



LUND UNIVERSITY

A Trend Towards Climate Reparations?

Contemporary Perspectives on Global Climate Justice by the European
Commission vs Political Actors of the Global South

Maria Asklund

Supervisor: Alena Minchenia

Bachelor of Arts Programme in European Studies

Spring semester 2023

Abstract

This thesis aims to answer the following questions: How does the EU Commission approach the issue of climate justice, more specifically climate reparations? What discursive patterns and inconsistencies are present in the EU Commission's stance on climate justice? What are the relationships between the EU Commission and actors representing the Global South on the topic of climate reparations? How does the EU work with climate financing today on an international level? Finally, what demands are coming from the Global South? In order to respond to these questions, critical discourse analysis is used to analyze three documents. This analysis is combined with postcolonial interpretations, specifically postcolonial Europe and decoloniality. As a result, the climate justice discourse prevailing in the EU Commission is outlined, showing that there is a strong focus on EU ambitions and leadership. Simultaneously, the discourse excludes historical factors and focuses merely on the present-day aspects of the climate crisis. This approach is reflected in the framework for climate financing, which is not synonymous with climate reparations. Meanwhile, a dialogue between the EU Commission and vulnerable countries in the Global South is taking shape as the Commission is beginning to listen to demands for easy access to climate funding for the most exposed countries.

Keywords

Climate justice, climate reparations, climate financing, Loss and Damages Fund, European Green Deal

Table of Contents

1. Introduction	3
1.1 Purpose and Research Questions	4
1.2 Previous Research	5
1.3 Research Limitations	7
1.4 Disposition	7
2. Background	8
2.1 European Union Politics on Climate Change	8
2.2 Loss and Damage	9
3. Theoretical Background	11
3.1 Postcolonialism	11
3.1.1 Postcolonial Europe	12
3.1.2 Decoloniality	13
4. Methodology and data	15
4.1 Critical Discourse Analysis	15
4.2 Data	16
5. Analysis	18
5.1 Commission Communication	18
5.1.1 The EU as a Leader in Climate Action	18
5.1.2 Climate Justice Through Climate Financing	19
5.2 Speech by Frans Timmermans	21
5.2.1 Telling the Truth	21
5.2.2 Solidarity with the Global South	23
5.3 Remarks by Gaston Browne	24
6. Discussion	27
6.1 Commission Communication	27
6.1.1 European Universality	27
6.1.2 Affirmation of the Self and Denial of the Colonial Legacy	30
6.2 Speech by Frans Timmermans	34
6.2.1 Now and Then	34
6.2.2 Speaking for the Vulnerable	37
6.3 Remarks by Gaston Browne	39
7. Future research	41
8. Conclusion	42
9. Bibliography	44

1. Introduction

The Global South¹ has been advocating for climate justice for an extended period of time. One manifestation took place in 2010 when the World People's Conference on Climate Change and the Rights of Mother Earth took place in Bolivia. During the conference, the People's Agreement of Cochabamba was written by representatives of civil society and governments. It was established that “developed countries, as the main cause of climate change, in assuming their historical responsibility, must recognize and honor their climate debt in all of its dimensions as the basis for a just, effective, and scientific solution to climate change.”² These critical voices are not least directed at Europe. Firstly, large parts of Europe colonized the Global South, laying the groundwork for today's injustice. Secondly, European imperialism powered the industrial revolution,³ the starting point for the high levels of greenhouse gas emissions that have driven the temperatures to rise. In fact, greenhouse gas emissions are regarded as a form of colonizing the atmosphere by the people demanding climate justice.⁴

The great question is who will take responsibility for this and whether the European Union (EU), as an institutional representative of Europe, can be held accountable for the implications of the ecological crisis in other parts of the world. The concept of climate justice takes for granted the effects of climate change are unjust in that they affect people and regions differently.⁵ With regard to the recent increase in climate disasters in regions such as South Asia, Africa, and Central America, I am curious as to how the EU relates to the rest of the world in this crisis. At this critical stage of climate negotiations, I wonder if there will be solidarity with the most exposed and subsequent implementation of global climate justice through climate reparations.

¹ Global South is used as an alternative to ‘Third World’ and ‘Developing World’

² World People's Conference on Climate Change and the Rights of Mother Earth, ‘People's Agreement of Cochabamba’, 23.04.2010, p.3

³ A. M. Shahid, ‘Colonialism and Industrialization: Empirical Results’, Northeastern University. Boston, 1998, p.26

⁴ ‘People's Agreement of Cochabamba’ p.3

⁵ D. De Cristofaro, ‘Patterns of Repetition: Colonialism, Capitalism and Climate Breakdown in Contemporary Post-Apocalyptic Fiction’, Parallax, 27:1, 2021, p.13

1.1 Purpose and Research Questions

This thesis aims to provide a deeper understanding of the European Union's approach to global climate justice. To narrow this topic down, I have chosen to focus on the EU Commission and the case of climate reparations. My analytical focus is the demands for climate reparations from the Global South and the EU Commission's stance on these. Considering that the Commission is an important actor in presenting solutions to the other EU institutions, I believe their view of climate reparations is of value.

In order to outline the Commission's discourse on this question, I analyze two documents; a communication concerning the European Green Deal and a speech by Vice-President Frans Timmermans held at COP27, which concerns the EU in relation to other actors, especially the Global South. In addition, I analyze a collection of remarks made by Gaston Browne, Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda, and Chair of the Alliance of Small Island States, which were also made at COP27. The purpose of this is to see what exactly representatives of the Global South are demanding from the Global North.

The theoretical approach used is postcolonial theory, in particular the pathways postcolonial Europe and decoloniality. By combining the postcolonial perspective with Norman Fairclough's critical discourse analysis and a simple content analysis, I examine the documents in order to find power dynamics, patterns, changes and inconsistencies. The following questions will be discussed:

1. How does the EU Commission approach the issue of climate justice, more specifically climate reparations?
 - a) What discursive patterns and inconsistencies are there in the EU Commission's stance on climate justice?
 - b) Is there a dialogue between the EU Commission and the Global South on the topic of climate reparations?
2. How does the EU work with climate financing today on an international level?
3. What demands are coming from the Global South?

1.2 Previous Research

Over the years, much has been written about the EU and its approach to climate change. When it comes to the particular case of the EU and global climate justice, there has been an increasing amount of research during the past decade. In the research, different pathways have been embarked on and I have been particularly inspired by Franziskus von Lucke's research exploring the question of the *type* of climate justice in the EU's approach.

Climate justice in an EU context has been conceptualized as three different approaches by von Lucke.⁶ He links the EU's strategy to conceptions of justice, by looking at the EU negotiations in an international context and discusses reasons for change in the EU's approach. Interestingly, von Lucke differentiates himself from existing literature, saying it rarely discusses how climate justice can be achieved politically. This is his aim, in addition to discussing justice in governance. Similarly, I analyze the EU Commission's approach but also describe the EU framework for climate financing. Von Lucke thus links ethical theories with Political Science and IR. Von Lucke's three conceptualizations of justice are the following; 1) non-domination, 2) impartiality and 3) mutual recognition. The last-mentioned aims to "ensure that all voices – especially of marginalized non-state actors – are heard,"⁷ which is of interest to me in my study of climate reparation demands from the Global South.

In fact, von Lucke argues the EU's approach to climate justice has transformed itself towards impartiality and mutual recognition. Before, non-domination prevailed and still does to a great extent. This means that "internally [the EU] still favoured ambitious, supranational and binding climate measures but now sought new ways to implement them internationally."⁸ In fact, von Lucke proposes that future studies of climate justice in an EU context focus on voices from the Global South too, and I will include this aspect by discussing climate justice demands coming from Small Island Developing States (SIDS).

⁶ F. von Lucke, 'Principled pragmatism in climate policy? The EU and changing practices of climate justice', *Political Geography*, 2021, p.2

⁷ von Lucke, 'Principled pragmatism in climate policy? The EU and changing practices of climate justice', p.3

⁸ von Lucke, 'Principled pragmatism in climate policy? The EU and changing practices of climate justice', p.8

In addition to von Lucke's article, this paper takes inspiration from researcher Jason Hickel who combines racial and climate justice in his research. In collaboration with other authors, he argues the consequences of climate change are unevenly distributed around the world, and therefore the mainstream climate discourse requires a discussion on structural discrimination.⁹ In fact, the minority populations in the Global South "bear the brunt of the health impacts of climate change, despite being least responsible for it."¹⁰ The current situation is explained by tracing it back to colonialism, which is a rare connection to be made in the climate discourse. It was only in 2022 that the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) recognized "historical and ongoing patterns of inequity such as colonialism" as one of the factors in susceptibility to climate change.¹¹ This is a basis for my thesis, too.

