

# **AN UNBEARABLE STRAIN**

**Hidden distress: the right to  
pleasure,  
traditional expectations, and  
suppressed needs**

**As women leave, mountains die**

Michela Zucca



Centro di Ecologia Alpina

# **WOMEN ARE THE CUSTODIANS OF MEMORY**

**But the women of the mountains  
are denied the right to pleasure**

Michela Zucca



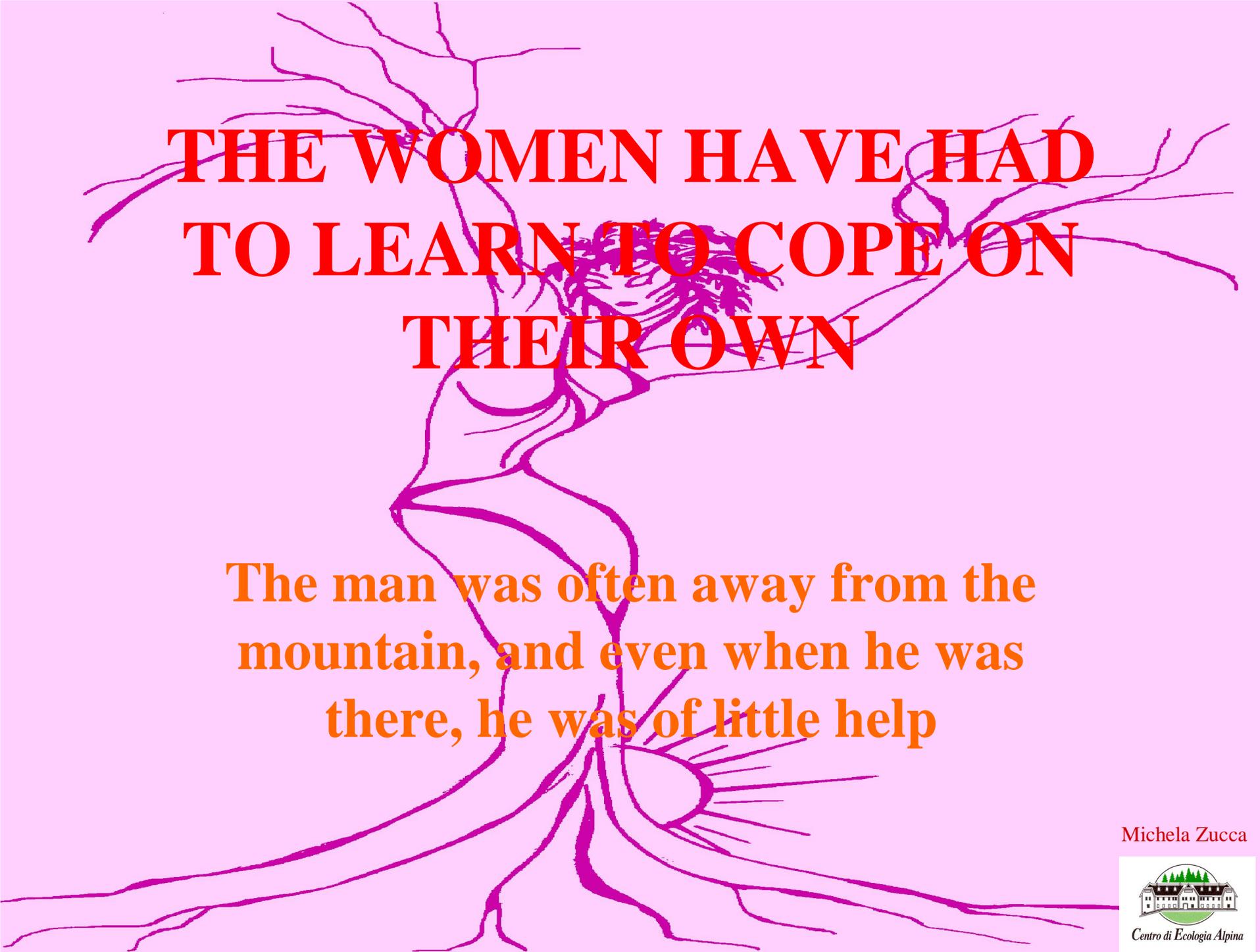
*Centro di Ecologia Alpina*

# **WOMEN ARE ESSENTIAL FOR EXISTENCE OF ALPINE SOCIETIES**

**Decision to raise a family, to have  
children and to settle depends on  
them**

Michela Zucca





**THE WOMEN HAVE HAD  
TO LEARN TO COPE ON  
THEIR OWN**

**The man was often away from the  
mountain, and even when he was  
there, he was of little help**

Michela Zucca



