DEP Deportate, esuli, profughe
Rivista telematica di studi sulla memoria femminile

Awaiting Spring and War: Insights from Ecofeminism

by

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Abstract: In her poem, "spring" Iryna Shuvalova describes the seasonality of women awaiting spring and war. In her words, war too often subsumes spring to punctuate women's lives with the threat of disruption and widespread violence. Following the Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2022, pundits have proclaimed a new era of war, an era they say has ushered in a "colder than Cold War". While the world watches the war in Ukraine, others suffer through lesser recognized conflicts in Ethiopia, Western Sahara, and Yemen, citizens of Sri Lanka face devastating economic crises, and citizens of India and Pakistan endure record-breaking heat waves. At the same time, African nations brace themselves against crippling price hikes and reduced access to essential grain supplies. The relative invisibility of these nations' plights deepens both the violence and marginalization they continue to be confronted with, further disrupting the cadences of life. In this essay, I share ecofeminist reflections on war, wherever it happens, seen and unseen, as it overshadows the natural rhythms of life on Earth. I consider how ecofeminism has historically responded to war and how ecofeminists have proposed to mobilize against its structural foundations.

spring

in my
no-matter-what-country

a woman who shall remain nameless
awaits spring and war

she pulls our common future from the closet
tries it on in the mirror
smiles

and only when the air-raid sirens go off
in the background
does her smile fade

she reluctantly lowers her hands
takes off our future

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hides it in the closet
sits out the airstrike on the bathroom floor

not the right season[1].

As women, we too often occupy what peace scholar Elise Boulding (1976) called the "underside of history." To be beneath, behind, or invisible to the center of attention does not, however, mean one is not fully present. On the contrary, one is perhaps even more present in a conscious sense, attuned to what everyone can see as well as what most tend to disregard. This position makes the marginalized more keenly aware of the hidden logics of social systems. This is poignantly so for women in war. The worlds that surround and engulf the marginalized, however unrecognized by those in positions of dominance, are full worlds, nonetheless. Women scholars have long worked to do what feminists do, make the invisible visible, through investigating, documenting, examining, and reflecting on women's unique experiences of war. These exercises are intimately tied to advocacy for women's experiences of peace and security. In the face of a new era of global war marked by Russia's historic advances into Ukraine, what more can ecofeminists say or do? War affects women deeply in ways that often elude mainstream attention. Ecofeminists have long argued that the horrific dynamics of war against people and against the planet are interrelated. To fully understand this relationship, considerations must be drawn from diverse perspectives using a cultural approach to systems theory and the nature of the global political economy. Ecofeminist peace scholars in particular have helped us to see women's experiences of war as intertwined with the destruction of nature. This body of work offers vital insights for women now forced to continue picking up the pieces of more war and destruction of life of all kinds. In this essay I critically examine selections of intersecting ecofeminist analysis and critical peace and mobilization studies on how war ties together patriarchal violence against women and the destruction of the Earth and its people. Ecofeminists have long explored the relationship between women's experiences of patriarchy, violence, militarization, war, and ecological destruction. I first present this ecofeminist framework on the historical legacies of extraction and structural violence that make war possible. I then describe how ecofeminists have examined the common ontological process of objectification that undergirds sexism, destruction of the planet, and violence against humanity. I close by summarizing ecofeminists' central antiwar tenants before offering insights into resisting armed conflict and suffering from an ecofeminist perspective.

An Ecofeminist systems approach to war

Feminism means many things to many people, and diverse interpretations and applications have been associated with ecofeminism as well. For some, ecofemi-

[1] By Iryna Shuvalova, translated from the Ukrainian by Amelia Glaser and Yuliya Ilchuk, in consultation with the author.

nism serves to pointedly explore the relationship between women and the environment. Some ecofeminists embrace a spiritualist orientation drawing on studies of matriarchal religions and ritual practices honoring the biological bonds between females and the Earth (Daly 1978; Plant 1989; Radford Ruether 1983, 1996; Spretnak 1982; Starhawk 1979, 1982). Others have worked to recenter intersecting systems analysis of the common ontological and epistemological roots of patriarchy and violence against people, through sexism, colonialism, nationalism, racism, and Otherism of various forms, and the planet, through the extractive industrial global economy that benefits and perpetuates violence against people (Collard and Contrucci 1989; Diamond and Orenstein 1990; Griffin 1978; Merchant 1980; Shiva 1988; Spiegel 1988).