The past of colonialism and the presence of neocolonialism has thus resulted in low-income regions being more vulnerable to climate change.¹² Subsequently, these countries in the Global South are also less able to adapt to the new circumstances, which are unequal, as the Global North represents 14% of the world's population, yet is responsible for 92% of historical carbon dioxide emissions in excess of the safe planetary boundary.¹³ Finally, the authors discuss the question of race in policy-making, saying "White supremacy enables environmental racism—ie, racial discrimination in environmental policymaking, the targeting of communities of colour in exposure to polluting industries, and the under-representation of minoritised people in environmental decision making and movements."¹⁴ This is one aspect I take into consideration as well in comparing discourses from the Global North and South. The research paper by Thilagawathi Abi Deivanayagam, Sujitha Selvarajah, Jason Hickel et al. is one example of applying postcolonial perspectives to climate change discourse and policy-making. In studying

⁹ T. A. Deivanayagam, S. Selvarajah, J. Hickel, R. R Guinto, P. de Moraes Sato, J. Bonifacio, S. English, M. Huq, R. Issa, H. Mulindwa, H. P. Nagginda, C. Sharma, D. Devakumar, 'Climate change, health, and discrimination: action towards racial justice', *Science Direct*, Vol 401, Iss 10370, 2022, p.5

¹⁰ Deivanayagam, Selvarajah, Hickel et al. 'Climate change, health, and discrimination: action towards racial justice' p.5

¹¹ Deivanayagam, Selvarajah, Hickel et al. 'Climate change, health, and discrimination: action towards racial justice' p.5

¹² Deivanayagam, Selvarajah, Hickel et al. 'Climate change, health, and discrimination: action towards racial justice' p.6

¹³ Deivanayagam, Selvarajah, Hickel et al. 'Climate change, health, and discrimination: action towards racial justice' p.6

¹⁴ Deivanayagam, Selvarajah, Hickel et al. 'Climate change, health, and discrimination: action towards racial justice' p.6

my question of climate justice and climate reparations for the Global South, I follow the same approach.

1.3 Research Limitations

Both entities studied in this text, the EU and the Global South, are complex and non-homogenous subjects. Using these terms without care could mean that the analysis becomes general and vague. Therefore, I have decided to focus on the EU Commission, instead of examining the entire EU and its institutions. Meanwhile, there is still a complexity in the Commission's understanding of climate justice and I can only assume a certain consensus, but this is still fragile. When it comes to the Global South, I am following the path that researchers such as Jensen and Hickel have taken in their studies of climate change and its victims. In their writing, the Global South is synonymous with the most vulnerable regions and peoples. Thus, while I am studying small island developing states in particular, I am drawing conclusions for a wider community, since I believe Gaston Browne's claims are representative of the discourse on climate justice. Simultaneously, the same issue of consensus applies here and there are thus limitations in how much I can extrapolate the result of my analysis.

1.4 Disposition

The paper begins with a background chapter (2) where the EU's present-day politics regarding climate change, in particular through the European Green Deal, as well as the history of Loss and Damage proposals are explained. Following this, I present the theoretical background (3) of postcolonialism. Moving on, the methodology of critical discourse analysis, as well as my chosen data is discussed (4). Based on this, I present my analysis (5) and discuss this (6). Finally, I present ideas for future research (7) and summarize the paper in my conclusion (8).

2. Background

2.1 European Union Politics on Climate Change

During recent years, the European Union's work with climate change and sustainable development has intensified. In 2019, EU leaders decided on a common goal of EU climate neutrality by 2050.¹⁵ In order to achieve the net-zero balance in all member states, it was recognized that joint efforts had to be made. A year later, EU leaders took a step further and decided all EU countries should be obliged to cut greenhouse gas emissions by at least 55% by the year 2030. In addition, the European Council, consisting of the heads of state, puts emphasis on ensuring economic growth, markets and jobs, as well as technological development in the future. The Council also underlines the transition will be "socially balanced and fair".¹⁶ Following the announcement of these goals, leaders asked the Commission to carry out this work. It would then become newly-elected Commission President Ursula von der Leyen's responsibility to present the European Green Deal.¹⁷

The Green Deal includes several initiatives, most importantly, the 'Fit for 55' package, which was presented by the Commission in July 2021.¹⁸ The package aims to turn the EU climate ambitions into EU law and consists of a list of proposals, such as a Social Climate Fund. In addition, the Green Deal includes other initiatives; firstly, the climate law is a regulation that will transform political ambition into a legal obligation for EU member states. This law will bind them to commit to climate protection measures. Secondly, the deal focuses on EU strategy for adaptation to climate change, including particular cases such as the strategy to ensure biodiversity. Following the Council's emphasis on a just transition, the Green Deal underlines this aspect as well. It is important to mention the concept of justice concerns Europe and EU member states. This is essential in the Deal since the EU recognizes that climate neutrality is more difficult to achieve in some member states compared to others. To manage this, a fund was established in June 2021 and up to 90 million euros were pledged to go into it. Finally, the EU

¹⁵ European Council, 'Climate Change: What the EU is doing'

¹⁶ European Council, 'Climate Change: What the EU is doing'

¹⁷ M. Siddi, 'Coping With Turbulence: EU Negotiations on the 2030 and 2050 Climate Targets', *Politics and Governance*, Vol 9, Iss 3, p.328

¹⁸ European Council, 'European Green Deal'

institutions play different roles in the implementation of the Green Deal. Firstly, the European Council provides “political guidance on the EU’s policies.”¹⁹ In addition, the Commission sends proposals and initiatives to the Council of the EU and the European Parliament. After receiving these, the final step is to adopt legislation, which in most cases is decided upon in the framework of the ordinary legislative procedure. This means that the Council and the European Parliament co-decide on climate policies.

2.2 Loss and Damage

The history of Loss and Damage goes back to 1991 when the Alliance of Small Island Developing States (AOSIS) presented the concept of an International Climate Fund, as well as an International Insurance Pool.²⁰ The purpose of the Fund would be to finance attempts to counter the consequences of climate change, while the Pool would provide financial insurance in the particular struggle against rising sea levels. In fact, special emphasis was at the time put on the Pool, saying its resources would go to “compensate the most vulnerable small island and low-lying coastal developing countries from loss and damage resulting from sea level rise.”²¹ This clearly exemplifies an early demand for climate justice through climate reparations for exposed countries in the Global South.

In case of implementation of these funds, developed countries would provide the money, showing the distinction between those who are able to finance climate action, and those who are not.²² In fact, this distinction is clarified by a classification of Group 1 and Group 2 countries. Group 1 concerns the countries most exposed to climate change, and Group 2 is the industrialized developed countries that will equitably share the cost.²³ In 1991, a detailed plan for how the financing will work was presented as well. It focuses on 10-year plans and the sums being paid to vulnerable countries will depend on the levels.²⁴ Figures would thus be agreed upon and development evaluated in 5-year spans. Subsequently, there would be fixed periods of

¹⁹ European Council, ‘European Green Deal’

²⁰ ‘Negotiation of a Framework Convention on Climate Change’, Intergovernmental Negotiation Committee for a Framework Convention on Climate Change, Working Group II, 17.12.1991, p.2

²¹ ‘Negotiation of a Framework Convention on Climate Change’ 17.12.1991, p.2

²² ‘Negotiation of a Framework Convention on Climate Change’, 17.12.1991, p.2

²³ ‘Negotiation of a Framework Convention on Climate Change’, 17.12.1991, p.3

²⁴ ‘Negotiation of a Framework Convention on Climate Change’, 17.12.1991, p.5

insurance between which the Conference of the Parties, who would direct the process, would plan out the next period with regards to development and further needs.²⁵

Finally, the Conference of the Parties would also be the authority evaluating what countries would be eligible for funding. In fact, the negotiation refers to the Ministerial Declaration of the Second World Climate Conference, which identified the groups of countries most vulnerable to climate change. Based on this, the proposal also points out that this classification can be a base for loss and damages related to drought and desertification, and not only sea-related issues.²⁶ The main goal for climate reparations would be *protecting* vulnerable land. The negotiation puts special emphasis on this term, saying that it means building structures that stop rising sea levels from destroying the land.²⁷ This proposal was not included in the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), which was established in 1992. The Kyoto Protocol from 1998 did, however, consider insurance mechanisms in line with what the negotiation demanded. Meanwhile, the AOSIS would continue its commitment to climate justice, presenting new proposals at climate conferences in 2008 and 2012.²⁸ Finally, the demands were brought up again at COP27 in 2022. This is the context, as well as the subject for analysis, of this thesis.