**IT'S THE WOMAN WHO  
RUNS THE HOUSEHOLD,  
LOOKS AFTER THE  
FAMILY, THE STABLE, THE  
VEGETABLE GARDEN**

**It's the woman who in silence  
manages the bodies of both the  
living and the dead**

Michela Zucca



Centro di Ecologia Alpina

**IF WOMEN WANT TO  
LEAVE IN A MODERN WAY,  
THEY HAVE TO LEAVE**

**The Alps have been (and still are)  
home to some of the most fiercely  
male chauvinist cultures: it is for  
this reason that the women  
departed**

Michela Zucca



Centro di Ecologia Alpina

# **WHEN WOMEN LEAVE, MOUNTAINS DIE**

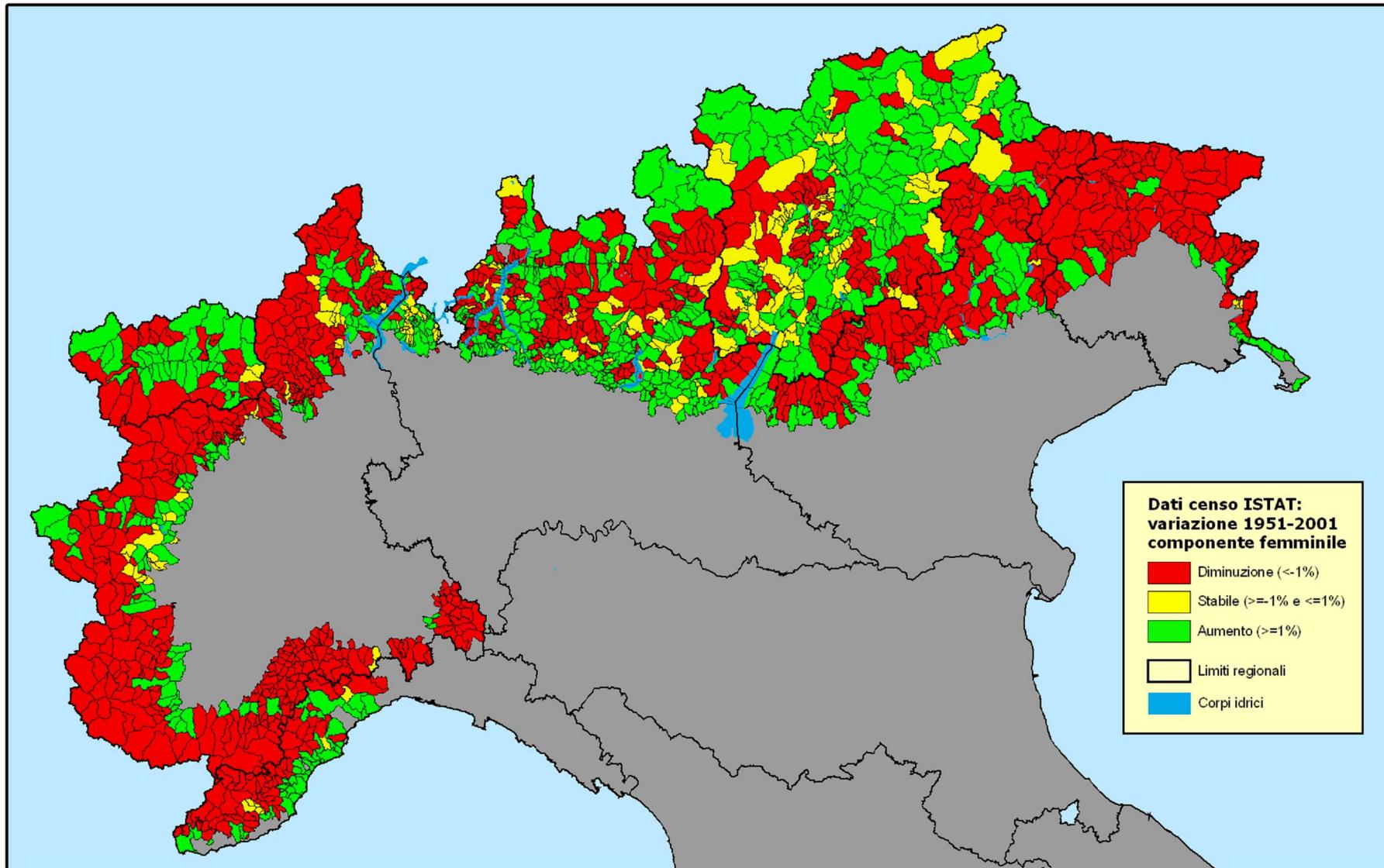
**And the side valleys and distant settlements become increasingly depopulated: it is important to be able to understand women's needs and to be able to satisfy them**

