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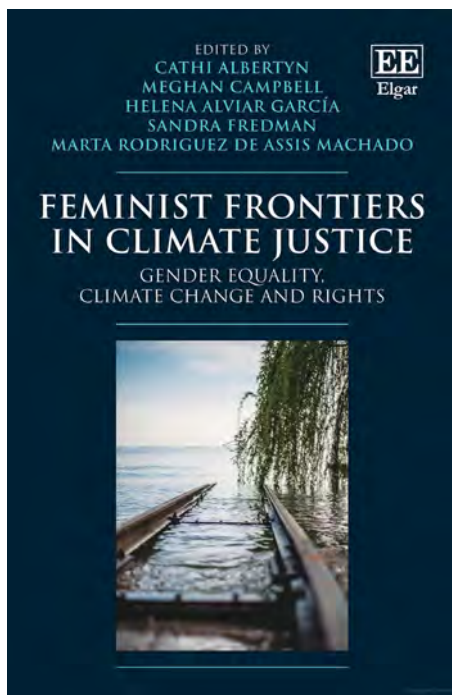
Feminist Frontiers in Climate Justice – Gender Equality, Climate Change and Rights

By Cathi Albertyn, Meghan Campbell, Helena Alviar García, Sandra Fredman and Marta Rodriguez de Assis Machado (eds)

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Reviewed by Irina Lawrenz*



The anthology *Feminist Frontiers in Climate Justice - Gender Equality, Climate Change and Rights* focuses on exploring social and political issues through feminist methodologies. The key to linking climate justice, gender equality, and climate change to one another through this lens is highlighting underexplored potential and mutually beneficial policy proposals. Therefore, the editors and contributors aim to fill (or at least narrow) the gaps in the discovery of the intersections between human rights, climate

change and women's experiences all over the world. To present the various realities and issues surrounding climate change from a feminist perspective, the authors address global, national, local and grassroots levels.

Throughout the anthology, the emphasis on linking global and local perspectives to find sustainable solutions leads to a better understanding of the complexities and the interrelationships as well as problems posed by the multi-level system of environmental law. In addition, the various ways of integrating a feminist perspective in this multi-level system open the eyes to the possible interconnections but also highlight the difficulties.

Firstly, the contributions address the global level. In this context, questions are raised about the wider connections between climate protection and gender equality, as well as fundamental systemic issues. The final five essays then focus on the national, local and grassroots levels. In addition to analysing existing structures in countries of the Global South, they focus on smaller feminist movements and highlight the value of court litigation for these feminist movements.

In line with the global focus, the initial essays operate within the realm of international law, emphasising the interconnectivity of climate change and gender equality. They demonstrate that gender and substantive equality are treated superficially, if at all,

* Research Assistant at the University of Bayreuth, Chair of Public Law III

and existing structures are rarely challenged through legal means. Atrey (Chapter 1) addresses this problem on the level of human rights and international law, criticizing the fact that, although states have an obligation to realise human rights to their full extent (according to her, intersectional and gendered inequality are the causal link between climate change and human rights violations), they do not sufficiently incorporate ecofeminist perspectives, instead being shaped by the capitalist patriarchy. In the same vein, Wilkinson Cross (Chapter 2) uses an ecofeminist perspective, to demonstrate the interconnectedness of gender equality, climate change and additionally intergenerational equality. Of particular interest is the parallel she draws between the conceptual similarities between women and non-human nature in the dualisms of society and patriarchy. According to Wilkinson Cross, they are both embedded in existing structures of oppression which the existing law does not resolve. This 'gender blindness' (p. 81) of international law is also criticised by Maguire (Ch. 3). She argues that, while disasters (which are increasingly often caused or exacerbated by climate change) lead to increased gender-based risks for women, girls and LGBTQI+, the international disaster legislation is generally insensitive to differential risk scenarios based on gender, providing no support for victims of gender-based violence following disasters. Campbell (Chapter 4) agrees with this criticism, stating that legal regimes have so far not paid sufficient attention to the gendered experience of climate change. However, the inclusion of General Recommendation No. 37 on the Gender-Related Dimensions of Disaster Risk Reduction in the Context of Climate Change in the CEDAW brings the experiences and role of women to

the forefront, possibly nudging new responses to climate change. Fredman (Ch. 5), who, like Campbell, works with her own four-dimensional idea of substantive equality, is looking for these new responses in the world of work, taking holistic approach that interconnects education, reproductive justice and domestic and care work. She emphasises the importance of states playing a central role in facilitating good-quality work, breaking down stereotypical occupational sectors, and providing social protection through employment initiatives. Also linking reproductive rights, climate change and gender equality through the concept of radical connectedness, Albertyn (Chapter 6) argues that reproductive rights should be understood as 'the ability to exercise substantive choice (...) within a multidimensional and multilevel idea of transformative substantive equality that takes account of reproductive justice (...) and climate justice' (p. 163).