Some ecofeminists in this camp place special emphasis on the material realities of the Earth's ecological constitution and women and humanity's dependencies on the planet (Caldecott and Leland 1983; Gruen 1993; Kheel 1989; King 1989; Merchant 1995; Plumwood 1991, 1993; Salleh 1984, 1997; Warren 1991, 1994). Others have rejected certain strands of ecofeminism in a wave of postmodern, socialist, and neoliberal feminisms, sharing an anthropocentric acceptance of human supremacy whereby women are urged to strive for equality in the industrial economy. Many of these environmental feminists (some of whom use this label to distance themselves from other strands of ecofeminism) adopt a postmodernist ideal that would open up, through culture and technology, the possibility for womanhood and women's relationship with nature to be defined in a multitude of ways (Carlassare 1994; Mellor 1992; Molyneux and Steinberg 1995; Salleh 1997, 2009; Sargisson 2001; Soper 1995)[2]. Others have developed an ecofeminist discourse to advocate for addressing women's suffering as related to ecological destruction, especially against marginalized women and in the developing world (Agarwal 1992; Collins 1990; Gebara 2003; Jackson 1993; Jackson and Pearson 1998; Leach 2007; Nhanenge 2011; Jeremiah 2014).

Here I explore the enduring value of a systemic ecofeminist analysis for understanding the nature of war. I begin by describing how and why systems-analytic ecofeminism emerged among women mobilizing against war before summarizing the insights this approach can offer at a moment of heightened geopolitical conflicts and industrial degradation of a planet in peril.

War as a cultural system

Ecofeminists who embrace a systemic and cultural understanding of violence conceptualize war as a social system founded on ideals of dominance and hierarchy, organized through a stratifying Otherism of peoples, nations, and planet. To

[2] Gaard (2011) explains that this critique became so excoriating that it devolved into a strong "fear-of-contamination," making some people avoid use of the label "feminist" despite ideological alignment with the term, lest their concerns be dismissed through an oppositional framework. See also Cudworth (2005), Seager (2003), and Thompson (2006). Fundamental to understanding what defines this antagonism, I argue, is the stance on anthropocentrism and whether one understands humans as superior to the nonhuman world or as integral to it.

counter war and to recover from it, ecofeminists advocate for systems founded on reciprocity and life-sustaining diversity.

One easy interpretation of war is to document who and what is proclaimed to be in contention. Histories of conflict are important, to be sure, but ecofeminists also develop insights into violence and war as general social forms. These systemic insights broaden our understanding of how any war and war itself might be disentangled from the idiosyncrasies of unique disputes. Foundational forces of war include sexism and ecological destruction, as both are widespread systems of domination. The coexistence of these systems is not coincidental. Rather, they are institutionalized patterns of social life whereby social values and goals emerge from particular forms of organization and behavior. This enables the maintenance of collectively shared world views that allow different forms of supremacy to be safeguarded or expanded through violence. Many books and review articles have been written to document and outline the long and vibrant history of ecofeminist theory, practice, analysis, and debate (Buckingham 2004; Gaard 2011; Parameswaran 2022; Phillips and Rumens 2016; Warren 1997). Here, I highlight only a selection of programmatic writing to present some of the most central tenets of an ecofeminist systems approach. Systems thinking has come first and foremost from feminists who were deeply engaged in antiwar organizing and theorizing, which gained momentum in the 1970s antiwar and feminist movements. These scholars and organizers examined what they came to consider an inextricable relationship between violence against women and the organized, large-scale destruction of humanity brought about by nationalist, colonial, and neoimperial wars. They argued that both draw on comparable conceptualizations of hierarchy and an orientation toward dominating "others." Violence against the Earth, exasperated by both industry and war, was also observed to emanate from these common ontologies of objectification and superiority.

Betty Reardon in particular is often considered a "mother of peace education studies." In her now touchstone *Sexism and the War System* (1985) Reardon examines the many ways war and militarization is deeply infused with sexism as a guiding order of stratification. Reardon explains that just as sexism privileges traits and actions characterized as male, so too does the war system forward a "competitive social order, which is based on authoritarian principles, assumes unequal value among and between human beings, and is held in place by coercive force" (p.10). Several elements must be in place to perpetuate war. The establishment of a hierarchy necessitates division. Through sexism, this division occurs in a binary, sex-based system where positive traits like strength, confidence, and assertiveness are assigned to the superior male category and negative traits like weakness, timidness, and frailty are construed as female.