Michela Zucca

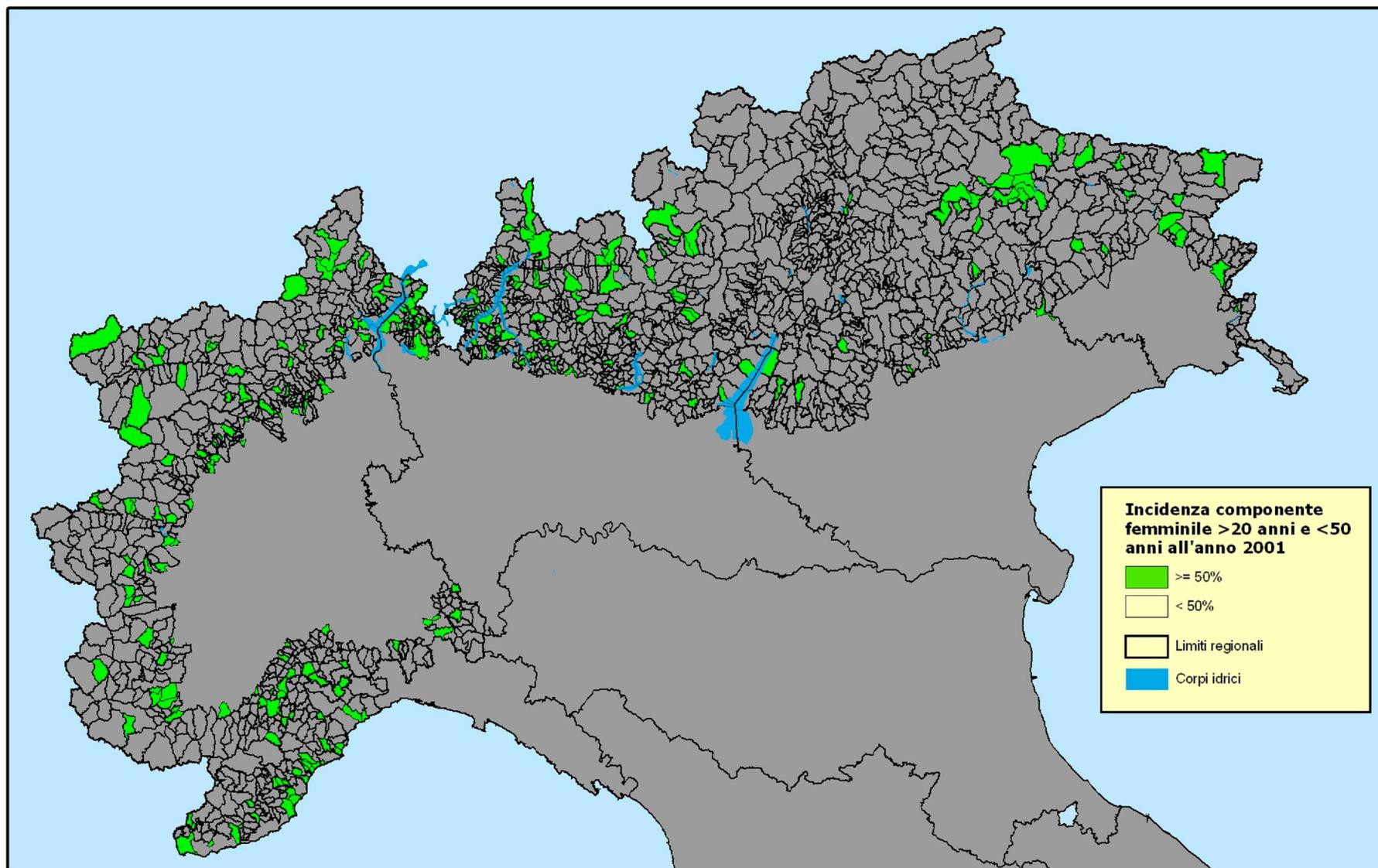


Centro di Ecologia Alpina

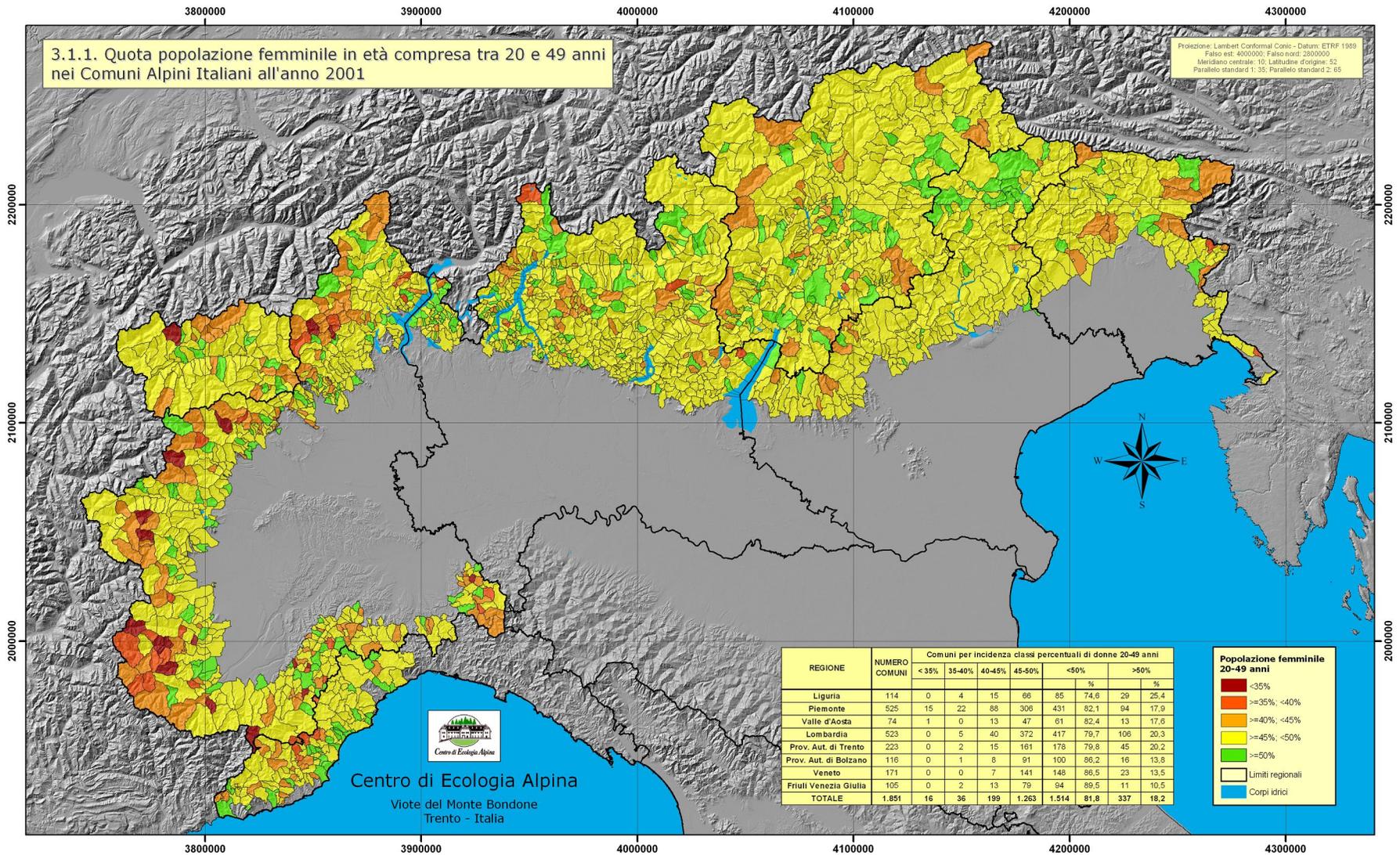
## Demographical trends of feminine population 1951-2001



# Municipalities where women outnumber or equal men - 2001



# Municipalities and presence of women - 2001



# **IN RURAL AREAS WOMEN ARE STILL EXPECTED TO FULFILL THEIR TRADITIONAL ROLE**

**When married, they often live in  
their husband house, they must  
work outside home, look after  
children and old people, and they  
lose any right to have free time or  
money for themselves**

