



APPLYING DECOLONIAL PERSPECTIVES TO CLIMATE ETHICS

An inquiry into the use of management approaches
in climate ethics

ABSTRACT

In this inquiry two parts of the climate ethical debate have been analyzed. These are the views of climate ethicists who see merit in management approaches and ethicists that do not. It is argued that these two opposing views can be reconciled to outline one project of ethically just mitigation. Furthermore, decolonial thinking is used to address epistemic problems that arise when employing management approaches. Drawing upon these problems, decolonial thinking has been used to set prerequisites for social justice that contribute to the construction of a successful mitigation project. In this work I have argued for regarding managerial climate ethics and non-managerial climate ethics to be different temporal goals of the same project. Decolonial thinking is used to show the necessity of attributing managerial climate ethics only a short-term role in this project, whilst non-managerial constitute the long-term aim.

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Introduction

Why do we study ethics? Before answering this question, simply to be on the same page, one should ask him- or herself this: What is ethics? Ethics, or moral philosophy, is the branch of philosophy that concerns itself with how humans ought to live. The word ethics comes from the Greek word ἠθικός, which means habit or custom. Similarly, the word moral comes from the Latin word mores, which also means customs. Aristotle said that anyone who wants to properly study and subsequently make recommendations about what is right and wrong to do (what he calls politics), first has to know and understand his own habits in the same terms before he/she can make qualitative judgments (Aristotle, p. 6). An ethicist, then, is a philosopher that reflects on the way humans (including himself) live, attempts to find what would be the best way to live and, according to that constitute, make recommendations regarding, right and wrong conduct.

Why do we study ethics? When I walked into my first ethics class at University College Roosevelt in Middelburg, this was the first question Professor David Wyatt Aiken asked the class. The role of an ethicist, he said, is to help humanity (read here as humankind) preserve its humanity (what it means to be human). This can be understood through a notion of teleology (a form of thought that explains something in function of its purpose): Because humans share a number of traits that together classify the subject as being human, humans should act in accordance to what they are, namely as humans. Simply put: humans are designed to act as humans, just as dogs are designed to act as dogs and cats as cats. Preserving humanity's humanity, then, means to remind people that they are humans and help them act accordingly. Similarly, it is important to have ethicists to help people understand what this means and what constitutes right and wrong conduct, because this is the field of expertise of an ethicist. Just as an ethicist should not make recommendations about how to design bridges, an engineer should not make recommendations about what constitutes right and wrong human behavior. Aristotle said that excellence is achieved through training and habituation and therefore, since ethicists dedicate themselves to training themselves in ethics, they would have achieved (the most) excellence and so the leading authority on this matter.

In recent years the question whether humans are playing an important role in the changing of the climate globally has been confirmed by an emerging and growing consensus (Jamieson, p. 77-78) and therefore I will treat this role as a given throughout this work. Anthropogenic climate change (climate change induced by human behavior and activity) has

given rise to many investigations into the matter in a wide range of disciplines: science, politics, economics, but also ethics. Climate ethics is the branch of philosophy that concerns itself with the way humans ought to behave with regards to the changing climate and the part that they play in changing it. As Dale Jamieson puts it in his work *Ethics, Public Policy, and Global Warming*, the problem "...is about how we ought to live and how humans should relate to one another and to the rest of nature. These are problems of ethics and politics as well as problems of science" (Jamieson, p. 79). Interestingly he continues to say that philosophers (ethicists) have become more modest and reluctant to recommend courses of action, whilst economists have become bolder to do so. According to him many view economics as providing more important (or even the most important) information than ethics for making policy-decisions (Jamieson, p. 79). The reasons he gives for this will be discussed later in the first chapter, but before elaborating on the argumentation in this paper there are some remarks to be made regarding the debate in the ethical domain.

Ethics is not an exact study. There has yet to be an ethicist that composes a theory objectively and accurately defining right and wrong conduct in an irrefutable manner. This means that often disagreement arises among ethicists and in the domain of climate ethics this is no different. This could lead ethicists to be more modest about their work and reluctant to make absolute statements in the form of recommendations due to the disagreement among peers and therefore the absence of a consensus regarding such recommendations. Conversely, the people ethicists make recommendations for might be reluctant to listen to a group of experts all giving different recommendations with different justifications. The position of ethicists, therefore, could be a lot stronger and influential if they could present a unified message or recommendation.

Relevant terminology

It is important to establish a common ground with regards to the terminology of this inquiry as to provide clarity to the reader. Hence, the concepts that are central to this work will be briefly discussed before moving on. Firstly, there is need to define the concept of management approaches. In this work Dale Jamieson's conception of management approaches will be used as a work definition. According to Dale Jamieson, management approaches can be understood as the following:

"From the perspective of conventional policy studies, the possibility of anthropogenic climate change and its attendant consequences are problems to be "managed."

Management techniques mainly are drawn from neoclassical economic theory and are directed toward manipulating behavior by controlling economic incentives through taxes, regulations, and subsidies.”

(Jamieson, p. 79)

Secondly, there is need to establish a work definition of value-based approaches. From the perspective of a value-based approach, combatting anthropogenic climate change should be regarded foremost as a moral problem. The value-based approaches presented in this work should thus be understood as approaches that do not regard anthropogenic climate change as a management problem (such as management approaches), but rather attribute the problem to a value-system that is inadequate.

Thirdly, two notions of responsibility will be presented in this inquiry. The Oxford Dictionaries provide three definitions of responsibility:

- 1) “The state or fact of having a duty to deal with something or of having control over someone”
- 2) “The state or fact of being accountable or to blame for something”
- 3) “The opportunity or ability to act independently and take decisions without authorization”

(Oxford Dictionaries)

The first notion of responsibility (which I will also call linear responsibility) matches the second definition provided by the Oxford Dictionaries. This is the conception of responsibility that matches management approaches and which can be understood as a reaction; a proportionate compensation for a done harm. The second notion of responsibility, as is used by value-based approaches, can best be understood as a combination of the first and third definition provided above. It is a notion of responsibility that should be understood as a duty, but that duty also resides in the opportunity or ability to act independently and does not require authorization.

Lastly, the concept of fairness requires some attention. Even though later in this work fairness in relation to climate ethics is defined as a just distribution of the burden and benefits of combatting anthropogenic climate change among countries, this still leaves the concept somewhat open to interpretation. The ambiguity resides largely in what is just about the

distribution; what makes such a distribution a fair one. Drawing once more upon the Oxford Dictionaries, the concept of fairness in this work should be understood in accordance to the definition they provide: “Impartial and just treatment or behaviour without favouritism or discrimination” (Oxford Dictionaries).

Aside from these main concepts, there might be concepts introduced in this work that are challenging for the reader to comprehend or to interpret in the way they are intended. Therefore, in the appendix there is a glossary in which work definitions are attributed to the concepts that might be troubling.

Main argument

The disagreement in the climate ethical debate this paper is concerned with is whether management approaches make for an adequate framework to deal with ethical problems emerging from anthropogenic climate change, or whether the framework provided by value-based approaches is more appropriate.

It is an interesting and important endeavor to examine the reasoning of ethicists who adhere to management approaches versus those that adhere to value-based approaches, because their distinct views construct different ethical considerations and recommendations that at face value seem irreconcilable. However, as mentioned before, an increase in agreement among ethicists could yield more influence in the way anthropogenic climate change is being addressed by increasing the perceived reliability of ethical theory.

This paper is dedicated to exactly this: reconciling these two parts of the debate surrounding climate ethics and separate the role of ethicists from political economy in the enterprise of combatting anthropogenic climate change. In doing so, decolonial thinking will be used to critically analyze epistemic dimensions of the climate ethical debate and the way this relates to the unification of the debate. What exactly decolonial thinking is will be elaborated on later, but a brief explanation of the concept is here in order: Decolonial thinking is a school of thought that emerged in indigenous communities in Latin America (Mignolo, p. 55). In a nutshell, it is a mode of thinking that poses Western modernity as the source of marginalization of many indigenous peoples and seeks to eradicate the mechanisms that marginalize these peoples (Mignolo, p. 52-53). Other than anti-Western modes of thinking, decoloniality is not a project that has as its goal to end Western modernity, rather to create a pluriversal world in which different cultures and modes of thinking can coexist on an equal basis (Mignolo, p. 34-35, 52). The contribution decolonial thinking makes to this inquiry into

climate ethics is that it voices the indigenous peoples that are often pushed to the sideline. This is highly relevant, since policy-decisions and ethical recommendations regarding climate change mostly come from Western countries. Climate change, however, is a problem that affects everyone on this planet and therefore in this work I will argue that it is only just to at least take into consideration what people outside the Western paradigm think regarding the matter. The research question that is central to this inquiry can be formulated as the following: Can decolonial thinking be a useful addition to the discussion between the employment of management approaches and value-based approaches in climate ethics? The hypothesis that underlines this work: Decolonial thinking can aid in determining a suitable framework for the climate ethical debate.

A brief outline

Before going into the analysis, I will structure the outline of this paper in order to provide some clarity as to what is going to be discussed. Although it might seem deviant to the main aim of this inquiry, decolonial thinking will not be the focus of the first chapter of this work. Rather the first chapter will be dedicated solely to the climate ethical debate. The reason for doing so is the following: in order to evaluate whether decolonial thinking can be a useful addition to the debate between managerial ethicists and value-based ethicists, first the context in which it could be useful should be clear. Therefore, it is imperative to first analyze the debate and its attendant problems as it is before any such evaluation can properly take place. As mentioned, I will not attempt to represent or depict the entire debate, but rather the analysis will be focused on two parts of the debate: climate ethicists who adhere to management approaches and who adhere to value-based approaches. As representative of the former I will draw upon the arguments of Peter Singer, because in his argumentation he considers the application of multiple fairness principles in management approaches. As representatives for the latter I will draw upon Dale Jamieson and Jonathan Aldred, because their value-based approaches and rejection of management approaches are complementary and together construct an alternative way to think about responsibility when it comes to the burden of combatting anthropogenic climate change. Important to note is that the arguments and ideas that will be put forward are not the only ones that fit the above mentioned focus of the analysis, but they have been selected for their potential of constructing a workable ethical model that can reconcile the opposing views. Furthermore, in the beginning of the first chapter Mark Timmons' work *Moral theory* will be used to elaborate on the field of ethics. This will be of importance for the reflection at the end of the chapter, in which the above

mentioned ethicists will be classified as answering the questions of what to do (Singer) and who to be (Jamieson and Aldred).

In the second chapter decolonialism will be explained. This explanation will also not be intended as an all-encompassing representation of decolonialism, but will only focus on what is relevant for this work. The argument that will be presented is that management approaches interfere with social justice and that cognitive justice is a prerequisite for social justice. As mentioned, decolonial thinking voices indigenous communities, but apart from that, at face value it seems like quite a leap to look for answers in decolonialism to problems originating in the domain of climate ethics. The turn to decolonial thinking is, however, not an arbitrary one. Next to the radical social and political ideologies that decolonial thinking fosters, decolonialism is also greatly concerned with nature and the relation between humans and nature. As will become clear in the second and third chapter of this inquiry, decolonial thinking complements the reasoning of the value-based approaches that will be presented in the first chapter.