Reardon's work drew on and was published at the pinnacle of a long discussion among pacifist feminists who theorized violence against women, people, and the planet had common social-systemic origins. Feminist peace activists in the 1970s had begun to critically examine the common institutional orientations towards violence in patriarchy and the military, finding that both infused male sexuality with domination. In sexism, this domination was over women, in militarization the dom-

ination was over a defined Other, and often including women, as a way of bolstering aggressive masculinity in military culture.

Organized violence relies on socialization, activist theorists noted. In militarization, this regularly involves the socialization of boys in military training to realize their masculinity through aggression and conquest. But its cultural-systemic origins reach further back into the typical male's life course of socialization. In her widely distributed essay "Come in Tarzan, Your Time is Up," Anne-Marie Fearon (1978) opined that all babies are born with the capacity to be gentle loving beings, but socialization through a sex-role system positing men as violent aggressors creates the hierarchy of sexism and patriarchy[3]. As feminist pacifist Jenny Jacobs (1978) explained, it is therefore not surprising that proving one's masculinity comes easily to military men who have long been ingrained with the social imperative to "sort the men from the boys" through displays of violence. Feminist activist Donna Warnock (1982) called patriarchy a "killer" with women identified as prime targets through rape and other forms of everyday violence and domination, causing the cultural logics of sexism to fuel wars of other kinds. Many others noted how women are socialized into war systems, too, both directly through the active recruitment of women into the military and indirectly through being oriented toward male-dominated systems, including war against defined Other-enemies (Ellsberg 1971; Kinchy 1978; Michalowski 1980; Somerset 1978; WRI 1981).

At this point, through systemic analysis, feminism and peace activism began to share foundational concerns, just as ecological care and feminism do. Barbara Zanotti (undated) spoke for a generation of pacifist feminists when she declared in "Undoing the Ravages of War" that rooting out colonization, dehumanization, Othering, and the cycle of "tearing down to build back up" would all be necessary to stop war. Lisa Leghorn (1983) claimed culpability is also located in the "economic roots of violent male culture" arguing that violence depends on exploitation and stark inequities in power. Others have revealed how women suffer along the unseen but essential commodity chains of war. The documentary *Village of Widows: The Story of Sahtu Dene and the Atomic Bomb* (Blow 2018) details the story of a community of women survivors from the shores of Great Bear Lake in Canada, the location of uranium mining for the Manhattan Project, which was responsible for killing over 250,000 Japanese. After approximately twenty years of delivering uranium to the project, most of the miners have died of cancer. From historic hindsight, nuclear bombs mean death both through their production and at the final point of delivery. Winona LaDuke (2002) has documented that the everyday waste disposal practices of North Americans are also experienced as war by Native Inuit communities exposed to dioxins on a daily basis. Native Shoshone peoples are exposed to the radioactivity of nuclear waste and continued uranium mining use to develop nuclear energy. Where Warnock called patriarchy a killer, LaDuke calls uranium one for its life-destroying impacts on the communities who suffer the creation of new mines. Physician and antinuclear activist Dr. Helen Caldicott has

[3] In the 1970s, feminists critically identified the "sex-role system" as the foundational institution through which gender roles were assigned to biology at birth, a form of ascribed stratification that relegated women inferior to men.

boldly stated that apart from nuclear war, the development and use of nuclear power is the greatest medical threat posed to life on Earth.