Arthur Wyns credits the strong lobbying of the G77, led by Pakistan, throughout 2022 and at COP27 for the success of firstly putting the issue on the agenda, and secondly getting the parties to agree on a loss and damage deal.²⁹ In fact, the unity of the G77 was described to be the success factor in convincing developed countries to agree to the proposal. After COP27 ended, many questions remained unanswered regarding the structure and implications of the fund. At COP28, a Transitional Committee will present a proposal. In line with this, the fund would also go into operation in December 2023. It is important to mention that the implementation of a fund does not mean binding climate financing.³⁰ Therefore, researchers and actors in vulnerable Global South nations are presently urging that the fund takes historical responsibility for climate change

²⁵ 'Negotiation of a Framework Convention on Climate Change', 17.12.1991, p.6

²⁶ 'Negotiation of a Framework Convention on Climate Change', 17.12.1991, p.7

²⁷ 'Negotiation of a Framework Convention on Climate Change', 17.12.1991, p.8

²⁸ Y. Nazarova, *International Organization for Migration*

²⁹ A. Wyns, 'COP27 establishes loss and damage fund to respond to human cost of climate change', *The Lancet*, Vol 7, 2023 pp.21-22

³⁰ Wyns, 'COP27 establishes loss and damage fund to respond to human cost of climate change', p.22

into consideration.³¹ In other words, there are demands for the fund to have a strong basis for global climate justice.

3. Theoretical Background

3.1 Postcolonialism

According to Lars Jensen, “colonialism is pivotal to understanding the evolution of global history”.³² In addition, Jensen establishes that environmental destruction is rooted in colonialism,³³ which is why I have chosen postcolonial theory to outline the EU’s current discourse on the eco-crisis. This approach underlines historical factors and their importance for the time we live in since “colonialism still impacts the current world order both in terms of the legacy of colonialism and as renewed forms of dominance replacing older.”³⁴ In this sense, the postcolonial perspective sees colonialism as vital in understanding the EU’s position in the world today, as well as in understanding the environmental crisis.

In the postcolonial theory that is relevant to European Studies, one can use two schools of particular importance: postcolonial Europe and decoloniality. The two overlap in several ways but also differ, as decoloniality sees Europe as a part of the greater domination of the Global North.³⁵ According to Gurinder K. Bhambra, postcolonial and decolonial arguments succeed in challenging the historical narratives originating in Europe.³⁶ These narratives lay the foundation for the dominant discourse today and the postcolonial scholarship “has been integral to the exercise of opening out and questioning the implied assumptions” within it.³⁷ Consequently, postcolonial and decolonial perspectives allow us to look at Europe in a nuanced way and relate its internal discourse to surrounding discourses. One has to mention that the two approaches are still developing and being defined. In my paper, I aim to use aspects of both paths, which I will now describe in further detail.

³¹ Wynn, ‘COP27 establishes loss and damage fund to respond to human cost of climate change’, p.22

³² L. Jensen, *Postcolonial Europe*, London; New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2020, p.6

³³ Jensen, *Postcolonial Europe*, p.139

³⁴ Jensen, *Postcolonial Europe*, p.139

³⁵ Jensen, *Postcolonial Europe*, p.8

³⁶ G. K. Bhambra, ‘Postcolonial and decolonial dialogues’, *Postcolonial Studies*, 17:2, 2014, p.115

³⁷ G. K. Bhambra, ‘Postcolonial and decolonial dialogues’, p.117

3.1.1 Postcolonial Europe

Postcolonial Europe offers a reflection on Europe's discourse on its role in the world today. These ideas can be applicable to the EU as an institutional representation of Europe (even if not all of Europe is included in the Union). For example, taken-for-granted ideas such as European universality and European relevance on the whole globe are two points of interest to me.³⁸ Here, I stress that I will focus on the climate discourse, and not the wider discourse of Europe's role on a global scale. However, EU identity can be linked to the eco-crisis and I find the tools presented by postcolonial and decolonial thinkers to be fruitful here. For example, one can take the idea of Europe's loss of global centrality, which is described as a current crisis on the continent.³⁹

More specifically, postcolonial thinkers discuss narratives and discourses that challenge the dominance of the West.⁴⁰ The postcolonial scholar Homi Bhaba states that postcolonial theory "should be seen instead as 'an attempt to interrupt the Western discourses of modernity through ... displacing, interrogative subaltern or postslavery narratives and the critical-theoretical perspectives they engender.'"⁴¹ By including 'other' cultural traditions in the dominant discourses, Bhaba argues that the narrative can be changed. Similarly, Gayatri C. Spivak discusses the subaltern's role in Western discourses. In her research, she focuses on the Third World Subject's representation in the dominant discourses. She writes about "the relationship between Western discourses and the possibility of speaking of (or for) the subaltern (woman)."⁴² This point is of interest to me as the climate crisis' greatest victims are women in the Global South, as stated by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), which singles out women as a group facing higher risks from the impacts.⁴³ Hence, I use Spivak's theory to see how the EU Commission speaks of people at risk.

³⁸ Jensen, *Postcolonial Europe*, p.134

³⁹ Jensen, *Postcolonial Europe*, p.137

⁴⁰ Which I will refer to as the Global North in this paper, due to the inequality in managing the climate crisis between the Global North and South. For more information, see J. Hickel *Existing climate mitigation scenarios perpetuate colonial inequalities*

⁴¹ H. Bhaba in G. K. Bhambra, 'Postcolonial and decolonial dialogues', p.116

⁴² G. K. Bhambra, 'Postcolonial and decolonial dialogues', p.117

⁴³ UNFCCC, 'Five Reasons Why Climate Action Needs Women', 8.3.2023

3.1.2 Decoloniality

Having most of its scholarship in the Global South, decoloniality offers insight from voices in a non-European context, which is important in a paper about demands for climate reparations from the Global South. Anibal Quijano's concept of "coloniality of power" lays the groundwork for the decolonial perspective, which was proposed by Walter Mignolo and Mladina Tlostanova. Quijano theorizes that Europeans simultaneously affirm their sense of self and deny the existing colonial order.⁴⁴ Furthermore, he aligns modernity with coloniality since he argues that "the modernity that Europe takes as the context for its own being is, in fact, so deeply imbricated in the structures of European colonial domination over the rest of the world".⁴⁵ In other words, European identity is deeply rooted in its colonial past and related to the coloniality of the present. Therefore, decoloniality focuses on questions of power in the ongoing presence of coloniality. The decolonial scholar Walter Mignolo explores this power question further;

The colonial matrix of power, that Mignolo argues is the inextricable combination of the rhetoric of modernity (progress, development, growth) and the logic of coloniality (poverty, misery, inequality), has to be central to any discussion of contemporary global inequalities and the historical basis of their emergence.⁴⁶

This idea is of particular interest to me in my analysis of climate reparations from the Global North to the Global South, since the two mirror this matrix. The decolonial school, therefore, aims to highlight perspectives and positionalities that are radically different from and question Western rationality as the only frame of reference when it comes to existence, analysis and thought.⁴⁷

Moreover, Dipesh Chakrabarty's idea of "first Europe, then elsewhere" is of relevance.⁴⁸ This has been tied to the spread of capitalism, but can in my opinion also be used in relation to the climate discourse by asking where investment in preventive measures to safeguard lives and nature is taking place. This idea of time is a historicism that allowed Marx to say that the "country that is more developed industrially only shows, to the less developed, the image of its own future."⁴⁹

⁴⁴ G. K. Bhambra, 'Postcolonial and decolonial dialogues', p.118

⁴⁵ G. K. Bhambra, 'Postcolonial and decolonial dialogues', p.118

⁴⁶ G. K. Bhambra, 'Postcolonial and decolonial dialogues', p.119

⁴⁷ W. Mignolo & C. Walsh, *On Decoloniality*, Durham: Duke University Press, 2018, p.17

⁴⁸ D. Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*, Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 2000, p.7

⁴⁹ Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*, p.7

Similarly, European superiority can be analyzed by looking at a “not yet” attitude that can be found in Europe and its imagination of the Global South as countries not able to rule themselves.⁵⁰ This attitude prevails today against the insistence on the “now” that can be found in all movements toward democracy.⁵¹ The actors insisting on the “now” are the subaltern of the Third World. This can be applied to the Global South demanding climate justice and the EU’s stance toward the urgency of climate reparations.