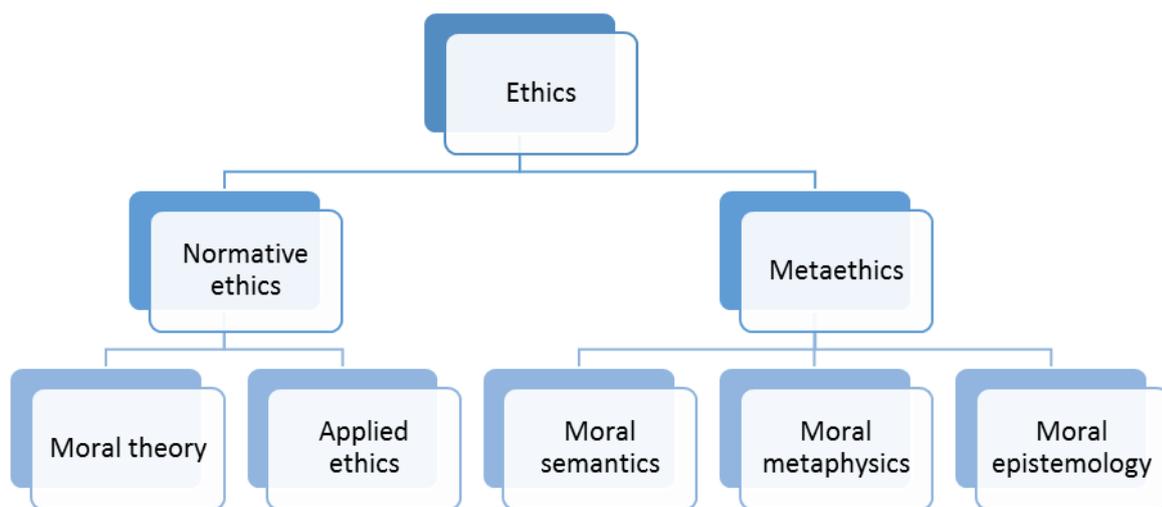
The third chapter will consist of a discussion section and a conclusion. In this discussion I will reflect on the interaction between the first and the second chapter (between climate ethics and decolonialism) and on the contribution decolonialism could be to the climate ethical debate. Apart from that the limitations of this inquiry will be assessed and recommendations will be made for future research.

Chapter 1: Contextualizing the debate

Selection of authors and preliminary remarks

The first author that will be presented in this chapter will not be a climate ethicist. In his work *Moral theory* Mark Timmons elaborates on various well-known moral theories, but in the introduction of this book he also gives a brief yet clear overview of the field of ethics. This is captured in the following figure:

Figure1: Overview of the field of ethics



(Timmons, p. 19)

The above illustrated hierarchical model divides ethics into two main branches: normative ethics and metaethics. Metaethics, as Timmons explains it, “attempts to answer non-moral questions about morality” (Timmons, p. 19); it seeks answers to questions regarding the existence (moral metaphysics), meaning (moral semantics) and justification (moral epistemology) of moral statements. Normative ethics, on the other hand, does attempt to answer moral questions and can be divided into moral theory and applied ethics. As the name suggests, moral theory concerns itself with theory; it seeks to answer “general moral questions about what to do and who to be” (Timmons, p. 19). Applied ethics concerns itself with practice; it seeks to answer specific moral questions regarding a predetermined context. Classical examples of such issues are abortion, death penalty, but also environment is

highlighted by Timmons (Timmons, p. 19). Environment, in terms of anthropogenic climate change, is indeed a widely discussed topic in the field of applied ethics.

Let's take a small step back for now and return to the field of ethics as a whole. The model that so neatly depicts the different branches of ethics above is slightly misleading. As Timmons argues:

“...no such neat and tidy division really exists. A moral theory not only attempts to discover true or correct moral principles but is also concerned to justify or prove such principles. Thus questions about the proper way to justify or prove moral principles in particular, and moral claims in general, are necessarily involved in giving a normative moral theory. That is, epistemological questions about justification (as well as the sorts of semantic and metaphysical metaethical questions that naturally arise in connection with epistemological questions) are just beneath the surface when engaging in moral theory.”

(Timmons, p. 18)

This paper, since it is an inquiry into climate ethics (which is an ethical debate that is predominantly located in the domain of applied ethics), will be largely focused on normative ethics. However, in light of what Timmons says here, two things need to be explained: firstly, due to the inseparable nature of the different ethical domains, also in this inquiry attention has to be given to metaethical as well as normative considerations. In fact, epistemological issues, emerging from decolonial thinking, will construct a significant part of this paper's argumentation. Secondly, it is necessary to have some prior understanding of moral principles, not merely in order to fully understand Timmons' argumentation above, but more so to understand the relation between theory and practice in normative ethics and the theories that will be put forward in this chapter. Timmons defines moral principles as the following: “In the field of ethics, moral principles are to be understood as very general moral statements that purport to set forth conditions under which an action is right or wrong or something is good or bad” (Timmons, p. 4). Moral principles are derived from moral theory as a means for ethicists to bridge the gap between theory and practice, hence applied ethicists often use these principles in their argumentation. According to Timmons, moral principles have both a practical and a theoretical aim. The practical aim is to provide a decision procedure for correct moral reasoning in any context. The theoretical aim is to explain what makes an action right

or wrong or what makes something good or bad, which ethicists attempt to express in the principle when constructed (Timmons, p. 5).

Analysis of argumentation

Peter Singer: a proposal of fairness

Ethics and economics

In his work *One atmosphere*, Peter Singer argues that it is a pressing matter to reconsider our ethics with regards to the way our value-system relates to the changing circumstances of climate. Whereas previously natural resources as the atmosphere's capacity to absorb greenhouse gasses were regarded as unlimited, it has become clear that this is not the case. This means that previously defined notions of responsibility with regards to harm done due to the emissions of greenhouse gasses (floods, tropical disease, droughts) need to be reconsidered, because one cannot simply point out who is responsible for said harm. The question he thus poses is how we can adjust our ethics to account for these changes (Singer, p. 183-184).

International climate negotiations have yielded the Kyoto Protocol in 1997 which went into effect in 2002. This treaty held that all 178 countries that signed the agreement would lower their emissions to at least 5 percent below 1990 levels. For countries that had significantly higher emission levels than other this could go up to 8 or 9 percent. These numbers, however, were not based on any principles of fairness or anything else than the need to reach an agreement (Singer, p. 185).

As mentioned in the introduction, according to Jamieson, economists have become bolder in claiming in what manner humankind should deal with combatting anthropogenic climate change. It seems, however, that when it comes to combatting anthropogenic climate change policy-decision makers are predominantly concerned with economic interests. As Jamieson argues:

“...in my view, the most important force driving the backlash is not concerns about the weakness of the science but the realization that slowing global warming or responding to its effects may involve large economic costs and redistributions, as well as radical revisions in lifestyle. Various interest groups argue that they are already doing enough in response to global warming, while some economists have begun to express doubt about whether it is worth trying to prevent substantial warming.”

(Jamieson, p. 78)

This view seems to be confirmed by the years of negotiation and effort it cost to come to an agreement such as the Kyoto Protocol, and subsequently by the reluctance of countries (such as the United States, which is one of the greatest polluters in terms of emissions) to comply to the agreement and even withdraw from it (Singer, p. 185). Furthermore, Singer argues that the Kyoto agreement will not solve the problems of anthropogenic climate change, merely slow its consequences, and that for that reason skepticism arises (mainly from economists) regarding whether, as Jamieson also says, it is worth trying to prevent anthropogenic climate change (Singer, p. 185).

Economist Bjørn Lomborg claims that “economic analyses clearly show that it will be far more expensive to cut carbon-dioxide emissions radically than to pay the costs of adaptation to the increased temperatures” (Lomborg, 2001). This analysis is based on future discounting and in a nutshell it says that the present cost of mitigation (attempting to prevent anthropogenic climate change through e.g. cutting emissions) exceeds the cost of adaptation (adjustment to the actual or expected consequences of anthropogenic climate change) in the future. However, as Singer argues, this analysis assumes that the numbers Lomborg uses in his analysis are all correct, which is highly unlikely. The cost of adaptation would involve deaths of natural disasters, not merely monetary costs. Therefore economic justification does not suffice, but ethical justification would be required, which is not provided (Singer, p. 186). Singer goes on to say that the Kyoto is indeed not a solution to the problem of anthropogenic climate change, but that it should be perceived as the first step in this endeavor. Since there is no ethical justification for not acting in the present, it is clear that from an ethical point of view this is necessary. The main ethical issue, as Singer views it, would be what the next step would be and, unlike the Kyoto Protocol, how to deal with the previous mentioned issue of responsibility in terms of fairness or equity (Singer, p. 186).

The proposal

Before going into an analysis of different principles of fairness as presented by Singer, it is important to first have a workable definition of fairness. Fairness, as it is used by climate ethicists such as Singer and Caney, refers to a just distribution of the burden and benefits of combatting anthropogenic climate change among countries (Caney, p. 123). This burden should be understood as the cost of mitigation. Singer expresses the problem of distribution as the following:

“Think of the atmosphere as a giant global sink into which we can pour our waste gases. Then once we have used up the capacity of the atmosphere to absorb our gases without harmful consequences, it becomes impossible to justify our usage of this asset by the claim that we are leaving “enough and as good” for others. The atmosphere's capacity to absorb our gases has become a finite resource on which various parties have competing claims. The problem is to allocate those claims justly.”

(Singer, p. 188)

Different ideas arise regarding what makes such a distribution a just one, which yield different principles of fairness. Singer adopts Robert Nozick's distinction between two types of principles: historical principles and time-slice principles. Historical principles are principles that argue that a just distribution cannot be constructed by merely looking at the present. Since the situation we are in now has come about through events in the past, a just distribution must also account for these events. Time-slice principles, on the other hand, consider only the present. They assume that parties that are at a disadvantage due to such past events overlook these events so that all parties can start with a blank slate (Singer, p. 187-190).

Singer analyzes three principles of fairness:

- The Polluter Pays Principle (PPP): The PPP is a historical principle that employs a fairly simple reasoning. It holds that the polluting parties should bear the cost of mitigation proportionate to their pollution. Therefore, those that have polluted more should cover more of the cost, whereas those that polluted less should cover less.
- Aiding the worst-off principle: This is also a time-slice principle that holds that, regardless of the past, the wealthy should help the poor.
- The egalitarian principle: This is a time-slice principle that holds that every country is entitled to the same amount of emissions per capita.

What makes the PPP appealing, according to Singer, is that it accounts for unjustified appropriation of resource. In his view, the atmosphere is a finite resource that belongs to all human beings. The emissions of the developed countries have exceeded by far those of developing countries for two hundred years up to the point that the atmosphere's maximum capacity has been reached. Also, the wealth of developed countries is inseparably tied to their higher emissions, which means that they have become richer by taking more than they were entitled to. This means that, now it has become clear that the atmosphere's capacity has been

reached, developing countries do not have the same opportunity to develop as the developed countries have. For these two reasons compensation for the wronged party (the developing countries) is in order and then it would only be fair to say that the developed countries have the responsibility to carry the burden of mitigation in terms of such compensation (Singer, p. 188-190). This does not mean, however, that developing countries have to contribute nothing to mitigation, but at least far less than the developed countries.