Ecofeminist theorists and historians celebrate the praxis-based knowledge generated across women-led and feminist movements used to organize against the destruction of people and the planet by industry. In the US, Women Strike for Peace (Swerdlow 1993), Women's Pentagon Action (Harris, King, and Cohn 2019), the Baby Tooth Survey (Logan 2010), Lois Gibbs' pioneering work toward establishing the Environmental Protection Agency's superfund act for cleaning up toxic waste dumping sites (Reed 2002), and the Seneca Women's Encampment for a Future of Peace and Justice (Krasniewicz 1992) all forwarded strong theoretical frameworks positing that violence against people and the planet were intimately connected. These frameworks position chemical alteration of life as an intrinsic part of this process that must be resisted. Women-led movements like the National Toxics Campaign, the Mothers of East Los Angeles (MELA), and Native Americans for a Clean Environment (NACE) (Merchant 2005), the Akwesasne Mother's Milk Project (LaDuke 1999), the Greening of Harlem Coalition (Bernstein 1993), and the Gardening Angels of Detroit (Hawthorne 2002) all emphasized the effects of industrial capitalism and the production of weapons of war on poor communities. Several movements and initiatives emerged to take on environmental degradation and pollution's life-threatening effects on human health. These include the Center for Health, Environment, and Justice (Gibbs 2002), the movement against environmental racism surrounding the Hooker Chemical hazardous waste site in Warren County, North Carolina (McGurty 2009), and the breast cancer awareness movement's emphasis on the role environmental toxins (Clorfene-Casten 1996). A body of works informing Black Feminist Ecological thought reveal the many ways women across the African diaspora routinely experience and confront the most harmful effects of environmental degradation (Craig 2014; Frazier 2020; see also Alvarez, Theis, and Shtob 2021). Around the world, movements like the Chipko movement against deforestation in Northern India and the Green Belt movement to prevent desertification in Kenya sparked consciousness of the integral role women could play in instilling an understanding of the vital interdependencies between human life and the state of the natural world (The Green Belt Movement 2016; Warren 2000). Today, Navdanya continues to work to support organic and biodiverse small-farms agriculture in India while partnering with Earth University to develop ecofeminist knowledge that can oppose harmful mining and other industrial solutions to climate change.

Academic studies have developed alongside and in the wake of these movements, conducting careful historical and social scientific studies of the origins, dynamics, and impacts of social systems of violence against the Earth and its people, including the role played by patriarchy and other forms of Othering in the destruction of life. These works have helped to organize historical and systemic understandings of the cultural-ideological bases of the violence of war and the destruction of the Earth. Carolyn Merchant's (1980) *The Death of Nature* was formative to the new wave of ecofeminist consciousness the developed in the 1970s and 1980s. Merchant traced the ontological origins of the destruction of nature to the Baconian philosophical program that formed the basis of the Enlightenment in Western sci-

ence. She recounts the dynamics of debate that allowed this one ontology to become vital to the rise of Western thought, containing within it "a set of attitudes about nature…that reinforced tendencies toward growth and progress inherent in early capitalism" (p.185). What lies beneath the systems of war against women, people, and the planet, this suggests, are ideas and understandings common to all of them. Mechanism, the philosophy that cane to form the basis of Western thought neglects to account for the environmental consequences of synthetic products as a consequence of human-constructed environments. Maria Mies' (1986) *Patriarchy and Accumulation on a World Scale* followed with an analysis that an "accumulation model" has perpetuated global Northern domination through consumerism and growth in waves of global capitalism fueled by colonialism, extractive economies, and conspicuous consumption. She details how wealth from exploitative industries concentrates in the global North and relegates women to a life of poverty and consumption by others as Others at the bottom rung of the global economy. Vandana Shiva's (1988) *Staying Alive: Women, Ecology, and Development* elaborated on the focused exploitation of women in the colonized global South, where development programs have destroyed the natural world and the lives of women interdependently linked to these areas. Together, Mies and Shiva then wrote *Ecofeminism* in 1989 to put forth the argument that both capitalism and colonialism are patriarchal forms of violence. In these systems, an epistemology of progress fuels the incessant drive towards "growth" which has left the Earth, women, the poor, and colonized peoples destroyed in its wake. Mies and Shiva delimit how a "myth of catching up" has been propagated so that the developing world de facto consents to its plunder by global capitalist managers of wealth and industrial extraction. This thesis has been further supported in ecofeminist analyses of the declining lot of the poor and women in post-conflict societies, in which extractive industries offer a ladder to development out of the devastation of war only to reignite the same instabilities that instigated prior violent conflicts (Cohn and Duncanson 2020, Gallo-Cruz and Remsberg 2021; Lujala and Rustad 2012; Lujala, Rustad, and Kettenmann 2016).

Since then, the ecofeminist framework has splintered off into multiple perspectives, with some ecofeminists focusing on pursuing equality within an industrial capitalist system, as opposed to transforming that system altogether. Still, the general analytical objective of understanding the relationship between gender inequality and the environment remain significant to many ecofeminists, and a systemic ecofeminist analysis continues to inform critical understandings of the origins of common forms of oppression and violence against people and the planet. This framework puts forth the following tenets as necessary ingredients of the social system of violence against women, people, and the Earth.

Chemicals matter to life, and so does the culture that enshrines their production, consumption, weaponization, and alteration.