⁵⁰ Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*, p.8

⁵¹ Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*, p.8

4. Methodology and data

4.1 Critical Discourse Analysis

Discourse analysis is often used to examine the power aspect in creating socio-political representations of the world. I am focusing on the power of shaping the EU-Commission's discourse on climate justice and thus, discourse analysis seems like a good method in this process. First, I will describe the theory aspect of discourse analysis, however.

In this school, there are three sub-categories: discourse analysis, discourse psychology and critical discourse analysis (CDA). Their common point is that they all consider language to be constitutive.⁵² Language always represents something more than the spoken or written word and is part of a discourse. The founder of this theory, Michel Foucault, described discourse as “practices that systematically form the objects of which we speak.”⁵³ *Discourse* has different meanings in different spheres, however, such as linguistics and psychology, and this is where the three sub-categories come into play. What they have in common is that they recognize power structures and look at what is considered to be right or wrong.⁵⁴ For example, this can concern knowledge and when combined with power, it is established that some people have the legitimacy to speak about a particular topic. This is the “power in discourse.”⁵⁵ In that sense, discourses not only shape the shared social consciousness of a particular group but there are also forces at work creating those discourses.

The ‘critical’ in CDA means that there are material aspects that affect discourses.⁵⁶ In fact, Norman Fairclough, who founded this school, is inspired by Marxism and analyzes how social conflict is mirrored in texts and discourses. CDA is less constructivist and more critical of society than the other paths in discourse analysis. In this sense, it is often used to examine social inequalities deriving from racism and capitalism; “CDA combines *critique* of discourse and *explanation* of how it figures within and contributes to the existing social reality, as a basis for

⁵² K. Boréus & G. Bergström, *Textens mening och makt*, Lund: Studentlitteratur, 2018, p.255

⁵³ M. Foucault 1972 in Boréus & Bergström, *Textens mening och makt*, p.253

⁵⁴ Boréus & Bergström, *Textens mening och makt*, pp.255, 258

⁵⁵ N. Fairclough 2015 in Boréus & Bergström, *Textens mening och makt*, p.255

⁵⁶ J. Angermuller et. al. 2014 in Boréus & Bergström, *Textens mening och makt*, p.307

action to change that existing reality in particular aspects”.⁵⁷ CDA was in fact developed by linguists and regards the spoken word as action. In order to understand the “real domain”, we have to use the means of text analysis and can then interpret power relations in our world.⁵⁸

Furthermore, Fairclough has established a 4-stage methodology for CDA which I use in my study:

- Stage 1: Focus upon a social wrong, in its semiotic aspect.
- Stage 2: Identify obstacles to addressing the social wrong.
- Stage 3: Consider whether the social order ‘needs’ the social wrong.
- Stage 4: Identify possible ways past the obstacles.⁵⁹

A keyword in this methodology is social *wrong*. In fact, Fairclough writes that there is a normative aspect to CDA, as one identifies ‘wrongs’ that need to be ‘righted’ from a normative standpoint. There are thus values and imaginations of a good society and a focus on action and change. The crux, however, is that there are different imaginations of justice, for example. “Critique assesses what exists, what might exist, and what should exist on the basis of a coherent set of values.”⁶⁰ This system of values will in this paper be constituted by postcolonial theory.

4.2 Data

The chosen material is an EU-Commission communication on the Green New Deal from the 7th of July 2021, “‘Fit for 55’: delivering the EU’s 2030 Climate Target on the way to climate neutrality.” I will focus particularly on the chapter “A Sustainable EU in a Sustainable World” which discusses the EU’s role in global climate change. In addition, I analyze a speech by EU-Commission Vice-President Frans Timmermans which was held at the climate conference COP27 in Sharm el-Sheikh on the 20th of November 2022, called “Speech of Frans Timmermans at the COP27 Closing Plenary.” Most importantly, the contexts in which the texts were established are different and thus they can give a nuanced representation of the EU’s climate discourse. One was written in Brussels and the other was delivered in Egypt, after a day of intense meetings between EU- and Global South representatives. The third text chosen is a collection of remarks by Gaston Browne, which were made during COP27 on the 7th of

⁵⁷ N. Fairclough 2015 in Boréus & Bergström, *Textens mening och makt*, p.307

⁵⁸ Boréus & Bergström, *Textens mening och makt*, pp.306-307

⁵⁹ N. Fairclough, *Critical discourse analysis: the critical study of language*, Harlow: Longman, 2010, p.226

⁶⁰ Fairclough, *Critical discourse analysis: the critical study of language*, p.7

November, 2022. Browne's statements were made during a roundtable discussion on the topic of Innovative Finance for Climate and Development. Due to Browne's position as Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda and Chair of the Alliance of Small Island States, it is clear that he represents the position of vulnerable countries in the Global South. In my analysis of the three texts, I will relate the content to the discourses, contexts and actors implicated.

5. Analysis

In the first stage of my analysis, I have identified text fragments connected to climate justice. In this process, I singled out recording units which later become the basis for my analysis of particular themes within the climate justice issue, such as *urgency* and *ambition* constituting the discourse. In the following text, these themes and the related analysis of power dynamics are presented.

5.1 Commission Communication

5.1.1 The EU as a Leader in Climate Action

In the analysis of the Commission's Communication, the theme of the EU as a leader is one of the key findings. This overarching theme of leadership in the discourse is constructed through concepts such as being a role model and responsibility.

A Role Model

A consistent feature of the text is that the EU is assigned the position of a role model in climate action and as such should be followed by the rest of the world. At the beginning of the fourth chapter, it is stated that the European Green Deal “is contributing to transform the global narrative” (...) and offering an example to follow.”⁶¹ In fact, the idea of the EU leading by example is presented early in the Communication, where it is stated that the EU is ambitious with its climate targets of reducing net emissions by at least 55% by 2030, as well as aiming to be the first climate-neutral continent by 2050.⁶² The European Green Deal is described as a “growth and competitiveness strategy” that offers “an example to follow”.⁶³ While the fourth chapter begins with this statement, it ends with descriptions of vulnerable, poor and developing countries in need of help, which creates a binary opposition. In addressing those who are in need of help, the EU underlines itself as “the world's largest contributor of public climate finance” to

⁶¹ ‘Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee of the Regions’, Brussels, 14.7.2021, p. 12

⁶² ‘Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee of the Regions’, p.1

⁶³ ‘Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee of the Regions’, p.12

vulnerable states.⁶⁴ Hence, the EU Commission claims leadership by representing the Other in comparison to oneself. To conclude, the Commission presents itself as a powerful actor, able to influence and aid others.

Responsibility

Another key concept found in the studied Communication is a shared responsibility for the planet. Firstly, it is mentioned that “the package translates the polluter pays principle into practice.”⁶⁵ In addition, the Commission argues that the industrial transition “must be a collective and inclusive effort.”⁶⁶ Later on in the text, the Commission does, however, state that “while only accounting for 8% of global CO₂ emissions, the EU recognises its responsibility for a higher share of cumulative emissions.”⁶⁷ Subsequently, the meaning of responsibility is constructed in two ways.

In other words, the EU leadership in climate action is constructed as an intersection of two narratives: the EU being a role model and the EU being a responsible actor. This narrative is built on the basis of the EU’s capability in comparison to the incapability of the vulnerable. EU leadership is thus necessary.

5.1.2 Climate Justice Through Climate Financing

When analyzing the discourse of climate justice, the topic of climate financing is of high relevance. By looking at the descriptions of different forms of climate financing, I analyze how the climate justice discourse is constructed.

Climate Justice for Europeans

⁶⁴ ‘Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee of the Regions’, p.13

⁶⁵ ‘Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee of the Regions’, p.2

⁶⁶ ‘Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee of the Regions’, p.7

⁶⁷ ‘Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee of the Regions’, p.12

A key feature of the European Green Deal is the implementation of a Social Climate Fund, which will support “European citizens most affected or at risk of energy or mobility poverty.”⁶⁸ The fund will provide €72.2 billion for the period 2025-2032 and go to those who are most exposed to the increase in fossil fuel prices during the transition to green energy.⁶⁹ Thus, future frameworks for climate justice are underway. In addition, it is established that the fund builds on existing solidarity mechanisms since it is stated that “solidarity is a defining principle of the European Green Deal.”⁷⁰ Subsequently, the Communication recognizes different capabilities in adapting to climate change due to differences in wealth.