Conversely, Singer points out that the PPP has two main drawbacks. Firstly, although responsibility can be assigned through the above mentioned duality (developed countries – developing countries), allocating this responsibility among developed countries is problematic. Singer explains that there is data of emissions in the past and that with such data calculations can be done that indicate what country should account for how much pollution. He acknowledges, however, that this data is not very reliable, because there are other variables that need to be taken into account (forestation, the time of measuring) (Singer, p. 189). On top of that, the amount of greenhouse-gasses emitted per country cannot be accurately determined over the entire relevant course of history, which as according to Singer, is about two hundred years (Singer, p. 189). Secondly, Singer argues that the PPP puts too much strain on developed countries (Singer, p. 194-195). He does not offer any direct justification regarding this point, but in light of the amount of effort it cost to ratify the Kyoto Protocol, it would make sense that such strain brings about reluctance among developed countries to even engage in mitigation at all.

The principle of aiding the worst off is quite similar to the PPP in that the burden of mitigation falls heavily on the developed countries. In fact, according to this principle, the entire burden would fall on developed countries. Again, he does not offer direct justification (Singer, p. 193). Aside from the rationale mentioned above, however, this can be explained through the underlying assumption that economic development is essential for addressing climate change as has been established by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change in 1992 (Singer, p. 184). Therefore, if the developed countries sacrifice a large part of their economic development by cutting their emissions drastically, they will not be able to aid developing countries or account for their contribution to climate change.

In relation to the previous mentioned principles, Singer argues that the egalitarian principle would be the most suitable, because while it does not put as much strain on the developed countries on the other ones, it does force them to lower their emissions whilst it is

quite lenient for developing countries (Singer, p. 194). Emissions levels could be fixed to population levels in 1990 or for example to expected population levels in the future as to not encourage population growth. The quota would be fixed in such a manner that developing countries need to cut down their emissions whilst developing countries still have some room to increase their emission levels. This would make up for the missed development opportunity of the developed countries as mentioned above. Singer also proposes emissions trading (which is already in effect under the Kyoto Protocol) as a mechanism to make it easier for countries to reach their targets. This way countries that have trouble cutting down their emissions to reach the desired target can buy emission rights from countries that emit less than they are allowed to, so that the reaching of the target is not a political impossibility nor leads to the annihilation of the national economy (Singer, p. 196). Furthermore, since developing countries often emit less than developed countries, they can sell their emission rights and use the revenue to benefit their country. Singer realizes, however, that many developing countries have a corrupt government and therefore he proposes an international authority that answers to the United Nations to allocate such revenue correctly if the domestic government of such a country fails to do so (Singer, p. 197).

Reflection on Singer

As has been discussed so far in this chapter, Singer views an egalitarian principle of fairness to have most merit. There are, however, a couple particularities that need to be brought to attention. The solution Singer proposes is a time-slice solution, so it ignores the past. This means that no responsibility is taken for wrongs done in the past. A justification for doing so could be the ignorance regarding the consequences: while heavily emitting in the past we were unaware of the consequences. Singer himself, however, acknowledges that this is a weak justification (Singer, p. 190). By taking a time-slice principle, then, he conveniently avoids the question of responsibility. Responsibility, however, is important to account for in a principle of fairness, because the amount of polluting that has been done is not evenly distributed among the affected parties (which in this case is humankind entirely). Therefore, fairness cannot be a simple even distribution and is then subject to this notion of responsibility. Taking this into consideration, the actual fairness of his fairness principle becomes questionable. What exactly is the fairness in setting an equal emission limit per capita? Can justice be attained if past injustices are simply disregarded? The consequences of instating such an egalitarian principle could lead to a fair or just distribution, but the instatement itself seems to be more justified by its applicability than justice or fairness. Singer

wants to avoid putting too big a burden on the developed countries while he acknowledges that they are creators of the current climate problem. The conclusion can therefore be drawn that in electing his principle of fairness, Singer is more concerned with applicability than fairness. Singer argues that the aim of his egalitarian principle with emissions trading is not to punish countries with high emission levels, but to produce the best outcome for the atmosphere (Singer, p. 196). However, as mentioned above, the preservation of the atmosphere seems to be subject to the preservation of the economy and the political system. In the second chapter I will come back to this point when discussing sustainable development as perceived by Arturo Escobar.

Dale Jamieson and Jonathan Aldred: Responsibility, value-systems and the failure of management approaches

Why management approaches are unsuitable

As has been explained in the introduction, management approaches view climate change as a problem to be managed with economic tools. Jamieson argues that such approaches are unsuitable to deal with anthropogenic climate change, because “the tools of economic evaluation are not up to the task” (Jamieson, p. 82). His argumentation consists of three arguments.

Firstly, Jamieson argues that many people wrongly believe that economic theory is “the only social theory that accurately represents human behavior” (Jamieson, p. 80). This is because economic theory assumes that self-interest is the only motivator that drives human behavior, but this is often not the case. Jamieson argues that the empirical claim that people always act out of self-interest appears to be false. People often make selfless sacrifices for family, friends, moral reasons or a certain collective good. Therefore it is not rational to make decisions solely based on economic considerations. As Jamieson says: “This amounts to a general critique of viewing all social issues as management problems to be solved by the application of received economic techniques (Jamieson, p. 80).

Secondly, as a critique specific to climate change, Jamieson argues that “there is no way to assess accurately all the possible impacts and to assign economic values to alternative courses of action” (Jamieson, p. 80). This is similar to Singer’s critique regarding Lomborg’s economic analysis. Evaluating the impacts of alternative courses of action involves the evaluation of more than mere monetary costs. Impacts such as loss of life and the irreversible

changing of the planet's climate cannot be accurately evaluated in mere economic terms, because these are issues of morality rather than economics. As Jamieson says:

“the most fundamental reason for why management approaches are doomed to failure is that the questions they can answer are not the ones that are most important and profound. The problems posed by anthropogenic global climate change are ethical as well as economic and scientific”...”Economics may be able to tell us how to reach our goals efficiently, but it cannot tell us what our goals should be or even whether we should be concerned to reach them efficiently.”

(Jamieson, p. 82)

A different ethic

Jamieson's answer to the ethical concerns regarding climate change is quite different from the one Singer gives. Whereas Singer's aim is to find an adequate principle of fairness to allocate the burden of mitigation justly, Jamieson points out that the problem of responsibility, such as the one Singer runs into, can be attributed to the employment of a value-system inadequate for dealing with anthropogenic climate change. In order to make sense of his argument, let's consider first what exactly he means by value-system.

“A system of values, in the sense in which I will use this notion, specifies permissions, norms, duties, and obligations; it assigns blame, praise, and responsibility; and it provides an account of what is valuable and what is not. A system of values provides a standard for assessing our behavior and that of others. Perhaps indirectly it also provides a measure of the acceptability of government action and regulation.”

(Jamieson, p. 82)

Important to understand here, is the distinction between values and preferences. As Jamieson puts it: the difference is that we hold values for rationally discussable reasons, whilst we can hold preferences for no reason at all other than that we like it (Jamieson, p. 82). Values, then, can be understood to be rather objective and rational, whilst preferences are more emotional. This means that a system of values can be deliberated and changed if there is need to.

According to Jamieson a value-system is a cultural construction that governs behavior with the actual values that are being upheld often being inexplicit. Individual differences occur within the parameters of this value-system, but as it is a cultural construction this can be

understood as deviations from the mean (the mean being a culture's thought collective or tradition). The adoption of a value-system by individuals in a certain tradition is generally not a conscious process, but rather comes along with the cultural heritage of the society a person is born into. Therefore they are often presupposed and assumed without argument (Jamieson, p. 82-83). As a result, inconsistencies can arise and deliberation, through which values become explicit, is needed to adjust the system.

As mentioned above, Jamieson claims that the notion of responsibility in the Western value-system (he is an American and talks about our value-system, so it is safe to assume he refers to the Western paradigm) is inadequate for dealing with anthropogenic climate change. "Our current value system presupposes that harms and their causes are individual, that they can readily be identified, and that they are local in space and time" (Jamieson, p. 83). For example, if Tom steals from Jack, then the cause and harm are easily identified. It is then Tom's responsibility to compensate Jack proportionately to the harm done. I will call this linear responsibility.

Responsibility involved in climate problems, however, deviates from this conception on the following three dimensions: "apparently innocent acts can have devastating consequences, causes and harms may be diffuse, and causes and harms may be remote in space and time" (Jamieson, p. 83). What this means is that if there is loss of life due to natural disaster resulting from climate change, then it will be impossible to point out an individual cause. Unlike the example of Tom and Jack given above, it will be impossible to say whose pollution has caused this exact harm. As Jamieson argues: "Instead of a single cause, millions of people will have made tiny, almost imperceptible causal contributions— by driving cars, cutting trees, using electricity, and so on" (Jamieson, p. 83).

Referring back to the first paragraph of this section, Jamieson's third argument is the following: Management approaches are unsuitable for dealing with climate change, because the use of responsibility in such approaches to allocate the burden of mitigation is based on the conception of responsibility as it is in our current value system (like the Tom and Jack example). This is inappropriate, according to Jamieson, due to the above mentioned three dimensions. Therefore, Jamieson suggests to not conceive of climate problems as management problems, but rather as ethical problems. This way, instead of being problems for governments and experts to deal with, they become problems that concern everyone in everyday life (Jamieson, p. 84). This makes sense, because as Jamieson argues, millions of

people in developed countries make tiny causal contributions every day (Aldred, p. 355; Jamieson, p. 83).

In order to do this, however, we need to change our value-system, but what would a change in value-system look like? In the definition regarding value-systems previously provided, responsibility is one of the things specified by a value-system. The change in value-system (and thereby morality) Jamieson suggests, is in effect a change in the conception of responsibility. This should be understood as a notion of responsibility not as a reaction: a proportionate compensation for a done harm (such as Tom owes Jack). Rather it should be understood as a moral duty attributed to each and every individual by virtue of living on this planet.

The Civic Responsibility Argument and contrasting values

In his work *The ethics of emissions trading*, Jonathan Aldred uses Michael Sandel's CRA (Civic Responsibility Argument) as a means for arguing against the ethical permissibility of emissions trading. The CRA holds that it is wrong to pay another to do one's civic duty: everyone should do their own bit (Aldred, p. 350). Civic responsibility should be understood as a moral duty by virtue of being a citizen, such as voting (although this is often obligatory by law as well, there is hardly a compliance mechanism; therefore compliance relies more on morality than law) or jury service in the United States (Aldred, p. 351). This is similar to Jamieson's proposal, because both argue that mitigation is not a problem for governments or experts to solve. Aldred's argumentation, therefore, also resembles Jamieson's. Aldred says that successful mitigation is impossible without substantial behavioral change in developed countries, because (as Singer also argued) these countries are responsible for such a large part of the global pollution (Aldred, p. 355). This does not, however, necessarily mean that in order to reduce emissions, every citizen of these developed countries has to change his behavior in order for mitigation to be successful. Aldred says this is the case for two reasons:

Firstly, management approaches cannot provide fairness. On both a national (between individuals) and on an international (between states) level, they fail to distribute the burden of mitigation fairly or justly. Aside from the fact that not all factors involved in combatting anthropogenic climate change can be expressed in monetary terms, as argued by Jamieson, fairness cannot be achieved even in economic terms due to the relative value of money. Consider again emissions trading as proposed by Singer to make the burden of mitigation

more bearable. Suppose that both a rich and a poor state want to buy emission rights. The burden they then each have to carry should be the same: the price of the emission rights. However, since the rich state has more money than the poor state, the money spent on these rights will be worth relatively less to the rich state than to the poor state. Therefore, the burden is relatively heavier on the poor state than it is on the rich one. As Aldred explains, the price of permits such as emission rights typically trickles down to the consumers who pay their electricity bill, for example (Aldred, p. 354). Therefore, the rationale that applied to states above also applies to rich and poor citizens. If the price of electricity increases due to a corporation's additional expenses buying emission rights, this burden will be relatively heavier on the poor than the rich. Consequently, a just distribution cannot be achieved with economic tools.

