



This work revisits famous fables to illustrate key concepts and proposals of degrowth and its close ties with the energy issue.

### The awakening of the hummingbird: a fable in three acts

#### Act One: The hummingbird and the chicken

A hummingbird and craved fat kid,  
Envious of the round chicken and the lovely peacock.  
Decided to get informed and wanted to take hormones .  
At the Club of Rome [4], a specialist was consulted.  
This one, surprised , said to the interrogator:  
"Why do you want to get bigger and change?  
Biologists and economists [5] have shown  
That we should live respecting the biosphere.  
She embraces us all,  
Imposes its laws and reacts with force  
When they are violated without control.  
As Georgescu-Roegen said [6] and so other men of good sense,  
For a simple matter of physics, or rather of thermodynamics,  
There won't be infinite growth in a finite world!  
Likewise, you cannot get as big as you want,  
Absorbing so much medicine would only get you denaturalised.  
Nor would it be an advantage for you, think about it:  
How could your wings support you?  
And how would you choose what flowers to visit?  
Nature is perfectly made, it is not worth fighting it,  
Grow just to grow, does not make sense,  
Nor, as announced by Furtado, development brings." [7]



#### Act Two : The hummingbird and the grasshopper

" - Hello Mrs Grasshopper,  
They told me that in abundance and luxury you lived singing,  
And I wanted to picture myself with the same feeling,  
But I find you working, was I misinformed?  
- Well my friend, for living that way I now suffer the punishment.  
Of many goods I filled my house, but they didn't last long;  
ir obsolescence was planned, and cost me so much, it was wrong.  
To be able to survive the wave, I decided to imitate my cousin ant,  
But quickly I was taken by the system,  
And like the bees of the fable, by the work I got crushed [8]:  
I felt disgusted and worn out by the overload of work!  
Mészáros and his peers are right, these patterns need to be revised [9, 10],  
Both consumption and production!  
We can enjoy life in friendliness, joy and soberness,  
Sharing our goods with others and consuming moderately,  
But never giving up our autonomy! [11, 12]  
Our relationship with work should also be reviewed:  
We should not neglect our leisure time. [6, 13]  
- But developed countries enjoyed without worrying...  
Couldn't we consume without restriction now?  
- That is what it seems, my dear, "the Western culture only remains  
By the desire of the rest of the world to have access to it " [14]  
It is the fruit of our imagination, we have to decolonise it! [15]  
And as with the territory, our culture we must recover,  
And the virtuous circle begins to deploy:  
Rethinking, reducing, and especially resisting [12 ]  
To choose our own model of development,  
And according to local characteristics and capabilities,  
Choose the most suitable energy system. "



#### Act Three: The hummingbird and the snail

" - Snail Master, how are you? I was sent to consult you,  
But wanted to be advised about speed...  
The wrong door I must have hit, I apologize for the inconvenience.  
- No son, you are in the right place, from the race with the hare I came out victorious.  
I will also teach you that *chi va piano va sano va e va lontano*.  
Look at me: my shell is the right size:  
It protects me without getting in my way.  
Now, you, my friend: why do you beat your wings so fast?  
You spend a lot of energy; it will cost you to replace it!  
Allow me to give you some tips, which in the future you will value:  
Georgescu-Roegen spoke of a "minimal bioeconomic programme" some time ago,  
It called to use solar energy directly, and avoid all waste ,  
Also promoted organic agriculture, and manufacturing durable and serviceable goods. [16]  
The ecologist Odum, in the same line, created a method of energy evaluation . [17]  
And Illich analysed thoroughly the limit of the most convenient use of energy,  
Told us to avoid "radical monopolies" like cars, [18]  
Which counterproductively subject a lot,  
Testimony of a modernity that brought technical progress,  
But did not know how to prevent some perverse effects. [19]  
Why would you produce even more powerful engines,  
If they reach excessive speeds and cause accidents?  
Break free from the diktat of efficiency, and opt for frugal abundance, [20]  
Without risking a general blackout, which could lead to a global conflict. " [21]



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