Support

Regarding the framework for climate justice mechanisms, the EU’s strategy assures “support to climate finance to help vulnerable countries adapt to climate change and invest in reducing greenhouse gas emissions”.⁷¹ Here, the keyword is *support*, as it implies the existence of other actors. Moving forward, the Commission proposes a Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM) which is said to be “a climate action instrument.”⁷² The mechanism would on one hand protect the EU, and on the other, global climate policy by reducing emissions globally and promoting sectors to become more sustainable. Hence, the mechanism is also described as an invitation to international partners to increase their climate action.

Climate Financing

The topic of international climate financing is introduced in the last few sentences of the Communication. The countries to whom the EU intends to grant this money are described as follows; “vulnerable countries”, “low- and middle-income countries” and “the least developed countries.”⁷³ It is not specified how this money will flow to these countries, only that there will

⁶⁸ ‘Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee of the Regions’, p.4

⁶⁹ ‘Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee of the Regions’, p.4

⁷⁰ ‘Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee of the Regions’, p.4

⁷¹ ‘Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee of the Regions’, p.13

⁷² ‘Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee of the Regions’, p.12

⁷³ ‘Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee of the Regions’, p.13

be “particular attention to the needs of the least developed countries.”⁷⁴ This indicates that the concept of climate justice is present in the discourse.

To summarize, climate justice is present in the discourse but is only explicitly mentioned in regard to Europeans. When it comes to international justice, this is expressed by mentioning climate financing.

5.2 Speech by Frans Timmermans

While the Communication was written in Brussels by the EU Commission, the context surrounding Frans Timmermans’ speech at the closing plenary of COP27 is very different. According to the Guardian, the speech followed “deadlocked global climate talks” and the speech is described as a “dramatic intervention” on behalf of the EU.⁷⁵ In fact, the speech is a response to key demands from the Global South that were voiced throughout the climate conference. The demands concerned climate reparations in the shape of a Loss and Damages Fund. Additionally, it is important to underline that wealthy countries had opposed this idea and the EU acted alone in its commitment to the fund.⁷⁶

5.2.1 Telling the Truth

As a foundation for his speech, Timmermans mentions the gap between climate science and climate policies. Most importantly, he states that major emitters need to cut their emissions. Moving on, he says that current ambitions are not enough, that this decade is vital in starting climate action, and finally, that voices telling the truth are needed. I will present how the discourse of truth is shaped using key concepts of the speech.

Friendship

⁷⁴ ‘Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee of the Regions’, p.13

⁷⁵ F. Harvey, A. Morton, P. Greenfield, ‘Cop27: EU agrees to loss and damage fund to help poor countries amid climate disasters’, *The Guardian*, 18.11.2022

⁷⁶ Harvey, Morton & Greenfield, ‘Cop27: EU agrees to loss and damage fund to help poor countries amid climate disasters’

Deepening this truth aspect, Timmermans says that “friends are only friends if they also tell you things you might not want to hear,”⁷⁷ implying that the EU acts from the position of friendship that assumes open, honest, and equal relationships. More specifically, the EU’s friends are the Pakistani people, the people of Eastern Africa and those living in the Pacific and Caribbean regions.⁷⁸ In other words, Timmermans approaches the exposed Global South.

Ambition and Failure

Similarly to the Communication, the EU is constructed as an ambitious institution throughout the speech; the EU has attempted to implement what scientists demand and it has also tried to convince other parties to follow their lead.⁷⁹ Here, clear links to the European Green Deal are visible. For instance, Timmermans mentions the goal of halting temperature changes at 1.5 degrees. While discussing these ambitious commitments, a clear disappointment is articulated, since the EU has not been able to convince other countries to commit to climate action in the same way. Timmermans mentions the reasons; firstly, “some are afraid of the transition ahead” and secondly, there are concerns relating to the cost of the transition.⁸⁰ Timmermans states that he understands these concerns and that many Europeans share them.

Morals

A moral dilemma is described by Timmermans, since the deal agreed upon by the parties “is not enough on mitigation”.⁸¹ Thus, Timmermans presents the EU as an actor who would have liked to have even higher ambitions. As a result, he compares “walking away” to committing to the Loss and Damages Fund. By saying this, it seems as though he is speaking for the other, reluctant parties, however. His conclusion is that the EU is proud of its contribution to the creation of the fund, although the Global North has fallen short. Therefore, in the future, even higher ambitions are needed. More specifically, the situation presents the opportunity to “bridge the gap between those in need and those in a position to contribute to addressing their needs, on the basis of their today’s potential.”⁸²

⁷⁷ ‘Speech of Frans Timmermans at the COP27 Closing Plenary’

⁷⁸ ‘Speech of Frans Timmermans at the COP27 Closing Plenary’

⁷⁹ ‘Speech of Frans Timmermans at the COP27 Closing Plenary’

⁸⁰ ‘Speech of Frans Timmermans at the COP27 Closing Plenary’

⁸¹ ‘Speech of Frans Timmermans at the COP27 Closing Plenary’

⁸² ‘Speech of Frans Timmermans at the COP27 Closing Plenary’

Urgency

Since much of the world is reluctant to commit to climate action, the EU argues for more urgency on the whole globe. Here, the purpose of the speech has to be kept in mind, since it addresses the global situation and not only internal pursuits, as the communication on ‘Fit for 55’ does. Throughout the speech, there are numerous claims regarding time. For instance, Timmermans states that “our people and planet have no more time to lose” and that “we pledge to pick up speed again, starting now and here.”⁸³ Thus, the discourse is marked by an instance of *now*.

To summarize, Timmermans insists on telling the truth in climate action. This discourse is constructed by using terms of friendship and ambition and is built on the basis of morality.

5.2.2 Solidarity with the Global South

As previously stated, Timmermans addresses the vulnerable countries of the Global South as “our” friends in Pakistan, Eastern Africa, the Pacific and the Caribbean. I will now examine this view of vulnerable people and present the building blocks of Timmermans’ discourse of solidarity.

‘We’ and ‘Them’

In the speech, a clear “we” is present. Timmermans urges this “we” to “just listen to our friends.”⁸⁴ In creating this “we”, it seems as though he means the Global North, which is struggling to decide on a unified approach. Moreover, Timmermans embarks on the topic of global climate justice by explaining how some countries are more affected by climate change than others. Some examples given are flooding, drought and storms.⁸⁵ In the speech, the Global South is not addressed as “you”, but “they”.

To Deserve

⁸³ T. Reilly, ‘COP27: Loss and Damages COP’, *Global Policy Watch*, 16.12.2022

⁸⁴ ‘Speech of Frans Timmermans at the COP27 Closing Plenary’

⁸⁵ ‘Speech of Frans Timmermans at the COP27 Closing Plenary’

Moreover, the earlier-mentioned discourse on ambition and truth-telling is given a purpose in this section of the speech since the vulnerable countries in the Global South “deserve our support for the loss and damage they face.”⁸⁶ Moving on, he also explains why the EU is discontent with the outcome of COP27; enough efforts were not reached. Thus, the most vulnerable have been let down and Timmermans stands in solidarity with them. The EU is not only presented as a powerful entity but more importantly, as a mediator.

In summary, the discourse of solidarity is constructed by calling attention to the people most exposed to climate change. Timmermans aims to correct a *wrong*, namely that these people have been let down and deserve better.

5.3 Remarks by Gaston Browne

Before presenting the major claim of the remarks made by Gaston Browne, it is worth stating that Timmermans mentions the AOSIS in his speech, highlighting that countries within it have fought for its implementation for decades.⁸⁷ Hence, Timmermans’ speech can be seen as a response to Browne’s statements. The investigation of this final document solely aims to illustrate what demands are made in the Global South, in order to compare the discourse to the EU Commission’s approach.

Demand for Loss and Damages Fund

Keeping in mind that the AOSIS first launched this idea, it comes as no surprise that Browne regards the implementation of the Loss and Damages Fund as critical in the future of climate action. Due to the precarious situation in Small Island Developing States (SIDS), “an effective and timely response to people living in the most vulnerable countries” is needed.⁸⁸ In other words, the current climate financing system is not nearly adequate. SIDS in particular struggle due to the fact that their economies typically are small and dependent on a single sector such as tourism. Simultaneously, SIDS often have a narrow revenue base and high debt levels. When disasters hit these countries, the impact is extreme and all state finance is directed at rebuilding

⁸⁶ ‘Speech of Frans Timmermans at the COP27 Closing Plenary’

⁸⁷ ‘Speech of Frans Timmermans at the COP27 Closing Plenary’

⁸⁸ ‘Remarks by the Honourable Gaston Browne, Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda, and Chair of the Alliance of Small Island States at a High Level Round Table at COP27’, Alliance of Small Island States, 07.11.2022

essential infrastructure. Browne states that this situation is only exacerbated today. There is therefore a key element of urgency.