Secondly, management approaches do not seem to account for the full dynamic of a capitalist society. Governments and experts cannot determine the general direction or tendency of a society, it is a reciprocal system. The reciprocity should be understood in the following manner: a government or corporation can only spend their money if consumers (citizens) pay them that money. This means that there needs to be public demand for the good a corporation sells. When it comes to a government the same basically applies, but instead of the price citizens pay for a good they pay taxes. A government has to spend this money on something that holds public interest, because a democratic government is a formal representation of the people it governs. Therefore, at least in Western democratic countries, management agents are (at least to a certain extent) subject to the individuals they manage.

Considering these two reasons together, it becomes clear why developed countries need a behavioral change rather than monetary sacrifices and why the need for change addresses everyone. The way this relates to Jamieson, is that he says that our behavior is largely determined by the value-system we employ. By conceiving of climate problems as ethical problems rather than management problems, Jamieson's proposal can be understood as the integration of the burden of mitigation into civic responsibility as proposed by Aldred. In order to do so, however, the citizens need to perceive such a responsibility as sufficiently valuable to act upon in a significant manner (changing their everyday behavior). Therefore, the adjustment in value-system needs to be more than merely a change in the conception of responsibility (as Jamieson argues); what these citizens are responsible for needs to be high in the ranking of values that they hold in their value-system. This means that combatting

anthropogenic climate change should be a primary objective of everyone. The question then becomes why this objective is currently not perceived as being a part of civic responsibility and what would motivate people to adopt such an objective.

Aldred argues that the CRA is problematic, because of a lack of intrinsic motivation regarding mitigation. He says that market tools (as employed by management approaches) give the idea that by holding a certain right (an emission right) one can legitimately pollute the environment. Refraining from polluting is then not motivated by moral reasons, but rather by economic reasons such as how many emission rights one can afford (Aldred, p. 351). Both Aldred and Jamieson argue that refraining from polluting should be motivated by moral reasons. They also argue that the values in our current value-system emphasize self-interest rather than solidarity, which the realization of the CRA difficult. This statement, however, is quite problematic as an empirical claim. Therefore I will address this further in the reflection on Aldred below.

Reflection on Jamieson

There are two objections that can be raised regarding Jamieson's reasoning. Firstly, it is sometimes argued that discussion about values and changing value systems is idealistic. This, however, is supported by the view that value-systems are a product of human nature (Jamieson, p. 84). Jamieson argues that if one studies history or anthropology, it becomes clear that value-systems are historically and culturally constructed and can therefore be reconstructed (Jamieson, p. 84).

Secondly, it can be argued that Jamieson attributes too much weight to the significance of the actions of individuals. As Jamieson says: "Others may think that a search for new values is excessively individualistic and that what is needed are collective and institutional solutions" (Jamieson, p. 84). Simon Caney, for example, argues that it is impossible to ascertain the emissions of individuals and that their emissions are allowed by the state. Therefore, it would be more appropriate to attribute responsibility to states rather than individuals, because their total emissions can be approximated and they can be held liable for the actions of their individuals (Caney, p. 127). However, as I have shown with Jamieson's argumentation above, causes and harms are diffuse when it comes to climate change. Therefore, responsibility is diffuse over individuals spread across different states. Attributing responsibility to states, then, would be an unjust simplification of the complexity of responsibility.

Another dimension of this objection is that individual contributions are only small drops of water in a big pond. The major pollution comes from the industries that are also endorsed by the state, therefore the state would still be more appropriate to hold liable. However, as Jamieson argues, millions of these small drops of water still add up to a drop of significant proportion (Jamieson, p. 83). Furthermore, the dynamic (as mentioned when discussing Aldred) between state, industry (corporations), and individuals is subject to the values that govern their behavior; their value-system. By reforming our values we can construct new moral concepts and consequentially new political and legal concepts (Jamieson, p. 84). To explain: if new moral concepts are to be integrated into people's everyday lives, people will need to regard these concepts as valuable to the extent that it changes their behavior. The way this changes politics and law, then, is through the reevaluation of the acceptability of government action and regulation (as mentioned above in a quote from Jamieson in the previous section). As Jamieson says, "values permeate institutions and practices" (Jamieson, p. 84), so if morality changes through a change in value-system, then institutions and practices will change accordingly.

Reflection on Aldred

In the reflection on Aldred I'd like to return to the claim posed at the end of the section, which said that our current value-system emphasizes self-interest rather than solidarity. As mentioned, this claim is incredibly difficult to support empirically, but that does not mean that it does not hold any truth. There is a large number of scholars supporting this claim, but the argumentation for it is largely intuitive and interpretive. Nonetheless, the argumentation amongst such scholars is often quite similar and consists of an historical analysis of the development of thought tradition (which can be understood as collective thought, or the construction of a value-system). This development, according to such authors, is highly correlated with the rise of capitalism and modern science and is greatly influenced by writings of authors such as Adam Smith, Thomas Hobbes, Charles Darwin, Emmanuel Kant, Sigmund Freud, Francis Bacon, and John Locke. Since it is not within the scope of this paper to analyze this claim, I do not seek to defend it. However, a list of some exemplary works that do analyze this claim is provided in Appendix A.

Although it is difficult to provide concluding evidence on the claim presented above, there are some observations that can be made. First of all, Jamieson makes the observation that policy decisions nowadays rely heavily on economics:

“In recent years economic vocabularies and ways of reasoning have dominated the discussion of social issues. Participants in the public dialogue have internalized the neoclassical economic perspective to such an extent that its assumptions and biases have become almost invisible. It is only a mild exaggeration to say that in recent years debates over policies have largely become debates over economics.”

(Jamieson, p. 79)

In the previous reflection it has been argued that values permeate institutions and practices. If debates over policies are predominantly governed by economic considerations, this says something of the values employed and their importance in our value-system as well. Economic analyses of social behavior regards social behavior to be motivated by self-interest (Jamieson, p. 80). If policy debates are held on economic terms and we accept the claim that policy-decisions reflect the public interest (as has been argued earlier), then the collective thought of the public must at least to some extent comply with the economic analysis of social behavior. Simply put, this means that self-interest must occupy a prominent place in the public's value-system.

Secondly, we can say that the burden of mitigation is currently not integrated into the domain of civic responsibility, because conventional policy takes a management approach to climate change (Jamieson, p. 79). The notion of responsibility as it in our current value-system, according to Jamieson, supposes not only linearity, but also that the responsibility resides with governments and experts. Since values permeate institutions and practices, it makes sense that the burden of mitigation is not part of civic responsibility, exactly because conventional policy takes a management approach. If policy reflects public interest and thought collective, then consequently we can assume that also citizens regard the burden of mitigation to be the responsibility of these management agents.

In order to motivate people to regard the burden of mitigation as a civic responsibility (a moral duty), Aldred argues that policy-makers should refrain from engaging in emission markets, because it discourages intrinsic (moral) motivation for behavioral change (Aldred, p. 356). This is because it allows people to act out of self-interest by buying exemptions from the burden of mitigation (Aldred, p. 356). In light of what has been discussed above, conventional policy cannot simply be altered to promote solidaristic values of responsibility amongst citizens. As explained, the dynamic between policy-makers (government) and citizens is transcended by a value-system that is upheld and governs both. Therefore, if one

changes (policy or the thought collective of the public) the other has to change as well. Conversely, one cannot change if the other does not. Therefore, the value-system has to be adjusted in order to make the integration of mitigation into civic responsibility plausible.

Chapter's reflection

Claims

Before going into the reflection of this chapter as a whole, the main claims put forward by the presented authors will here be briefly summarized as to provide clarity.

Singer:

- Economic justification for mitigation or adaptation policies does not suffice; ethical justification is needed.
- Since there is no ethical justification for adaptation policies, the emphasis in the endeavor of combatting anthropogenic climate change should be on mitigation rather than adaptation.
- Although historical principles account for past injustices, they cannot allocate responsibility accurately, which renders them inapplicable.
- A fair distribution needs to be a plausible possibility, therefore an egalitarian principle of fairness is most suitable.
- Market tools such as emissions trading can aid in smoothening the process.

Jamieson and Aldred:

Jamieson:

- Management approaches are inadequate for dealing with anthropogenic climate change.
- The conception of responsibility in our current value-system is inapplicable to the problem of anthropogenic climate change.
- People in developed countries make tiny causal contributions to anthropogenic climate change every day, therefore the burden of mitigation should not be managed by governments nor experts, but should be part of the moral responsibility of these people themselves.

Aldred:

- Management approaches cannot provide fairness.

- According to the CRA the burden of mitigation should be integrated into civic responsibility, which requires a change in value-system.

A fundamental conflict

As stated in the introduction of this paper, the aim is to reconcile the ideas and recommendations of ethicists who adhere to management approaches and ethicists who adhere to value-based approaches. In this chapter I have presented Singer as a representative of the former and Jamieson and Aldred of the latter. When discussing Jamieson, the reasons for rejecting the use of management approaches have already been outlined. However, Jamieson and Aldred do not give a direct critique regarding the use of principles of fairness as proposed by Singer. In the introduction I have stated that these two groups of ethicists put forward considerations and recommendations that seem at face value irreconcilable. Therefore, in this reflection I will elaborate on why they are irreconcilable at face value and how they might be reconciled nonetheless.

What constitutes the main difference between Singer's ethics and Jamieson's ethics is captured in the two questions that are posed at the end of the first part of this chapter: what to do and who to be? As I have said, Singer seems to concern himself more with the former, whilst Jamieson seems to concern himself more with the latter. But what exactly does that mean? The answer to this question should be sought in the implicit nature of the two different approaches, which is in Singer's case more practical, whilst Jamieson is operating more on a theoretical level. Aldred can be understood to concern himself with both questions; he seems to answer the "what to do" question in terms of the "who to be" question.

Consider again what Timmons said regarding moral principles. They have both a practical (providing a decision-making procedure) and a theoretical aim (explaining why an action is right or wrong). Singer's use of moral principles does not seem to satisfy the theoretical aim, because they lack explanatory power in their construction: Singer does not back them up with moral theory. Therefore, as said in the reflection on Singer, they are not justified ethically. They do, however, satisfy the practical aim: they give a rather clear procedural guidance regarding action to be taken in combatting anthropogenic climate change. Singer thus answers the question "what to do".

Jamieson does not make use of moral principles to support his reasoning, but argues more on a theoretical basis regarding the nature and role of ethics in the climate debate. He claims that ethics should determine our goals and that economics can help to reach to goals

efficiently. This type of reasoning belongs more to the domain of moral theory than applied ethics, because the statement that ethics should determine our goals is not tied to a specific context. Rather it is a general statement regarding the role of ethics in determining what human behavior should look like (not what to do specifically) and what we as humans should deem valuable, as is expressed in his ideas regarding our value-system. This, then, indicates that Jamieson's emphasis is not on "what to do", but rather on first figuring out "who to be". As he says in the conclusion of his work:

"Science has alerted us to the impact of humankind on the planet, one another, and all life. This dramatically confronts us with questions about who we are, our relations to nature, and what we are willing to sacrifice for various possible futures. We should confront this as a fundamental challenge to our values and not treat it as if it were simply another technical problem to be managed."