Moving to a national level, Kameri-Mbote and Kabira (Chapter 7) critically examine Kenya's legal and policy framework regarding gender equality and climate change within a plural legal context. They conclude that despite several laws and policies in Kenya addressing gender equality and climate change, three key aspects are still missing: 1) climate change as a threat multiplier, 2) women's knowledge and experiences concerning climate governance, and 3) implementation difficulties due to discrepancies between formal and informal legal contexts.

The subsequent essays focus on the perspectives from local and grassroots levels. Alviar García and Olarte-Olarte (Chapter 8) shed light on the female-led struggle in Bogotá's flower industry

and the intersection of climate change and gender issues condense in this sector. They claim that current ideas on how to mitigate climate change and/or gender inequality remain market centred. However, Alviar García and Olarte-Olarte argue that the women's movement, which focuses on sustaining social and natural reproduction, has the potential to generate new policies and politics. Chamberlain (Chapter 9) also acknowledges the potential of women's struggles, positively assessing the value of the Baleni litigation for the struggle of 'Women Affected by Mining United in Action'. However, she also points out the limitation that the litigation fell short of its potential as gender-based concerns were not included and due to malicious compliance. Goldblatt and Hassim (Chapter 10) discuss the role of litigation in the context of the Xolobeni struggle. While they deem collective political organisation and the pursuit of goals through litigation to be key elements in achieving justice, they also argue that gains through litigation can only be sustained if they are institutionalised. De Assis Machado, Vitale and Rached (Chapter 11) contribute to this discussion by examining the indigenous women's movement against the Bolsonaro government in Brazil. Although the movement formed strong local and global alliances, it was sidelined in the decision-making process in the Amazon.

Although the contributions address various issues and legal and non-legal contexts, they are connected by overarching questions and arguments.

One such argument is a systemic critique of neoliberal and capitalist structures, and their links to climate change and gender inequalities. The privileging of market solutions can lead to the exploitation of women and

the environment, and the root causes of inequalities are often overlooked (García and Olarte-Olarte). Climate change also perpetuates social and economic injustice, as those who are already marginalised tend to be the most affected (Kameri-Mbote and Kabira, Maguire). A system change is deemed necessary for the required transformation (see, for example, Atrey, Wilkinson Cross, Chamberlain, Goldblatt and Hassim).

Another important issue is the role of women in combating and mitigating climate change: The specific issue here is that women (and other marginalised groups) are particularly vulnerable because they are generally more affected by climate change. On the other hand, García and Olarte-Olarte, Chamberlain, Goldblatt and Hassim, de Assis Machado, Vitale and Rached highlight how women are striving for climate justice, (as well as for social and economic justice. Taking these factors into account, the authors emphasise that women are not simply 'victims' of climate change or 'agents of change', but rather their role is far more complex (for example de Assis de Machado, Vitale and Rached).

Another key theme is the nature of law, its potential and its limitations in mitigating climate change. The authors who address these issues agree that gender and substantive equality are treated superficially, if at all, and that existing structures are not challenged through law and litigation. Maguire also points out, that the international law is fragmented in the sense that gender work is carried out in specific committees, resulting in isolation from other areas of legislation.

Overall, the anthology is a thought-provoking collection of diverse perspectives and pluralistic approaches, all of

which highlight the interconnectedness of gender equality, climate change and women's rights. The focus on the Global South is a positive feature, as this often does not receive the attention it deserves in climate change discussions taking place in the Global North, despite being particularly vulnerable to the effects of climate change. The selection of topics, ranging from the local to the global, succeeds in surveying the

problems that exist and the need to involve all levels of government, as well as different perspectives - especially those of women - in the search for small- and large-scale change. The anthology also demonstrates that, despite the contexts and individual issues being quite different, important connections exist between the ideas and struggles, providing a sense of unity to various movements.