Ideological Shift

When asked what coordinated global response can be developed to facilitate access to climate finance for vulnerable countries, Browne states that “there clearly needs to be an ideological shift as to how finance operates, because the current system is consistently leaving the most vulnerable behind.”⁸⁹ By mentioning this wish, climate justice demands are put on the table and the Global North’s approach to climate change is criticized. Moreover, it is difficult to access funding, as there are numerous obstacles and barriers in the way. Simultaneously, the Global South, as exemplified by SIDS, faces challenges already in the *lack* of loss and damage funding.⁹⁰ Meanwhile, the EU Commission states that it ambitiously works with climate financing. This shows the gap between the EU and the Global South. Therefore, Browne urges the international community to give an updated global response on this topic as soon as possible.

Unique Needs

Furthermore, Browne argues that the loss and damage solutions must have a strong focus on “the needs of the vulnerable.”⁹¹ The process of accessing climate finance is currently marked by “inadequacy, imbalance, and unpredictability.”⁹² In addition, SIDS are faced with difficulties since the current system “operates on a one size-fits-all model” which disregards the “unique needs” these states have.⁹³ Thus, pre-existing mechanisms are not enough and climate financing has to take a new shape in the Loss and Damages Fund. Browne’s critique can also be applied to the previously analyzed documents. Descriptions concerning the most vulnerable in need of help are vague and one does not mention the complexity of the climate issue.

⁸⁹ ‘Remarks by the Honourable Gaston Browne, Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda, and Chair of the Alliance of Small Island States at a High Level Round Table at COP27’

⁹⁰ ‘Remarks by the Honourable Gaston Browne, Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda, and Chair of the Alliance of Small Island States at a High Level Round Table at COP27’

⁹¹ ‘Remarks by the Honourable Gaston Browne, Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda, and Chair of the Alliance of Small Island States at a High Level Round Table at COP27’

⁹² ‘Remarks by the Honourable Gaston Browne, Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda, and Chair of the Alliance of Small Island States at a High Level Round Table at COP27’

⁹³ ‘Remarks by the Honourable Gaston Browne, Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda, and Chair of the Alliance of Small Island States at a High Level Round Table at COP27’

Climate Financing by the International Community

Browne's demands are clear; a new climate financing system is needed to ensure that Global South states at risk can move forward in safety. Vital characteristics of this potential new system are fairness, accessibility and adaptability to different states and their individual needs. In his discourse, Browne addresses the global community, the UN, its member states, International Financial Institutions (IFI's) and "other entities".⁹⁴ One of these entities might be the EU. Hence, the power imbalance presented by Browne is clear; funding to vulnerable states is withheld by wealthier nations. In addition, the multilateral funds of the UNFCCC "do not presently have dedicated sources of support to developing countries to implement ex-post responses."⁹⁵ Browne expresses that this is the main gap in the current climate mitigation process, and thus I conclude that the EU Commission's emphasis on solidarity can be put into question if looked at through a Global South perspective.

⁹⁴ 'Remarks by the Honourable Gaston Browne, Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda, and Chair of the Alliance of Small Island States at a High Level Round Table at COP27'

⁹⁵ 'Remarks by the Honourable Gaston Browne, Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda, and Chair of the Alliance of Small Island States at a High Level Round Table at COP27'

6. Discussion

Having presented my data and the particular findings in terms of key concepts and themes, I now analyze the development of the EU Commission's discourse regarding global climate justice and climate reparations. On one hand, I discuss the documents in relation to postcolonial Europe and decoloniality, as well as relevant research. On the other hand, I describe changes that have taken place in the discourse and compare the Commission's discourse with the key demands found in Browne's remarks. Finally, using Fairclough's methodology, I analyze the work of power and construction of power asymmetries in every text by looking at the social *wrong*, its implications and the obstacles that stop this *wrong* from being addressed.

6.1 Commission Communication

6.1.1 European Universality

A consistent feature of the text is that the EU is represented as a role model in climate action and thus is to be followed by the rest of the world. One interpretation of this discourse is the idea of European universality. According to Jensen, this means that "uniquely European ideas are held up as an ideal for the rest of the world to copy."⁹⁶ Moreover, unique ideas are only believed to originate from Europe and thus, non-Europeans are limited to imitation and internalization. This leads to the question of whether voices from the Global South are allowed to influence the climate justice discourse or whether they are expected to merely embrace the given approach. In relation to this issue, Mikael Klintman's research on knowledge resistance is of interest. According to him, the culture we come from tells us what claims we should believe and which to ignore, for example when it comes to how to preserve the environment.⁹⁷ In the question of climate change, this can be applied to Europeans rejecting alternative knowledge since we firmly believe in our own ideas.

According to Jensen, European knowledge lacks an understanding of Europe's colonial world history. This colonial world history is absent from "the mainstream European historiography,

⁹⁶ Jensen, *Postcolonial Europe*, p.3

⁹⁷ M. Klintman, *Knowledge resistance: how we avoid insight from others*, Manchester University Press, 2019, p.84

cultural history and political science.”⁹⁸ According to Klintman’s theory on knowledge resistance, this can be seen as a conscious discursive strategy. There is thus a choice to underline certain parts of history while ignoring other parts that in turn produce an absence of the history of imperialism and colonialism. When voices from former colonial domains disrupt the silence, the result on the European part is historical distancing.⁹⁹ Namely, historical explanations for the inequality in managing the eco-crisis are missing from the Communication, which can be interpreted as the EU distancing itself from its history of high emissions and environmental destruction. Decolonial thinker Quijano makes similar claims on the topic of Europe and its self-image. His idea of European affirmation of the self and simultaneous denial of the colonial order can be applied to the issue of the EU’s role in climate change.¹⁰⁰ By underlining its role as a leader, the EU Commission is also underpinning its power in climate change mitigation and on the global scene. In fact, Quijano argues that European colonial domination is deeply connected to Europe’s perception of itself.¹⁰¹ Hence, being a key figure is embedded in the discourse of imperialist leadership.

Does the EU, as a leader on the global scene, initiate a dialogue with vulnerable countries? The EU Commission intends to strengthen its climate diplomacy in order to “enhance cooperation” and “facilitate the global transition.”¹⁰² This statement can be seen as an attempt to approach the Global South as an equal partner. Simultaneously, the concept of climate diplomacy also makes it seem as though the EU plans to convince states in the Global South to commit to climate action. Taking into account the Global South’s demands for climate justice, as exemplified by the AOSIS, the question is whether there is a need for the EU to do so. Meanwhile, the other actors remain unspecified in the Communication and therefore, it is difficult to tell what political subjects the EU intends to reach out to. It is clear that the EU sees itself as a powerful actor, since it intends to transform the global narrative on climate action. This also indicates the power dynamic created by the discourse; the EU sees itself to be in a position to change the global approach according to its own image of what needs to be done.

⁹⁸ Jensen, *Postcolonial Europe*, p.3

⁹⁹ Jensen, *Postcolonial Europe*, p.3

¹⁰⁰ Bhambra, ‘Postcolonial and decolonial dialogues’, p.118

¹⁰¹ Bhambra, ‘Postcolonial and decolonial dialogues’, p.118

¹⁰² ‘Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee of the Regions’, p.13

This leads to the question of the possibility to combine the leadership and responsibility that is presented in the Communication as emblematic of the EU's role. According to Hickel, the EU-28 has consistently been one of the greatest greenhouse gas emitters on the globe.¹⁰³ In a study that takes consumption and international trade into account, he shows that the EU was the second-strongest emitter between 1850 and 2015. Only in 2015, it was the third-strongest. In studying these numbers, Hickel describes historical responsibility as 'climate debt'.¹⁰⁴ Countries that have exceeded or overshot their fair share of greenhouse emissions owe this debt to countries that have stayed within planetary boundaries of safe global emissions. Subsequently, Hickel's study identifies the EU-28 as a group with an enormous climate debt. Importantly, leadership and responsibility are not directly linked in the Communication but rather consecutively addressed. Indeed, it could be difficult for the EU to explicitly articulate this link. In admitting its historical responsibility for climate change, one undermines its authority as an ambitious and committed global leader.