(Jamieson, p. 85)

Jamieson's and Aldred's proposal can be viewed as more sound in terms of ethical justification than Singer's, because they provide an ethical conception of responsibility that is functional in light of the deviant dimensions of responsibility involved in climate problems. They do not, in contrast to Singer, provide clear procedural guidance regarding climate problems. Therefore, whereas Singer's account lacks theoretical justification, Jamieson's and Aldred's lacks practicality. As mentioned above, however, Aldred does answer the "what to do" question, but not procedurally. Rather he answers this question by making a concrete proposal (the CRA) from Jamieson's ideas, but he does not provide guidance how to bring this into practice.

The irreconcilability of the ideas of Singer and Jamieson's and Aldred's, then, can be understood as a fundamental conflict in application of an underlying framework. Whereas Singer operates under a management framework in which he attempts to find fairness by integrating ethical considerations, Jamieson and Aldred seek to establish an ethical framework into which management or economic considerations could be integrated. Therefore, the fundamental conflict between the two is whether ethics can operate under the parameters set by another framework (between the parameters of what is plausible or applicable in terms of management techniques), or whether ethics should be the framework to set the parameters for other considerations such as economic efficiency. Obviously, these two views cannot both be applied, therefore they seem irreconcilable.

A way around irreconcilability?

As I have stated in the introduction of this work, this paper is dedicated to reconciling the two views as described above. As mentioned, Singer regards the Kyoto Protocol as a first step in the struggle of mitigation, although the distribution of burden has no ethical basis. Therefore he argues that following steps need such an ethical basis. Interestingly, even though Singer works under a management framework, in his conclusion of *One atmosphere* he makes a statement that resembles Jamieson's and Aldred's reasoning:

“If the industrialized countries choose to retain this distribution (as the United States does), or to use it as the starting point for a new allocation of the capacity of the global sink (as the countries that accept the Kyoto Protocol do), they are standing simply on their presumed rights as sovereign nations. That claim, and the raw military power these nations wield, makes it impossible for anyone else to impose on them a more ethically defensible solution. If we, as citizens of the industrialized nations, do not understand what would be a fair solution to global warming, then we cannot understand how flagrantly self-serving the position of those opposed to signing even the Kyoto Protocol is. If, on the other hand, we can convey to our fellow citizens a sense of what would be a fair solution to the problem, then it may be possible to change the policies that are now leading the United States to block international cooperation on something that will have an impact on every being on this planet.”

(Singer, p. 197)

Here Singer hints towards Jamieson's and Aldred's notion of civic responsibility. Not as such that the burden of mitigation should be a part of civic responsibility rather than of management agents, but in the sense that citizens play a crucial role in determining a course of policy. This is in accordance with the previously explained dynamic of Western democratic society and thus amounts to an adjustment in value-system of citizens in developed (Western; industrialized) societies, because it is through a change in values that behavior and consequently policy changes. From the perspective that the struggle against anthropogenic climate change is a step-wise process, then, the integration of the burden of mitigation into civic responsibility could be understood as a step later in the process.

As has been discussed in the previous section, whereas Singer's principles of fairness as a solution lack ethical justification, Jamieson's and Aldred's solution lacks practicality. Also, since Singer himself hints towards a necessity for an adjustment in value-system,

Jamieson's and Aldred's solution might seem more preferable ethically. However, at this point qualitative evaluations of the two accounts is hardly relevant, because even though Singer's account lacks ethical justification, it would also be unethical to dismiss the application of a principle of fairness. The reason for this can be found in Singer's argument against Lombok's analysis.

Lombok argued that economically the cost of adaptation policies would be much lower than the cost of mitigation policies. Singer argued, however, that this is ethically indefensible. Therefore we should engage in mitigation policies rather than adaptation policies, which means that we have to act now and not wait for a potentially more opportune moment in the future. Even though Jamieson's and Aldred's solution has a stronger ethical justification, it does not provide procedural guidance of what to do in practice in the present. Furthermore, aside from the fact that a change in value-system is difficult to translate into procedural action, such a project would also take a considerable amount of time to succeed, if it would even succeed at all.

Since it has been established that ethically action in the present is required, this makes Jamieson's and Aldred's ethical justification weaker and provides Singer's solution with such justification. To clarify: if an ethical solution is necessary right now and there are no other ethically defensible alternatives for present action, then perhaps the requirement of theoretical ethical justification is a too high demand for the employment of moral principles that provide such a solution. Returning to a step-wise perspective of the process of combatting anthropogenic climate change, Singer's account could function as a short term solution whilst Jamieson's and Aldred's account can function as a long term goal. Even though these views cannot be applied simultaneously, they can be reconciled if they are regarded as different temporal goals of the same project.

A decolonial dimension

Up to this point, both Singer's principles of fairness and Jamieson's and Aldred's different conception of responsibility can be argued to have ethical justification. Since the two approaches are fundamentally different, conceiving them as temporal goals of the same project might be problematic. If Singer's approach is taken as a first step, how likely is it that it will only remain a short term solution? If mitigation policy as a management approach has success in making the first step to reduce emissions, would policy-makers not be inclined to continue on the same trajectory instead of radically changing policy to bring about a change in

value-system? Should they even radically change policy rather than refining management approaches and principles of fairness? Even though Jamieson's and Aldred's proposal solves the problem of responsibility, it solves it by changing the conception of responsibility. This means that they did not solve the actual problem, but reinvented or redefined it in such a way that it is solvable. Consequently, it could be argued that Jamieson's and Aldred's proposal is a utopian speculation regarding what could be, not what is. Perhaps such a proposal is merely wishful thinking about a world in which the problems of combatting anthropogenic climate change can be solved perfectly. Perhaps Singer's proposal is more in touch with reality and therefore more favorable, even though it is not perfect.

In the next chapter decolonial thinking will be used to argue why the justification for Singer's principles is insufficient and consequently why they can only be used as an inevitable first step in the above mentioned project. After this argumentation, in the discussion, I will argue how Jamieson's and Aldred's ideas are complementary to decolonial perspectives and vice versa.

Chapter 2: Applying a decolonial perspective

Before diving into the chapter on decolonial thinking, let us first take a step back and reconsider why decolonial perspectives are going to be applied to the climate ethical debate. As mentioned in the introduction, nature and the relation between humans and nature are topics directly related to decolonial thinking. Be that as it may, the reason decolonial thinking is relevant for this inquiry is that it supports the ideas of the previously mentioned value-based approaches in regards to management approaches. However, it does so out of primarily epistemic considerations, rather than ethical ones. Furthermore, the aim of decolonial thinking is to eradicate the mechanisms that marginalize indigenous peoples. According to decolonial thinkers, these mechanisms are rooted in the Western tradition and are part of the problem when it comes to just mitigation policy (as will be explained in this chapter). Therefore, decolonial perspectives are not merely suitable to the climate ethical debate, but neatly complement the previously mentioned value-based approaches and the proposed adjustment of the current Western value-system.

What is decolonialism and how does it relate to climate ethics?

Decolonial thought

What is decolonialism and how does it relate to climate ethics? A brief answer to these question is already given in the introduction, but further elaboration is required to construct the upcoming arguments. Before going into such elaboration, note that this is not intended as an argumentative defense of decolonial ideas, nor as a full representation of decolonial thinking. It is merely a concise explanation of the main ideas of decolonial thinking.

In his work *The darker side of Western modernity*, Walter Mignolo argues that decolonialism should be understood as a form of epistemic disobedience (Mignolo, p. 54). This should not be interpreted as moral epistemology, but in a broader philosophical sense. Epistemology is the study of knowledge and concerns itself with justification for different types of knowledge (so not merely justification for moral statements, which is moral epistemology). In *Imagining a post-development era*, Arturo Escobar argues that with the emergence of Western modernity, knowledge became to be approached objectively by the employment of what Mignolo calls a “zero-point epistemology” (Mignolo, p. 80):

“Modernity can be understood as that period in European history inaugurated at the end of the eighteenth century, when "Man" (sic) turned the apparatuses of knowledge upon himself in a distancing, self-objectifying fashion, thus originating the forms of inquiry and rationality that characterize today's sciences.”

(Escobar 1992, p. 23)

A zero point epistemology is a God gaze approach to knowledge, supposedly looking at all of the available epistemologies without bias from one's own (Mignolo, p. 80). According to this reasoning, by applying such an epistemology one would be able to give unbiased justification for the employment of a certain epistemology (in this case rationality and empiricism, as is employed in today's sciences), which would therefore enable one to conclusively say what epistemology best to employ. Zero point epistemology seeks to ultimately ground knowledge, with its locus of enunciation being the emergence of modern science.

According to decolonial thought this is paradoxical, since decolonial thinkers argue that knowledge is ultimately ungrounded. The difference between the Western (modern) and the decolonial conception of knowledge can thus be understood as an absolutist conception versus a relativist conception. Mignolo calls the Western absolutist conception objectivity or truth without parentheses and the decolonial relativist conception objectivity or truth within parentheses. The Western conception can be called absolutist, because if there is indeed an epistemology (or set of complementary epistemologies, such as rationalism and empiricism) better than other epistemologies, then there is only one truly correct conception of knowledge. Consequently, there should also be one absolute and universal truth. Conversely, decolonial thinkers argue that it is impossible to analyze epistemology objectively and without bias, because geopolitical and bio-graphical factors cannot be disregarded (Mignolo, p. 80). What this means is that one's thinking is always subject to the historical, cultural, and geographical influences that are a crucial part in the construction of one's thinking or knowledge. Therefore, the analysis of epistemology, of knowledge, cannot be done objectively, because everyone carries a baggage of subjectivity to which his thinking is subjected.

Mignolo argues that the subjectivity of objective knowledge is hidden in its transparency and universality. Therefore, the zero point epistemology is not an objective, unbiased form of knowledge, rather it is a local knowledge hiding its locality in its universalist projection (Mignolo, p. 80). Consequently, this locality (Western knowledge in

the form of scientific thought) instated a global epistemic hegemony that actively produces other forms of knowledge as inferior or non-existent (Santos 2013, p. 52-53).

The decolonial epistemic disobedience, then, should be understood as a rejection of the employment zero-point epistemology, of objectivity without parenthesis. Epistemic disobedience, although it is at the heart of decolonial thinking, is not sufficient to explain decolonialism. As the name already suggests, decolonialism seeks to divest manifestations of colonial power. In *Public sphere and epistemologies of the South*, Boaventura de Sousa Santos identifies five logics of non-existence that together constitute the articulation of colonial power. It will be sufficient to focus on the first two, as the latter three are not as important for later arguments and they can be regarded as derivatives of the first two. As mentioned above, through the instatement of an epistemic hegemony other epistemologies became regarded as redundant from a Western perspective, since the idea of this hegemony was exactly that there was one superior epistemology in accordance with an absolute and universal truth. According to Santos, this is the first and most powerful logic of non-existence: the monoculture of knowledge (Santos 2013, p. 52). As he says: “it consists in turning modern science and high culture into the sole criteria of truth and aesthetic quality, respectively” (Santos 2013, p. 52). The second logic is the monoculture of linear time, which can be understood as the following:

“...the idea that history has a unique and well known meaning and direction. This meaning and direction have been formulated in different ways in the last two hundred years: progress, revolution, modernization, development, and globalization.”