Michela Zucca



Centro di Ecologia Alpina

# **WHEN PRESSURE REACHES THE POINT OF NO RETURN**

**Suffocating social climate, fear of  
criticism and gossip, total  
neglect of depression by  
husbands and families may  
provoke major distress, abuse of  
psychotropic drugs, suicide or baby  
killing**

Michela Zucca



Centro di Ecologia Alpina

# **BUT NOW THINGS ARE BEGINNING TO CHANGE**

**Where the women stay, the  
mountain can rise up from its  
remoteness**

Michela Zucca



*Centro di Ecologia Alpina*

# **“BIG BUSINESS” STILL REMAINS IN MALE HANDS**

**But women are increasingly  
distinguishing themselves through  
innovative activities**

Michela Zucca



*Centro di Ecologia Alpina*

# WOMEN ARE MORE ADAPTABLE

## ASPIRATIONS

- **Permanent employment**
- **Regularly monthly income**
- **Job security**
- **Well established and fixed roles**
- **Task suited to the training received**
- **No need for training and education outside of work**
- **Regular working hours**
- **Separation of leave and work**
- **Free time**
- **Relaxation time**
- **No risk**

## MARKET DEMANDS

- **Flexible hours**
- **Constant updating**
- **Acceptance of new challenges**
- **Constantly changing roles**
- **Precariousness and adaptability**
- **Capacity to communicate**
- **Resistance to weariness**
- **Capacity for risk**
- **Self-entrepreneurship**
- **Creativity**
- **Fantasy**

Michela Zucca



Centro di Ecologia Alpina

# WOMEN HAVE MANAGED TO USE CLAN'S TRADITIONAL MUTUAL ASSISTANCE RULES TO THEIR ADVANTAGE

Chains of solidarity are active among mothers and daughters: the example of Italian and Swiss mother workers

*Matrilocal self-sufficiency*

Michela Zucca



# **WOMEN ARE WILLING TO BE TRAINED**

**On the whole, training and  
education programmes are more  
frequently attended by women**

Michela Zucca



*Centro di Ecologia Alpina*

# **WOMEN ARE AT THE CUTTING EDGE OF INNOVATIVE ACTIVITIES**

**The identity-type economy**

**Quality products**

**Sustainable tourism**

**Communication**

Michela Zucca



*Centro di Ecologia Alpina*

# PEASANT WOMEN IN ITALY : ENTREPRENEURSHIP ON THE INCREASE

- **1931: 19%** of farming labour
- **1951: 24%**
- **1971: 29%**
- **1991: 36%**
- **And these figures are still rising...!!!**

Michela Zucca



Centro di Ecologia Alpina

# PEASANT WOMEN: ENTREPRENEURSHIP ON THE INCREASE

## FARMING BUSINESSES RUN BY WOMEN IN ITALY

- 1970: 18.9%
- 1990: 25.9%

*And the increase is focused on those  
holdings of between 10 and 20 hectares*

Michela Zucca



Centro di Ecologia Alpina

# **BUT RURAL WOMEN ARE CONTINUING TO LEAVE**

- **NUMBER OF PEASANT WOMEN IN ITALY**
- 1951: 2.033.000
- 1991: 589.000
  
- **TOTAL NUMBER OF AGRO BUSINESS IN ITALY**
- 1951: 3.607.000
- 1991: 3.023.000
  
- **NUMBER OF WOMEN AGRO BUSINESS IN ITALY**
- 1951: 680.000
- 1991: 780.000

Michela Zucca



# **WOMEN ARE IN NEED OF MONEY**

- **Banks very rarely give credit to a woman**
- **Any support for female entrepreneurship only finances large projects**

Michela Zucca



Centro di Ecologia Alpina

# **WOMEN WANT TO WORK ON THE NETWORK**

**The network of the Alpine  
women at the Centro di  
Ecologia Alpina**

Michela Zucca



# THE NETWORK OF THE WOMEN OF THE CEA

## THE AIMS OF THE NETWORK

- To promote the culture of the women of the mountains
- To put the women who are working on the Alps in touch with each other
- To allow for the exchange of jobs and professionalisms
- To supply information about the availability of funding
- To educate and train for self-entrepreneurship

Michela Zucca



# THE NETWORK OF THE WOMEN OF THE CEA

## ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN

- SIX international meetings
- Five publications; pink page on the newsletter
- Resolution of the women of the mountains
- Establishment of a specialised mailing list
- Training courses for women
- Education and training courses for teachers
- International contacts

Michela Zucca



