19.10 (1987): 27-42. Print.
- In Spanish: "La cuestión ecológica es un reto al movimiento feminista." *Homines*, Universidad Interamericana de Puerto Rico, 12.1 y 2 (1988-89): 234-242. Print.
- Bennholdt-Thomsen, Veronika. *Geld oder Leben. Was uns wirklich reich macht [Money or Life: What Makes Us Really Rich]*. München: Oekom, 2010. Print.
- Bennholdt-Thomsen, Veronika. "Matriarchal Principles for Economies and Societies of Today: What we can Learn from Juchitán." *Societies of Peace: Matriarchies Past, Present, and Future*. Ed. Heide Goettner-Abendroth. Toronto: Inanna Publications, 2009. 70-75. Print.
- Bennholdt-Thomsen, Veronika. "Subsistence Production and Extended Reproduction." *Of Marriage and the Market*. Ed. Kate Young et al. London: CSE Books, 1981. 16-29. Print.
- Bennholdt-Thomsen, Veronika and Maria Mies. *Eine Kuh für Hillary. Die Subsistenzperspektive*. München: Verlag Frauenoffensive, 1997. Print.
- In English: *The Subsistence Perspective: Beyond the Globalised Economy*. London: Zed Books, 1999. Print
- Bennholdt-Thomsen, Veronika, Maria Mies, and Claudia von Werlhof. *Frauen, die letzte Kolonie*. (1983). Zürich: Rotpunktverlag, 1992. Print.
- In English: *Women: The Last Colony*. London: Zed Books, 1988. Print.
- Chenery, Holis et al. *Redistribution with Growth*. London: Oxford University Press, 1974. Print.
- Eurotopia Living in Community. Web.
- Holloway, John. *Change the World Without Taking Power: The Meaning of Revolution Today*. London: Pluto Press, 2002. Print.
- Hopkins, Rob. *The Power of Just Doing Stuff. How Local Action Can Change the World*. Cambridge: Green Books, 2013. Print.
- Merchant, Carolyn. *The Death of Nature: Women, Ecology, and the Scientific Revolution*. San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1980. Print.
- Mies, Maria and Vandana Shiva. *Ecofeminism*. London: Zed Books, 1993. Print.
- Polanyi, Karl. *The Great Transformation. The Political and Economic Origins of Our Times*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1957.
- United Nations. Millennium Goals. Web.
- World Bank. Agricultural Credit: Sector Policy Paper. Washington, DC: World Bank, May 1975. Print