(Santos 2013, p. 52)

The monoculture of knowledge in combination with the monoculture of linear time can then be understood as the source of epistemic marginalization of indigenous peoples through the rhetoric of development. As Escobar explains:

“...development can be described as an apparatus (dispositif) that links forms of knowledge about the Third World with the deployment of forms of power and intervention, resulting in the mapping and production of Third World societies. In other words, development is what constructs the contemporary Third World, silently, without our noticing it. By means of this discourse, individuals, governments and

communities are seen as "underdeveloped" (or placed under conditions in which they tend to see themselves as such), and are treated accordingly.”

(Escobar 1992, p. 23)

Following the reasoning of a monoculture of knowledge, there is one absolute truth; a truth that only scientific and rational thought can adequately uncover. Therefore, the conception of linear time, as found in accordance with the zero-point epistemology, also has to be the only correct conception of time. This then means that the direction of this time conception is accurate and therefore the construction of the Third World as underdeveloped is appropriate from a modern perspective.

The history of development is relatively recent; its emergence can be marked in the early post World War II period (Escobar 1992, p. 23). At this time, the military conquest of colonization had already stopped, but decolonialism argues that the logic of coloniality (colonial power relations) was maintained. The dichotomy that first separated the metropolitan from the colonial world, became the core and the periphery (Dussel, 2012), the Occident and the Orient (Escobar 1992, p. 24). Modernity, as Mignolo argues, is but one side of the colonial matrix of power (the mechanisms that preserve colonial power relations): the side that is seen and celebrated by the Occident (the West) (Mignolo, p. XVIII). The other side is coloniality, the darker side of Western modernity, as Mignolo calls it. It consists of “poverty, misery, inequality, injustices, corruption, commodification, and dispensability of human life” (Mignolo, p. XVIII). As Escobar says, African, Asian, and Latin American people did not used to see themselves in terms of development, nor regard this as the true direction of history (Escobar, p. 23). In approximately twenty years, however, billions of people started to define themselves as underdeveloped due to Western apparatuses of knowledge production and intervention such as “the World Bank, the United Nations, bilateral development agencies, planning offices in the Third World, etc.” (Escobar 1992, p. 23-24).

“In sum, development colonized reality, became reality, and no matter how sharp an instrument we used to pierce it, to break through it, we seemed to be left embarrassingly empty handed.”

(Escobar 1992, p. 25)

The “we” Escobar mentions are, amongst others (e.g. anti-western, dewestern, rewestern), decolonial thinkers. Important to understand is that decoloniality is not a reaction to eighteenth century Imperial colonization, but rather to the rearticulation of colonial power relations after World War II. Both the aim of decolonial thinking and the reason why I prefer decoloniality over for example dewesternization is captured in the following quote from Mignolo:

“Decoloniality, in my argument, means “long term processes involving the bureaucratic, cultural, linguistic, and psychological divesting of colonial power,” as I quoted Linda T. Smith above. These processes should lead to the “new humanity” claimed by Frantz Fanon within the genealogy of Black Caribbean thinkers. They should lead also, as a consequence, to social organizations centered on the indigenous notions of “the communal”. The “communal” (as well as the “common” in the Left genealogy of thought, and the “commonwealth” or “common good” in the liberal universe of discourse) could coexist in a pluriversal world, a world in which truth and objectivity in parenthesis is sovereign. For there is no entity that can be represented by the common, the common good, or the communal. Neither of them shall be seen as the ultimate blueprint for the future. Instead they shall be seen as concurrent projects that could either endorse universal and totalitarian conceptions based on truth without parenthesis or could turn into the pluriversality and promote truth in parenthesis. The future of the planet, not just of Western civilization, can hinge on whether the balance is tilted in one or the other direction.”

(Mignolo, p. 52)

The aim of decolonial thinking, as Mignolo says, is to erase colonial mechanisms, in whatever form. Also, as mentioned in the introduction, contrary to anti- or dewesternization, decoloniality is not a project that has as its goal to end the Western way of living entirely, rather to create a pluriversal world in which different cultures and modes of thinking can coexist on an equal basis. This seems more appropriate than a school of thought that disregards the whole of Western society, because it does not fit in the framework of an epistemological relativism. In the discussion in Chapter 3 an elaboration on said pluriversality and the communal will be provided.

Although the above provided elaboration on decolonial thinking does not fully do justice to the entire school of decolonial thought, it will have to do. There is still much to be

said regarding the material marginalization of indigenous peoples through the coloniality of political economy, but this is not the scope of this paper. What is relevant for this paper is the explained epistemic disobedience, epistemic relativism, and a conception of the communal in a pluriversal world.

Relation and contribution to climate ethics

As stated in the beginning of the previous chapter, moral epistemology is a branch of metaethics that concerns itself with the justification for moral statements. Moral epistemology, however, must also be a branch of epistemology, because if justification for moral statements is to be evaluated, there needs to be a justification for the (type of) knowledge employed to execute such evaluation. Therefore, moral epistemology needs to account for both ethical and epistemic considerations. As Timmons argued, there is no neat separation between normative ethics and metaethics: they are intertwined. So, if one were to engage in an inquiry to normative (applied) ethics, at least some attention has to be given to moral epistemology. It matters greatly, however, what epistemologies one employs as basis for that inquiry.

The way decolonial thinking thus relates to climate ethics is that it can be used to address epistemological issues in the current climate ethical debate. The argument that will be explained below is going to say that there can be no global social justice without global cognitive justice (Santos 2008, p. 258). In a nutshell, this means that an ethical form of mitigation policy cannot be achieved if the epistemology(-ies) employed to justify the evaluation of justification of moral statements (moral epistemology) is in conflict with epistemologies and relations to nature of the people affected by that policy.

Management approaches interfere with global cognitive justice

Different relations to nature

The argument regarding global cognitive justice draws upon indigenous relations to nature. According to Enrique Salmon, indigenous ways of relating to nature should be understood as a kincentric ecology (Salmon, p. 1328). This means that indigenous people regard themselves and nature as part of the same family. Salmon argues that the best way to understand such a relation to nature is through the Rarámuri (an indigenous community in eastern Mexico; the Sierra Madre) concept of *iwígara*, which he explains as the following:

“Iwígara is the total interconnectedness and integration of all life in the Sierra Madres, physical and spiritual”...”Iwí also makes reference to the Rarámuri concept of soul. It is understood that the soul, or iwí, sustains the body with the breath of life. Everything that breaths has a soul. Plants, animals, humans, stones, the land, all share the same breath. When humans and animals die, their souls become butterflies that visit the living. The butterflies also travel to the Milky Way, where past souls of the ancestors reside. Iwí is also the word used to identify a caterpillar that weaves its cocoons on the madrone tree (*Arbutus* sp.). The implication is that there is a whole morphophysiological process of change, death, birth, and rebirth associated with the concept of iwí. Iwí is the soul or essence of life everywhere. Iwígara then channels the idea that all life, spiritual and physical, is interconnected in a continual cycle. Iwí is the prefix to iwígara. Iwígara expresses the belief that all life shares the same breath. We are all related to, and play a role in, the complexity of life. Iwígara most closely resembles the concept of kincentric ecology.”

(Salmon, p. 1328)

The concept of kincentric ecology, iwígara, is at the heart of the Rarámuri land management philosophy (Salmon, p. 1329). It is a reciprocal relationship in which the Rarámuri are one of the relatives of the family of the land, of which they regard themselves as guardians (Salmon, p. 1329).

The Rarámuri conception of nature and their relation to it is quite different from Western conceptions. Singer, for example, argues that the atmosphere (which is a part of nature) is to be perceived as a resource and that for the sake of justice in mitigation policy, the entitlements to this resource need to be allocated fairly. Similarly, Escobar argues that the conception of capital in political economy is undergoing a significant change with regards to nature. He calls this the ecological phase. Nature, he says, is no longer exploitable and external to capital, but rather it has become internal to capital (Escobar 1996, p. 326).

“No longer does nature denote an entity with its own agency, a source of life and discourse, as was the case in many traditional societies, with European Romantic literature and art of the 19th century. For those committed to the world as resource, the ‘environment’ becomes an indispensable construct. As the term is used today, environment includes a view of nature according to the urban-industrial system.”

(Escobar 1996, p. 331)

As mentioned in Singer's section, the UNFCCC (United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change) recognizes a right to sustainable development, because of the assumption that economic progress is essential for combatting climate change. According to Escobar, however, this is counterintuitive, because economic growth and capital accumulation are largely the source of environmental degradation (Escobar 1996, p. 329). Therefore, the ability of sustainable development to preserve nature is questionable and the question should be asked whether this is even the main aim of the project. Referring back to the reflection on Singer, the preservation of nature seems to be subject to the preservation of political and economic systems.

“The sustainable development strategy, after all, focuses not so much on the negative consequences of economic growth on the environment, as on the effects of environmental degradation on growth and potential for growth. It is growth (ie capitalist market expansion), and not the environment, that has to be sustained. Since poverty is believed to be a cause, as well as an effect, of environmental problems, growth is needed with the purpose of eliminating poverty and with the purpose, in turn, of protecting the environment.”

(Escobar 1996, p. 330)

Escobar says this is perhaps most visible in discussions regarding the biodiversity in rainforests. Their preservation through sustainable development is not to save the rainforest for the sake of saving the rainforest. Rather it is to save the rainforest as a resource; the resource being the genes of the species living in this environment that can be used for bio-engineering (Escobar 1996, p. 334-335).

“Nature and local people themselves are seen as the source and creators of value-not merely as labour or raw material. The discourse of biodiversity in particular achieves this effect. Species of microorganisms, flora and fauna are valuable not so much as ‘resources’, but as reservoirs of value-this value residing in their very genes-that scientific research, along with biotechnology, can release for capital and communities. This is one of the reasons why communities-particularly ethnic and peasant communities in the tropical rainforest areas of the world-are finally recognized as the owners of their territories (or what is left of them), but only to the extent that they

accept viewing and treating territory and themselves as reservoirs of capital.

Communities in various parts of the world are then enticed by biodiversity projects to become ‘stewards of the social and natural “capitals” whose sustainable management is, henceforth, both their responsibility and the business of the world economy’.”

(Escobar 1996, p. 334-335)

These ethnic and peasant communities are the indigenous peoples that inhabit these territories (Escobar 1996, p. 334). Key to the argument of global cognitive and social justice here is that, as Escobar says above, these peoples are expected to view and treat these territories and themselves as reservoirs of capital. According to Lohmann, however, “a resource is something whose value lies in being a ‘source’ of something else”...”a commodity is something whose value lies in what it can be swapped for or what price it can fetch” (Lohmann et al, p. 55). Therefore, it seems that Escobar’s use of the term resource can perhaps better be swapped for commodity. Although this makes little difference for the argument to come, it means that what Escobar calls reservoirs of value can be interpreted as resources. What this means for indigenous peoples, on the one hand, is that they have to abide the ideology of efficiency that is central to modern economics (Lohmann et al, p. 54). For example, as Lohmann says, this means that indigenous peoples might be forced to divide their land into permanent forest areas and permanent agricultural areas, even though many indigenous communities use areas periodically (they use a piece of rainforest as agricultural land for some time, then move on to another area to let nature run its course on the previously used area) (Lohmann et al, p. 54). On the other, it means that they consequently have to redefine themselves, their relation to nature, and their everyday practices.