Interestingly, the Communication states that "the polluter pays" principle will be put into action. This principle is a key feature of responsibility in climate debt conceptualization, as argued by Cynthia D. Moe-Lobeda.¹⁰⁵ She writes that the recognition of climate debt is proposed by voices in the Global South that argue that a deep transformation of the discourse should take place. Accordingly, climate reparations are seen as a response to climate debt owed to the Global South.¹⁰⁶ In fact, Moe-Lobeda states that climate debt is increasingly recognized as a vital factor in climate policy. This moral responsibility is thus essential in order to respond to disastrous climate change affecting vulnerable people in the Global South.¹⁰⁷ In other words, facing the past and accepting the debt is vital in order to ensure climate justice.

¹⁰³ J. Hickel, 'Quantifying national responsibility for climate breakdown: an equality-based attribution approach for carbon dioxide emissions in excess of the planetary boundary', *Lancet Planet Health*, 2020, p.400

¹⁰⁴ Hickel, 'Quantifying national responsibility for climate breakdown: an equality-based attribution approach for carbon dioxide emissions in excess of the planetary boundary', p.400

¹⁰⁵ C. D. Moe-Lobeda, 'Climate Change as Climate Debt: Forging a Just Future', *Journal of the Society of Christian Ethics*, 36, no 1, Spr-Sum 2016 p.29

¹⁰⁶ Moe-Lobeda, 'Climate Change as Climate Debt: Forging a Just Future', pp.28-29

¹⁰⁷ Moe-Lobeda, 'Climate Change as Climate Debt: Forging a Just Future', pp.30-31

The concept of climate justice for vulnerable people is included in the Communication, but concerns only Europeans. Namely, there are plans to launch the Social Climate Fund in 2028. Based on the ideas by Chakrabarty, the focus on vulnerable Europeans can be interpreted as a manifestation of the European view of time as “first Europe, then elsewhere.”¹⁰⁸ Before realizing climate action in the Global South, the internal issues related to climate action are addressed. This discourse is also mirrored by the disposition of the Communication, seeing that the global aspect is the final chapter. The type of climate justice is therefore primarily what von Lucke describes as non-domination, meaning that states search for solutions that respect sovereignty while reducing gaps in the abilities of weaker states.¹⁰⁹ This climate justice discourse concerns the EU’s internal approach to climate change. Meanwhile, research shows that it is the Global South that is primarily affected by climate change, and with this in mind, one could argue that equal or even more attention should be given to vulnerable people outside of Europe. The case for this is especially strong if one were to keep the EU’s climate debt in mind, meaning that the EU has a moral obligation to correct *wrongs* committed in the Global South. In other words, climate reparations are “a dimension of a moral response,” according to Moe-Lobeda.¹¹⁰

6.1.2 Affirmation of the Self and Denial of the Colonial Legacy

In the fourth and final chapter of the Communication, the inequality in the effects of the climate crisis is addressed by presenting an intention for climate financing. The Commission explains this by stating that “while only accounting for 8% of global CO2 emissions, the EU recognises its responsibility for a higher share of cumulative emissions.”¹¹¹ According to Hickel’s research on the Sustainable Development Index, the EU really was responsible for 29% of excess global emissions as of 2015.¹¹² That being said, the discussion of climate financing is highly justified, since high-income countries are responsible for a greater degree of climate damages than previous studies have indicated. In other words, the EU Commission does recognize its higher responsibility for climate change, but not to the extent that researchers suggest.

¹⁰⁸ Chakrabarty, *Provincializing Europe*, p.8

¹⁰⁹ von Lucke, ‘Principled pragmatism in climate policy? The EU and changing practices of climate justice’, p.3

¹¹⁰ Moe-Lobeda, ‘Climate Change as Climate Debt: Forging a Just Future’, p.27

¹¹¹ ‘Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee of the Regions’, p.12

¹¹² Hickel, ‘Quantifying national responsibility for climate breakdown: an equality-based attribution approach for carbon dioxide emissions in excess of the planetary boundary’, p.400

According to the Commission, the EU and its member states are the globe's main contributors of climate financing to vulnerable countries, especially the Least Developed Countries and SIDS.¹¹³ This is realized through frameworks such as the Global Climate Change Alliance+ (GCCA). The main objective of the GCCA is to “promote policy dialogue and cooperation on climate change between the EU and developing economies.”¹¹⁴ Another initiative is the \$100 billion goal, which aims to gather support for developing countries from different sources. Interestingly, the EU mentions responsibility when describing the initiative, but it is “potential contributors,” meaning private actors, that have a responsibility. Another effort is the Green Climate Fund which was set up in 2010 and whose purpose is to financially support developing economies in reducing their greenhouse gas emissions and adapting to climate change. However, this project only lasts until 2023 and is an investment strategy, hence it cannot be seen as climate reparations.

One key finding presented in the analysis was that the EU approach will include “support of climate finance to help vulnerable countries to adapt to climate change and invest in reducing greenhouse gas emissions.”¹¹⁵ In using the word *support*, the EU does not intend to *initiate* climate financing, which diverges from its previously mentioned role as a leader in global change. Moreover, the text goes on to say that the EU already has a history of being the world's largest contributor to public climate finance, a process that will continue in order to help developing countries.¹¹⁶ How this has taken shape and how it will be realized in the future is left unsaid, contrary to the detailed description of the internal implementation of climate justice. While the aim is to create a meaning of solidarity and underline one's past and present role as a generous helper, essential points that could explain global climate justice are not found in the discourse. The Commission does not dwell on the most vulnerable peoples, meaning that descriptions of vulnerable people in the Global South are missing from the discourse, if one takes Spivak's words into consideration.

¹¹³ ‘International Climate Finance’, European Commission

¹¹⁴ ‘International Climate Finance’, European Commission

¹¹⁵ ‘Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee of the Regions’, p.13

¹¹⁶ ‘Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee of the Regions’, p.13

The Communication also overlooks the historical context for the state of the most vulnerable regions in need of climate financing to whom it intends to grant help. By using the decolonial approach to look at this discourse, Quijano's idea of European affirmation of the self and simultaneous denial of the colonial order can be applied. In this sense, the self-image on the part of the EU Commission is that of a helping hand that will aid vulnerable countries, but it is not discussed why these countries are incapable of facing the climate crisis without this aid in the first place. Jensen sees this absence as a result of how Europe is disconnected from its colonialism.¹¹⁷ Using Fairclough's methodology, this clearly symbolizes the social wrong (inequality in facing the climate crisis) and the obstacles in the way of addressing it (disconnection from history). Subsequently, silence about the reasons of inequality upholds the positive role of the EU.

Can a transition built on principles of climate justice be established without addressing the historical responsibility connected to colonialism on the part of the Global North? According to Janna Thompson, this is a complicated issue, since it concerns agency and moral responsibility.¹¹⁸ Those who caused historical emissions during the 19th and 20th centuries were unaware that they were using up global resources. Furthermore, those living in the Global North today are not responsible for these historical emissions.¹¹⁹ In other words, one can state that historical emissions have been inherited. Thompson's discussion puts the case of climate justice into question; can the Global North be held fully accountable for emissions that took place in the past? In this way, one could legitimize the Commission's choice to look past its own historical context to climate change. Simultaneously, the social *wrong* that is studied in this thesis is that Global South countries are not only vulnerable to climate change today but the root of their situation is in the history of colonialism. The colonial legacy manifests itself in today's inequalities between the Global North and South.¹²⁰ Accordingly, climate justice is connected to "naming reality for what it is."¹²¹

¹¹⁷ Jensen, *Postcolonial Europe*, p.141

¹¹⁸ J. Thompson in L. Meyer & P. Sanklecha, *Climate justice and historical emissions*, Cambridge, United Kingdom; New York, NY: Cambridge University Press, 2017, p.47

¹¹⁹ Meyer & Sanklecha, *Climate justice and historical emissions*, p.47

¹²⁰ J. Hickel & A. Slamersak, 'Existing climate mitigation scenarios perpetuate colonial inequalities', *The Lancet*, Vol. 6, Iss. 7, 2022

¹²¹ Moe-Lobeda, 'Climate Change as Climate Debt: Forging a Just Future', p.32

Another finding is the idea of growth and development, on one hand, and struggles against the eco-crisis, on the other. The former refers to the privileged in the climate crisis, and the latter to the vulnerable. The function of the juxtaposition is to build a foundation for EU leadership. While it is not explicitly stated, it is present in the disposition of the text. Turning to decolonial thinker Mignolo, pitting two opposites against each other can be linked to “the colonial matrix of power,” as the matrix combines “progress, development and growth” with “poverty, misery and inequality.”¹²² In fact, this combination binds together modernity and coloniality which are central to colonial discourse. According to Mignolo, the coupling has to be taken into account when addressing contemporary global inequalities,¹²³ since “there is no modernity without coloniality.”¹²⁴ Climate justice is thus a mechanism that has to be included in climate mitigation, since inherited global inequalities complicate the situation for vulnerable states. The underlying factor of inequality would be included in discussing climate action, according to the decolonial option, contrary to what Thompson argues.