A primary concern among ecofeminism that sets it apart from feminist anthropocentric thought is the insistence on a fundamentally material reality indelibly shaped by human culture. Anthropocentrism, the belief in human dominance and primacy, is understood as a cultural form rather than a universal given, with all actions stemming from it conceptualized as human choices. Both elements of this essential material reality – human dependence on the health of the natural world, the

integrity of soil, air, and water to survive, and the cultural world, the ways we think about human needs in relationship to the natural world, that either respect or serve to alter this reality – are necessary to fully comprehend the nature of the violence of patriarchy, war, and ecocide (see Molyneux and Steinberg 1995). This tenet in particular illustrates a fundamental distinction between anthropocentric expressions of feminism that allow for far-reaching chemical modifications of the body and the natural world to enhance human-centered experiences and a cultural-materialist ecofeminism that positions humans' industrial modification of the natural world as destroying the possibility for sustainable reciprocity between humans and nonhumans[4]. From this first tenet, it then follows that:

The destruction of life involves the production, consumption, weaponization, and alteration of chemicals, and these actions follow from organized social forms of domination and hierarchy.

Systems thinking brings together the cultural and material in cause-and-effect analysis. Ecofeminist theory and analysis was born through the early insight that modern technological life and the destruction of the earth share common ontological origins in patriarchy, violence against women, and violence against Others in war. Cultural worldviews of objectification and hierarchy beget acts of domination and violence. Material organization of extraction and production beget the tools and technologies that kill people and the planet.

Ecofeminist research has long focused on tying together the unrecognized relationships between cultural and resource commodity chains, ideas about hierarchy and domination, and a sense of entitlement to production and destruction. In so doing, ecofeminists join political ecologists and political economic historians in making visible those who would otherwise remain invisible despite being both victims of and integral to these chains of violence.

Domination stems from cultural systems that demarcate perceived threats to power and security. These perceptions map onto competition with targeted Others.

Patriarchy, as a system of power, operates according to perceived threats to power, and women can be understood as both prominent threats or assumed to be irrelevant and utterly powerless in patriarchal systems that take on idiosyncratic cultural histories (Gallo-Cruz 2021a and 2021b). Across contexts, patriarchy defines women as lesser-than and ultimately objects of assumed male supremacy. Ecofeminists give careful attention to fully understanding the nature of the origins of domination that fuel violence. Studies of socialization reveal the transmission of ontologies of power and hierarchy through institutions like the family, the nation, and the military. Ecofeminists have also elucidated the central role played by marginalization and Othering, the social dynamics that lead to perceived threats, and the social structures that perpetuate power-over orientations.

Othering is organized through sexism, colonialism, racism, nationalism, and anthropocentrism, among other forms of stratification.

[4] This topic is undoubtedly a challenging one that invites a difficult conversation about which chemical bodily practices are sustainable and/or helpful to the balance between human life and the natural world and which are not, akin to anti-nuclear activists' concerns over defined and projected energy needs (see above, Sutcliffe 1978).

Multilevel perspectives have been vital to systemic ecofeminist analysis. Socialization studies therefore present a level of understanding that is complementary and interdependent to cultural systems studies. On these five "isms," consensus has been easier to build among feminists opposed to colonialism, racism, and nationalism. The nature and particular dynamics of sexism and whether ecofeminism should pursue an anthropocentric or reciprocal human-nonhuman systems response has led to deeper disagreements and divisions. Nevertheless, Othering in the form of sexism and anthropocentrism are considered essential to an ecofeminist understanding of violence against women as a culturally imbued category of sex and violence against the Earth through the assumed entitlements of human supremacy[5].

Modern war demands industrialization.

A generation of feminists have given their lives to organizing against both nuclear weapons and nuclear power. The destructive nature of the production of weaponry is unquestionable. There are no modern weapons that can be produced in an environmentally sustainable way. The tailings from uranium mines used to produce nuclear weapons and power and the waste created by using nuclear weapons are also undeniably threatening to life. This point, too, can invite multilevel scrutiny. Some nations have responded to the interruption of fossil fuels caused by the war in Ukraine by investing in more rapid expansion of nuclear power infrastructure, to name one poignant and recent response. However, feminist antinuclear activists have put responsibility for the ills of nuclear power on an artificial demand for increased energy output, questioning how much power we really need (Sutcliffe 1978: 27). This argument extends beyond industrial manufacturing of nuclear and other modern weaponry into the industrialization of modern life.

Industrialization demands destruction of the Earth and its people.