No global social justice without global cognitive justice

Before it is possible to construct a sound argument, it is important to define social justice and cognitive justice. Michael Novak claims social justice is social in two ways: 1) it is social in the sense that it requires cooperation to attain justice; and 2) it is social in the sense that it aims at all members of a community (whether it be local or global), not at a single individual only (Novak, p. 12). The second claim can be understood as an entitlement to an equal notion of justice: justice applies to everyone equally. Cognitive justice, as Santos argues, should be understood as a “just relationship among different kinds of knowledge” (Santos 2008, p. 258). This means that no a priori supremacy should be granted to any kind of knowledge (Santos 2008, p. 258).

Justice is in itself a challenging philosophical concept. Referring back to Timmons, normative questions about how to attain justice are inevitably subject to metaethical questions of what justice is and how a concept of justice can be justified. Even though decolonial thinking regards universalist tendencies as problematic, there is need for a common ground in the understanding of the concept in order to have a normative discussion about global justice. Therefore, perhaps the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is the best model to work with, since it expresses that the "...recognition of the inherent dignity and of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in the world" (UDHR, preamble). In the making of the social and cognitive justice argument, I will draw upon Article 18 of the Declaration:

Article 18:

"Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance."

(UDHR, 1948)

Santos' argument, as previously mentioned, is that there can be no global social justice without global cognitive justice. So what exactly in climate ethics interferes with global cognitive justice? As mentioned in the previous chapter, Singer's principles of fairness are aimed at allocating the burden of mitigation fairly. This burden, however, is expressed in economic terms: the monetary cost of reducing emissions. For indigenous peoples such as the Rarámuri, however, it is not so much a material problem as it is an epistemic one. As illustrated above, their knowledge and beliefs do not fit in the epistemic framework of rationality and scientific thought; they employ a spiritual epistemology. Their philosophy of land management is directly related to their spirituality. Their use of land, such as a periodical use, is not arbitrary or random, but it is a manifestation of their spiritual beliefs. The Rarámuri, for example, only harvest plants in areas where their *Iwígara* (their life breath) is strong, so that the plants with a weak *Iwígara* may strengthen (Salmon, p. 1330). This way they believe to maintain a balance in the interconnectedness of life (Salmon, p. 1330).

By demanding that indigenous peoples view and treat nature and themselves as resources (reservoirs of value) to preserve biodiversity, they need to adjust their practices in

order to secure such preservation (like setting permanent forest and permanent agricultural areas). The problem, therefore, is that mitigation policy through management approaches interferes with the manifestation of indigenous beliefs in practice, which is a violation of Article 18 of the UDHR. Assuming that the UDHR is indeed an adequate standard for what is just, this means that management approaches (and therefore climate ethics operating under a management framework) fail to bring about social justice. Having established this, why is there need to discuss cognitive justice as a prerequisite for social justice? Is it not possible to simply adjust policy in such a way that it does not interfere with social justice?

As mentioned in the introduction, policy-decisions regarding climate change come predominantly from Western countries. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), created by the United Nations Environment Program and the World Meteorological Office in 1988 (Singer, p. 184), includes no representatives of indigenous peoples (Lohmann et al, p. 38). Yet, as discussed above, the policies constructed affect and disrupt these peoples way of living. It seems, then, that the construction of policy is paternalist in nature; indigenous peoples have no say in the construction of policy, even though they are affected by it. This implies that the policy-makers know better what is best for indigenous peoples than themselves. Consequently, this can be interpreted as a rearticulation of coloniality through the rhetoric of development: the Western policy-makers being the developed and the indigenous peoples the undeveloped. According to Giovanna Di Chiro, this is exactly the claim of the People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit. They claim that conventional environmental organizations and policy-makers employ a managerial top-down approach with a technocratic rationality that is “disempowering, paternalistic, and exclusive” (Di Chiro, p. 306).

As Escobar argued, however, people living in what are now labeled as developing countries did not use to define themselves in terms of development, even though billions of these people now do. Indigenous peoples, however, even though they often live in these developing countries, still do not define themselves in terms of development. Mark Plotkin, an Amazonian ethnobotanist, argues that the reason why indigenous peoples often live isolated should be regarded as a form of resistance, precisely because they do not want to comply with Western thinking and way of life (Plotkin, 2014). This resistance can thus be understood as the previously mentioned epistemic disobedience; indigenous peoples reject the epistemic hegemony of rational and scientific thought. Consequently, following decolonial

reasoning, qualitative statements regarding indigenous ways of life in terms of development or rationalism are inappropriate, because indigenous peoples do not employ a rationalist epistemology nor regard development as the meaning and direction of history (see Santos' monoculture of time).

As mentioned in the introduction, policy-decisions regarding mitigation policy come from the global actors empowered to make such decisions and conventional policy takes a management approach towards mitigation policy. These are the developed (Western) countries, because they have a stronger economic and political position than developing countries. Important to keep in mind is that mitigation policy is an international endeavor; the developed countries do not construct policy on their own and enforce them nationally, but this is managed globally by intergovernmental organizations such as the IPCC. Since the Western epistemic framework assumes an epistemic supremacy of rationality and scientific knowledge, according to decolonial thinking, policy-decisions reflect this assumption. Therefore, the construction of mitigation policy reflects the rhetoric of development, because policy-makers would consider Western knowledge to be more sophisticated and thus believe the employment of such knowledge to be capable of benefitting everyone, including indigenous peoples, more than other knowledges. Management approaches in policy show the same paternalistic tendency, because they globally impose the assumption that nature is a resource to be managed and preserved as to sustain capital (Escobar, p. 328). As has been illustrated above, however, such reasoning leads to the interference with indigenous ways of life and even their fundamental human rights. Therefore, from a decolonial perspective, there can be no global social justice without global cognitive justice in the construction of mitigation policy. Consequently, climate ethical theory or principles that operate in a management framework cannot achieve social justice, because the employment of a management framework in international policy-making implies the epistemic hegemony of one knowledge over others (a lack of cognitive justice). Therefore, cognitive justice is a prerequisite of social justice.

Chapter's reflection

Claims

In the reflection of the previous chapter I have first identified the claims as put forward by the authors discussed. In this reflection I will not list the claims by author, however, because of the larger amount of authors presented. Therefore, the claims will be separated into

the following two classifications: decolonial claims and decolonial claims in relation to climate ethics. Note that, as mentioned before, this is not intended as a full representation of decolonialism. Only what has been relevant for this inquiry has been presented.

Decolonial claims:

- Through the employment of a zero-point epistemology Western modernity has assumed the epistemic hegemony of rational and scientific thought.
- Decolonial thinking argues that there is no objectivity or truth without parentheses and therefore rejects such an epistemic hegemony.
- Decolonial thinking argues that there is a continuation of coloniality through the rhetoric of development.

Decolonial claims in relation to climate ethics:

- Management approaches in mitigation policy undermine Article 18 of the UDHR when it comes to indigenous peoples.
- A just mitigation policy cannot be achieved if the epistemology(-ies) employed to justify the evaluation of justification of moral statements (moral epistemology) is in conflict with epistemologies and relations to nature of the people affected by that policy.
- Therefore, climate ethics that operates under a management framework fail to bring about social justice and cognitive justice.

Decolonial argumentation

Decolonialism, although it can be understood as a sociological and philosophical school of thought, is not a part of academics. Therefore, from an academic perspective, a fair question to pose would be to what extent its claims can be considered valid and how that validity could be assessed. One way to assess the validity would be to analyze to what extent decolonial claims can be empirically supported. From a decolonial perspective this might seem counterintuitive, because decolonialism criticizes scientific (academic) thought on its predominant reliance on an empiric epistemology. On the other hand, if academics cannot assess decolonialism in terms of what it considers valid, then it cannot consider it valid either.

An empirical argument is constructed by observing the phenomenon in question, objectively report, and draw conclusions from the observations which can lead to an adjustment of theory. According to models in quantitative statistics, an experimental model

with a control group often lead to the highest validity of the research. Since the notion of epistemic disobedience in decolonialism is heavily dependent on an alternative interpretation of history and philosophically and socially analyzing this interpretation, it becomes difficult to construct purely empirical arguments. This is because an experimental model cannot be used; we cannot just create an alternative reality as a control group to see if the interpretations are completely sound. Also the observation of variables becomes problematic, because it cannot be an eye-witness account, only an interpretation of a previously recorded account.

Decolonial claims draw upon the epistemology and lived experience of indigenous peoples. Although such a methodology seems alien from a scientific perspective, it is not so different from an empiric method: Experience can also be regarded as the observing (or rather experiencing) of a phenomenon and drawing conclusions and consequently adjusting behavior based on an adjustment of understanding of the matter (which can be compared with the adjustment in theory through empiricism). The essential difference, however, between empirical arguments and arguments from experience is the objectivity of the observer: whereas in empiricism objectivity is required, experience exerts subjectivity.

A high validity in empirical claims can be seen as evidence that the claim is sound. This does not necessarily mean, however, that empirical (experimental) research is the only source of evidence claims can have. The decolonial claim that rationalism and scientific thought dominates the Western thought tradition, for example, is difficult to support in terms of validity on a purely empirical basis. This would require an enormous amount of research and a severely complicated coding system in order to represent and measure the relevant variables accurately. Such a project, provided that it could be set up, might not even succeed in giving conclusive answers. Would this then mean that the decolonial claim should be rejected simply because it cannot live up to the standards of statistical validity? I will continue on this point in the discussion.

Chapter 3: Discussion and conclusion

Interaction between chapter one and two

In Chapter 2 decolonial thinking has been used to indicate epistemic problems of climate ethics operating under a management framework. It has been argued that management approaches such as sustainable development have, next to striving to combat anthropogenic climate change, as primary goal to sustain economic growth. Even though this is because poverty is believed to be a cause of anthropogenic climate change, it discourages behavioral change, which is needed for successful mitigation, as has been argued with Jamieson and Aldred. By applying decolonial thinking it can be conclusively said that climate ethics in accordance to management approaches cannot bring about social justice, because it interferes with the manifestation of indigenous beliefs in practice (which is a fundamental human right).

The change in value-system, as proposed by Jamieson and Aldred, is complementary to decolonial thinking, because such a change in value-system does not impose global paternalist policy as management approaches do. Rather, the change in value-system addresses citizens in Western societies to collectively change their way of living. Therefore, it does not interfere with indigenous beliefs and thus does not violate social justice.

Decolonial thinking, in turn, is complementary to proposal of the change in value-system for two reasons. Firstly, it is complementary because it shows the need for an alternative to management policy. Implicitly, decolonial thinking point to the necessity for a change in value-system in the following way: Referring back to Jamieson, a change in value-system is needed when there are inconsistencies in the values that are employed. This inconsistency can be understood as the conflicting values that give rise to management approaches on the one hand, and to the establishment of fundamental human rights on the other. Since we have the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as a global standard for justice, it must mean that what constitutes these notions of justice (the content of the declaration) is highly valued. Since management approaches constitute the nature of conventional global mitigation policy, it must mean that the aim of these approaches (the preservation of economic growth) is also highly valued. As has been shown in Chapter 2, these two values are in conflict. Therefore, by indicating epistemic problems in climate ethical discussions under a management framework, decolonial thinking implicitly points to the necessity of reflection and adjustment of the current value-system in developed countries.