For ecofeminists, it is not coincidental that industrial life depends on extraction through mining and that mining pollutes both the planet and the human and nonhuman life that depend on it. Merchant (1980:3) discusses how, for example, modern societies' transition from ideals of reciprocal relationships between humans and the Earth's ecosystems to human-dominant ideologies involved more extensive forms of mining. Roman philosophers and stoic thinkers once deplored mining as an abuse of their Mother Earth. By the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, however, commercial mining was gaining in pace and scale and these old ways of thinking would soon become incompatible with a rapidly unfolding new economy.

Today, much of modern life, from infrastructure and energy to the development of modern medicine, weaponry, and fertilizers used in agriculture, depends on mining. The great paradox of this age of human dominance – which some have dubbed the "Anthropocene," as well as the "Capitalocene," "Plantationocene," and "Eurocene" (Moore, 2015; Haraway, 2015; Grove, 2016) – is that everywhere there is mining there is violence against earth and water, and the destruction of animal, plant, and human life. Too often, extreme violent conflicts are waged against

[5] Feminists and ecologists face a common challenge in confronting supremacy thinking. Just as sexists interpret feminism as a ploy to subvert male dominance with female dominance, anthropocentrists struggle to understand the concept of a reciprocal relationship between humans and the non-human natural world, thinking that humans must be either superior or inferior to non-humans.

the human communities inhabiting targeted mining areas. Modern life, with its utter dependence on industrial production, relies upon modern war and the destruction of the Earth. In this system, the threat of modern war is perpetuated by both the rapid production of weapons and the geopolitical tensions of nationalism and political economy.

An ecofeminist response to war

Just as praxis has deeply informed theory, ecofeminist theory sets out to redefine the real material relationships women have with each other and with other humans, species, and the planet. The first principled response of a strong ecofeminist approach is to assert that neither the anthropocentrism so intimately interwoven with neoliberal industrial capitalism nor the cultural relativism favored by postmodern feminists will effectively end violence against people and planet. As Mies and Shiva (1989) contend, ecofeminists must take a clear moral stance on the sanctity of a sustainable way of life in which people and the planet are able to live in harmonious reciprocity.

This involves deconstructing harmful ideologies while also disentangling ourselves from the chokehold of destructive economic and political systems. In Reardon's (1985) *Sexism and the War System*, she offers a vision of what a feminist corrective should involve. The gender binary system that superficially assigns personality traits to sex must be dismantled so that humans can collectively strive to develop positive, peaceful traits while mitigating the effect of traits that can foster violence.

In *Women Who Speak for Peace*, Kelley and Eblin (2001) add that a feminist system, as opposed to a patriarchal one rooted in dominance, embraces diversity and reciprocity: "Whereas patriarchy places value in one perspective and one type of voice, feminism, on the other hand, places value on multiple voices and narratives" (p.146). To take a unified moral stance, however, ecofeminists will have to do the work necessary to achieve consensus. This should begin with affirming the sanctity of the life of women, people, and the planet and committing to taking on the ills of violence enmeshed in patriarchy. Then, systemic transformations would involve instilling new orientations that respect and nurture life from early socialization carrying through into reengineered social institutions. Antiwar feminists have long envisioned such a deep transformation of systems and institutions. Helen Michaelowski in "The Army Will Make a Man Out of You" urges readers that in order to reorganize away from hierarchical competitive systems an emphasis must be placed on teaching men to nurture life and communities, rather than training women to kill. And, as ecofeminists hold concerns about violence against women and violence against the planet in equal measure, political economic solutions are also deemed essential to building peace. In "Nuclear Power: The Future is Fearful," Jill Sutcliffe (1978) explains that low-technology systems are easier to understand and give individuals more control over their lives compared to the great unknowns of modern industrial grids. She underscores that the violence of nuclear energy is ultimately based on a distinctly modern "need" for energy. She reflects:

> How many of our present "needs" have been manufactured by the advertisers to secure profits for the producer? Wall-to-wall gadgetry with built-in obsolescence; when it's worn out chuck it out? Is this the rationale for taking such a lethal course as nuclear power?...Will the throw-away mentality end by turning the world into a nuclear dustbin? What an apt monument to this white male society and its values so destructive of life and the environment.

From resistance has also sprung many creative solutions. Shiva (2009) follows her indictment of the life-destroying industrial extraction and use of oil with a clarion call to life through soil, a perfect ecological system balanced by its intrinsic diversity and life-sustaining forces. To protect the most vulnerable and marginalized, poor women in the exploited "third world," Shiva (1988) exhorts the world's citizens to work for deglobalization. Localization could help overcome the destruction caused by the global industrial system of extractive capitalism taking resources from the global South to fill the coffers of the global North (see also Shiva 2020). To grow strong and sustaining roots again, the world's many communities must work together to nurture organic life, diversity, and respect for women's wisdom and leadership in their own areas. For marginalized women and women of color, this takes an intentionally subjective and praxis-based stance in reclaiming community histories, and learning from Nature, as much as from within feminist community, gathering and nurturing insights on how to take on violence against Earth and against repressed peoples (Hall and Kirk 2021). In essence, each of these concepts are key: working to counter a cultural system of objectification with subjective reverence and reciprocity; creating a new value of respect for the communion of human and nonhuman life in order to live sustainably; making all that has been rendered strategically invisible visible again so that we may understand and respect the true source and cost of all practices and all we consume; and working towards systemic transformations in culture, economy, and politics based upon these principles of life and diversity.

In the face of an ongoing war of a scale that has had global geopolitical ramifications, including interrupting the global food supply, these long-term cultural and systemic ideals may seem quixotic or tragically unreachable. What then can ecofeminist theory offer during difficult times of active war and violence between nations and their peoples? The consequences of war are unquestionably devastating, to women, to humans, and to all life on Earth. As the words of poet Iryna Shuvalova so movingly communicate, war alters the seasons of life as nature would define them. Beyond this disruption and disconnection from natural cycles, women experience elevated levels of gender-based violence, rape, torture, and killing, and other traumas that continue to unfold long after a war ends. So do men. The environmental consequences of war are catastrophic for life and the air, water, and soil of the biosphere as well, from the debris and waste of spent weaponry and ammunitions to the contamination from damaged infrastructure and the spilling or spreading of toxins. Certainly, antiwar feminists have organized countless campaigns against wars of the present, for healing in the aftermath of war, and for demilitarization. Ecofeminists have, however, thus far focused their attentions on generating a systemic understanding of the necessary and sufficient actions to stop war as an institution and to eliminate violence against women, people, and the planet. Ecofeminists hold a deep longing to break the cycle, making another eruption of atrocity an

impossibility. This requires sweeping transformations of our military industrial and patriarchal systems, all of which can feel desperately far off as war disrupts the seasons of life. To bridge the needs of the present with the visions of the future, therefore, new and serious conversations are needed. Figuring out how to stop those perpetuating war and violence against people and planet and transitioning to a life of resistance and noncooperation to the systems making that violence possible should invite judicious attention and will undoubtedly involve arduous deliberations[6].

Still, ecofeminists have provided some answers for how to begin breaking the cycle. Dismantling and refusing to participate in structures leading to violence and war is a necessary first step. To grow life, we must, as the title of a recent talk given by Shiva (2022) asserts, "degrow greed". This can take on a sober and realist understanding of what has already been altered in our biosphere at this historical moment following the long industrial revolution, as the title of the recently published anthology of feminist and womanist statements All We Can Save communicates (Johnson and Wilkinson 2021). A seemingly formidable task, it can be approached with reverence and grace. Wabanaki elder and ecologist Judy Dow (2019) writes that we must conjure the courage to accept that the younger generation will not live in the times we have, and we must grow in the wisdom that to prepare them to "travel through the narrows…it's essential that they be reminded of the old stories of survival, hear the old songs of prayer, learn to read the land, and understand the difference between a want and a need" (p.15). For ecofeminists, this strategy of simplicity interwoven with deference to humans' small but significant place in the ecosystem involves bringing back a way of life that follows the natural seasons war against people and planet has altered. How we get there from where we are now, at what seems like the dawn of a new age of war, demands our attention. One answer already given by ecofeminists is that living locally and simply with deep respect for our place in an ecosystem greater than ourselves is not just a form of adaptation; it is also a strategy for transformation. Tactics of resistance to war may be added to these strategies, though ecofeminists have dedicated much less attention to such formulations. Nevertheless, dismantling the weaponry of war must take into account the source of that weaponry and the full chain of war-making itself, from industrial mining and manufacturing to the cultural replication of patriarchy, nationalism, and the dominant ideologies of political economy that drive the killing of people and the planet.

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[6] How should ecofeminists respond to the current state of nations' climate security planning, for example (à la McDonald 2018)?

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