Secondly, decolonial thinking is complementary to the proposal of a change in value-system by providing some indications as to how to change the value-system. These indications should be understood as indigenous ways of living and doing politics. Although this has been touched upon in Chapter 2, the way indigenous culture can aid in conceptualizing an adjustment in Western value-system and way of living is beyond the scope of this paper. Therefore I will continue on this point below as a recommendation for further research.

Limitations and further research

Before moving on to the conclusion, there are some limitations of the argumentation of this inquiry that need to be addressed and recommendations to be made regarding future research to overcome these limitations.

Historical responsibility

When discussing Singer it has become clear that responsibility for past injustices is difficult to account for. Even though Jamieson's and Aldred's approach of changing the current Western value-system and employment of the CRA account for the deviant dimensions of responsibility in the present, it does not solve the problem of responsibility regarding past injustices. Similarly, decolonial thinking does not offer a solution to this problem either. For further research it might be interesting to see if there is any plausible way to account for such historical responsibility, but I do not think that this would be incredibly relevant for two reasons.

Firstly, in this work it has been established that a change in value-system is necessary for behavioral change, which is necessary for successful mitigation. This change consists of integrating the burden of mitigation into civic responsibility (CRA) in developed countries. This would mean that the burden of mitigation would be carried by the citizens of developed countries and since the developed countries are largely responsible for past injustices, this solves the problem of historical responsibility to at least some extent. Furthermore, historical responsibility is only applicable if a collectivist position is taken. This means that not individuals are liable, but rather entities that transcend generations such as states (Caney, p. 129). This is because the individuals that live now did not cause the pollution in the past, therefore they cannot be held accountable in terms of linear responsibility. Jamieson's and Aldred's CRA proposal, however, is intended to make the problem of climate change an ethical problem for citizens (individuals) rather a management problem for governments or

experts. Therefore, historical responsibility is incompatible with their approach, because in order to establish a notion of historical responsibility the problem of anthropogenic climate change needs to be conceived of as a problem to be solved governments and experts rather than individuals.

Secondly, historical responsibility presupposes that the parties that have been wronged in the past are due some form of compensation. Since neither the missed development opportunity nor the damage to the environment and people can be restored, such compensation would be in the form of bearing more of the cost and burden of mitigation. Since there is no way to determine who would need to account for what part of such compensation, this boils down to the developed countries bearing more of the burden of mitigation. Since it has been established that for successful mitigation a change in the value-system of these developed countries is required, the burden of mitigation will fall on the developed countries regardless of such compensation.

Decolonial claims

As already mentioned in the reflection on decolonial argumentation at the end of Chapter 2, there is need for further assessment of the validity of decolonial claims. It has not been the aim of this inquiry, but it would be interesting for further research to examine to what extent policy-makers are influenced by a notion of epistemic supremacy. Also the claim that objectivity in epistemology through a zero-point epistemology would be impossible should be examined more thoroughly. Furthermore, there is need for what Santos calls “intercultural translation” (Santos 2012, p. 58). Due to the fact that there is a discrepancy between the standards of academic (statistical) assessment of validity and decolonial argumentation, there is need for a procedure that allows for mutual intelligibility among different knowledges regarding their reasoning. Intercultural translation should be understood as such a procedure. Santos argues that such a procedure would be in the form of diatopical hermeneutics: “Diatopical hermeneutics consists in interpreting two or more cultures, aiming to identify isomorphic concerns among them and the different answers they provide” (Santos 2012, p. 59). With this procedure Santos argues that Western notions of human rights can be compared to for example the Islamic concept of umma (Santos 2012, p. 59). Although this seems like a promising concept, it needs to be worked out in detail more extensively to be applicable to pragmatically complex matters such as climate ethics.

A lack of procedural guidance to and in the CRA

At the end of Chapter 1 I have stated that the two parts of the climate ethical debate this paper is concerned with (ethicists who adhere to management approaches and ethicists who adhere to value-based approaches) can be reconciled if they are regarded as different temporal goals of the same project. Principles of fairness, such as proposed by Singer, are still necessary for successful mitigation, because action is immediately required and the proposals of changing our current value-system and the CRA are long-term projects. The questions that arise, however, is where the short-term management solution ends, where the long-term project begins, and how to bridge the gap between these two different approaches. Such questions are also beyond the scope of this paper, so it would be interesting for further research to examine the way such transition could take place. As mentioned by Singer, however, key in this process is providing citizens sufficient information to understand the importance of mitigation and the role they (can) play combatting anthropogenic climate change.

Although it has been established in this inquiry that integrating the burden of mitigation into civic responsibility is necessary for successful mitigation, there is a lack of procedural guidance on the matter. Aside from educating people, it is still rather vague how a change in value-system could be brought about and what the resulting society would look like. As mentioned above, decolonial thinking can aid in this process. The notion of a pluriversal world, as mentioned previously by Mignolo, provides a starting point for conceiving such a changed society. This notion draws upon an ecology of knowledges as proposed by Santos. Cognitive justice, as explained in Chapter 2, is at the heart of what Santos calls an ecology of knowledges. The pluriversal world should thus be perceived as a world with truth in parentheses; a world without a universal and supreme form of knowledge, but a world in which there is a just relationship among different kinds of knowledge and no form of knowledge is marginalized by another: a world with an ecology of knowledges (Santos 2012, p. 57). Only if citizens of developed countries can accept that their knowledge is not irrefutably better than other, they can accept that they can learn from these other knowledges. Referring back to the first part of Chapter 2, according to decolonial thinking, people need to become aware that Western knowledge does not pose an absolute and universal truth, but rather that there is a relativity in truth and epistemology. Important to note, however, is what Santos says regarding relativism:

“Recognising the relativity of cultures does not necessarily imply adopting relativism as a philosophical stance. It does imply, however, conceiving of universalism as a Western particularity whose supremacy as an idea does not reside in itself, but rather in the supremacy of the interests that support it.”

(Santos 2012, p. 60)

According to Lohmann, the learning from other knowledges or cultures is exactly what should happen, because community-level solutions (that often come from indigenous peoples) have proven to be far more successful than international politics and market tools such as carbon trading (Lohmann et al, p. 173,333-334,349-350). Therefore, Lohmann argues that for successful mitigation decentring is required (Lohman et al, p. 349-350). Since Aldred argues solidaristic practices need to be increased, indigenous communal ways of living could be exemplary to the change that needs to occur in Western societies. This also beyond the scope of this paper, however, so I will leave this as a recommendation for further research. There are organizations that work on the struggle for an ecology of knowledges, such as the World Social Forum (Santos 2008, p. 249), and that work on a model for environmental justice that takes the epistemic considerations as raised by decolonial thinking into account, such as the People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit (Di Chiro, p. 307). It would make for an interesting inquiry to see whether such organizations could cooperate with policy-makers from developed countries and perhaps make a crucial contribution to the next steps in mitigation.

Conclusion

In this inquiry the unification of management and non-management approaches in climate ethics has been examined, as well as the contribution decolonial thinking can make to this process. The unification of management and non-management approaches in climate ethics is a relevant endeavor, because it can increase the influence of ethicists and ethical consideration with regards to anthropogenic climate change. Before making final and concluding remarks, let's briefly summarize what has been discussed.

In the first chapter Singer's principles of fairness have been contrasted with Jamieson's proposal of changing the current Western value-system as to give rise to a different conception of responsibility. This different conception of responsibility, I have argued, can be understood as integrating the burden of mitigation into civic responsibility in accordance with Aldred's CRA. In this chapter I have concluded that management approaches

(and thus climate ethics operating under a management framework) are inadequate for dealing with anthropogenic climate change, because they cannot account for the deviant dimensions of responsibility involved in climate ethics, because they cannot provide fairness, and because they discourage behavioral change. Still they are necessary, as they form the only plausible solution that is immediately applicable since current mitigation policy operates under a management framework. In the second chapter, the notion and source of epistemic disobedience of decolonial thinking has been explained. This has been used to show the interference with social justice of management approaches through the interference with the manifestation of indigenous beliefs in practice. Furthermore, decolonial thinking has been used to illustrate how cognitive justice is a prerequisite for social justice.

The research question posed in the introduction was the following: Can decolonial thinking be a useful addition to the discussion between the employment of management approaches and value-based approaches in climate ethics? In Chapter 1 it has been argued that management approaches and value-based approaches can be reconciled by regarding them as different temporal goals of the same project: the project of successful mitigation. Management approaches constitute the inevitable first step in this project, but the questions that remain are where one should end and the other begin (management approaches versus value-based approaches) as well as which should play the role of the primary framework in the project as a whole. These questions have been answered by employing decolonial thinking. As presented in Chapter 2, the contribution decolonial thinking makes to climate ethics is that it establishes prerequisites for social justice by highlighting epistemic problems in managerial climate ethics. Whereas it can be argued that Jamieson's and Aldred's proposal is farfetched and does not answer the question of responsibility as it is (rather it changes the question than answering it), the necessity of striving for alternatives to management approaches, such as the CRA, becomes solid and clear by employing decolonial thinking. Employing management approaches forces indigenous peoples to live in accordance to an epistemology that is not theirs and therefore it denies them the manifestation of their beliefs in practice. The prerequisites for social justice that decolonial thinking thus poses are the requirement of cognitive justice and the attendant consequences this has for the climate ethical debate. As has been argued, what this entails is that the role of management approaches should be restricted to the beginning of the mitigation project as a necessary and inevitable first step. While management approaches are crucial in the early stages of developing a successful mitigation project, the employment of decolonial thinking illustrates that it is imperative that a paradigm

shift to value-based approaches occurs shortly after the initial stages have been completed, in order to satisfy the requirement of cognitive justice. Therefore, the hypothesis posed in the introduction has been met: Decolonial thinking can aid in determining a suitable framework for the climate ethical debate.

To conclude, I'd like to leave the reader with some final remarks regarding climate ethics and the struggle against anthropogenic climate change in general. In order for management and non-management approaches to be unified, both sides need to be aware of their limitations. For managerial climate ethicists this largely means to distance themselves from political economy and realize and accept that management and market tools cannot bring about justice; they can only aid in attaining it efficiently. They also need to be aware of intertwined nature of ethics; even though they reside in the domain of applied ethics, metaethical considerations cannot be dismissed and will have to play a role in finding ethically right solutions. Conversely, non-managerial climate ethicists have to be aware that current mitigation policy operates under a management framework. Therefore, at least the initial stages of mitigation will be subject to management policy. Coming back to what has been mentioned in the section on further research, both managerial and non-managerial climate ethicists could benefit from communication and interaction with indigenous peoples, as indigenous knowledge, relation to nature, and way of life could prove to be an exemplary model for future mitigation efforts. Therefore, as a concluding remark, I hope this work can inspire ethicists and policy-decision makers to seek cooperation with organization such as the World Social Forum and the People of Color Environmental Leadership Summit.

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Appendix

Appendix A

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Appendix B: Glossary

Economic: Refers to the social science of economics.

Objectivity: This is a concept that refers to the state of being true without individual bias.

Subjectivity: This is a concept that refers to the state of being true only from the perspective of one or multiple subjects.

Hegemony: Hegemony refers to the dominance or control over others attained by a superiority of military or economic power.

Relativism: Relativism holds that different perspectives do not hold truth in themselves, but rather that they only hold subjective value dependent on different perceptions.

Paternalism: This concept refers to the active limitation of another's autonomy in order to benefit that other.