Moving forward, the Commission proposes a Carbon Border Adjustment Mechanism (CBAM) which is said to be “a climate action instrument.”¹²⁵ The mechanism would, on one hand, protect the EU, and on the other hand, protect the global climate policy by reducing emissions globally and promoting “relevant sectors” to become more sustainable. Hence, the mechanism is also described as an invitation to international partners to increase their climate action. In my opinion, this mechanism does not address global climate justice but rather seeks to promote sustainable development. That being said, this proposal is a concrete attempt by the EU to influence global partners to follow their lead on climate action. As the role model aspect is underlined throughout the Communication, CBAM can be seen as an instrument to anchor this in reality.

In examining the pre-existing climate finance efforts, the difference between climate finance and climate reparations becomes clear. While there is a pre-existing framework for climate financing, it is not synonymous with climate reparations, as the financing does not concern paying the EU’s debt for past emissions. Addressing the debt is a possibility of the Loss and Damages Fund and

¹²² Bhambra, ‘Postcolonial and decolonial dialogues’, p.119

¹²³ Bhambra, ‘Postcolonial and decolonial dialogues’, p.119

¹²⁴ Mignolo & Walsh, *On Decoloniality*, p.4

¹²⁵ ‘Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee of the Regions’, p.12

numerous actors from around the world urge that the aspect of climate justice be taken into consideration. “For the fund to be truly transformative, it is important that it is driven by the motivation to set right historic wrongs,” says Mrinalini Shinde, Lecturer of International Environmental Law, University of Cologne, Germany and a former legal advisor to the UNFCCC, as quoted by Arthur Wynn.¹²⁶ Thus, demands for climate justice aim at changing the discourse toward recognition of history and its implications for our time. In other words, these voices demand the recognition of past and present social wrongs.

One important principle of the Communication is solidarity. When discussing this concept and underlying reasons for climate reparations, morality is an essential aspect. According to David Heyd, the climate justice question combines past behavior and future conditions in that “the present conditions are taken both as reflecting the wrongness of past behavior and as standards for the assessment of responsibility toward future people.”¹²⁷ This is the basis for the ethics applied to the issue of climate justice. Heyd argues that in the environmental question, both aspects need to be taken into account since just policies need to be shaped with both past and future circumstances in mind.¹²⁸ Thus, the justice aspect in climate action is legitimized and should even be promoted in the political and juridical sphere, according to Heyd.

6.2 Speech by Frans Timmermans

6.2.1 *Now and Then*

As a foundation for his speech, Timmermans mentions the gap between climate science and climate policies. He thus addresses the inadequacy of current climate action, saying that more ambition is required. Early on in the speech, it is therefore clear that Timmermans aims to hold himself and the institution(s) he represents accountable. Meanwhile, he speaks of himself and other actors present at COP27 as ‘we’, which contributes to a discourse of collectivity.

Moreover, the EU’s high ambitions are a discursive pattern that unites Timmermans’ speech and the Commission’s communication. Turning to analytical tools developed in postcolonial theory,

¹²⁶ Wynn, ‘COP27 establishes loss and damage fund to respond to human cost of climate change’, p.22

¹²⁷ Heyd in Meyer & Sanklecha *Climate justice and historical emissions*, p.22

¹²⁸ Heyd in Meyer & Sanklecha *Climate justice and historical emissions*, p.23

one can again discuss the idea of European universality, meaning that European politics are to be of inspiration to the rest of the world. At the same time, Timmermans seems to be surprised and disappointed in seeing that the EU's goals are not shared by other parties. In comparison with the Communication, one can thus establish that the imagination of the EU as a global leader whose new narrative will spread is challenged, which the deadlocked talks at COP27 testify. While the Communication confidently underlines this role, the speech mirrors the difficulty in achieving this. As a solution for this divergence, Timmermans urges the reluctant parties to “find courage” to do more.¹²⁹ The word *courage* is of interest to me, since it implies that there is fear among the parties, and not incapability. By referring to the missing courage, Timmermans subsequently underlines his own bravery, or perhaps that of the EU. The question of agency is diffuse and it is difficult to see if the discourse on ‘the courage to do more’ represents Timmermans’ personal position or comes from the EU Commission and the EU, as a whole.

Simultaneously, Timmermans is still hopeful and states that the current situation presents the opportunity to “bridge the gap between those in need and those in a position to contribute to address their needs, on the basis of their today’s potential.”¹³⁰ This statement is of great interest since it creates a clear distinction between those who are in a position of privilege and those who are victims of the climate crisis, which the consulted research would identify as the Global North and South. Meanwhile, the phrase “today’s potential” is also remarkable. Here, historical distancing as discussed by the postcolonial school is of relevance. In focusing on the capability that countries have in handling the climate crisis today, the past is forgotten. In fact, in resonance with the Communication, Timmermans does not once mention historical factors in the climate crisis. In fact, his discourse makes it seem as though past injustices are inherited, which is coherent with Thompson’s discussion of climate justice. The insistence on *today* thus has a clear function of closing one’s eyes to the past and its implications for the present.

Contrary to the Communication, Timmermans’ statements insist on the *now*, as exemplified in the analysis. This focus on *today* means that Chakrabarty’s idea of Europeans having a *not-yet* approach to the Global South’s demands is not entirely applicable to the speech. Instead, this

¹²⁹ ‘Speech of Frans Timmermans at the COP27 Closing Plenary’

¹³⁰ ‘Speech of Frans Timmermans at the COP27 Closing Plenary’

discourse can also be interpreted through the perspective of the knowledge used in climate action. According to the decolonial thinker Mignolo, knowledge originates from a geo-political location, and in order to achieve decolonization, it needs to be re-evaluated.¹³¹ In particular, the knowledge that has been denied and suppressed by the dominant discourses needs to be given space. He thus argues for a “decolonial epistemic shift.”¹³² When it comes to telling the truth about climate change and ways to go forward, the decolonial approach would therefore argue for ways of thinking from the Global South to be promoted. As a result, the proposal of the Loss and Damages Fund, as a part of the demands for global climate justice, can be seen as an example of this. The insistence on *now* expressed by Timmermans can be read as an attempt to include voices from the Global South. Contrary to the Communication, where the Commission focuses on climate justice in Europe, the speech concerns those who are most vulnerable. This fact can be seen as a change in the European discourse, but can also be credited to the particular context of COP27. Bhaba’s research can be instructive for solving the interpretative puzzle. He argues that the inclusion of ‘other’ voices can anyway change the dominant narrative.¹³³

When discussing the future climate justice mechanisms, the context surrounding climate change is important to keep in mind. According to Deivanayagam, Selvarajah, Hickel et al, today’s discriminatory structures, originating in colonial times, are factors constituting vulnerability to climate change.¹³⁴ In fact, colonial and neocolonial exploitation have left countries, primarily in the Global South, in precarious conditions. Heyward and Roser share this view. According to them, the international institutions and debates taking place within them must be seen in the context of “previous injustices, such as colonialism and later indifference to humanitarian crises caused by conflicts or famine.”¹³⁵ This context poses challenges to creating a global action plan, specifically in bringing less-developed countries on board. As previously mentioned, it was the united G77 countries that succeeded in convincing the EU to implement the fund.¹³⁶ Subsequently, the demands for climate reparations and the implementation of the Loss and Damages Fund show a scenario in which the Global South struggles to bring the North on board.

¹³¹ Reilly, ‘COP27: Loss and Damages COP’

¹³² Bhambra, ‘Postcolonial and decolonial dialogues’, p.119

¹³³ H. Bhaba in G. K. Bhambra, ‘Postcolonial and decolonial dialogues’, p.116

¹³⁴ Deivanayagam, Selvarajah, Hickel et al. ‘Climate change, health, and discrimination: action towards racial justice’, p.5

¹³⁵ C. Heyward & D. Roser, *Climate justice in a non-ideal world*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016, p.5

¹³⁶ Wynn, ‘COP27 establishes loss and damage fund to respond to human cost of climate change’, p.22

While the discourse, as represented by Timmermans, is marked by EU ambition, the context is also vital. In fact, the disappointment on Timmermans' part can also be seen as hesitance in committing to the Loss and Damages Fund. Numerous actors around the world were skeptical in their analysis of the announcement, for example, pointing out that the language is vague.¹³⁷ Furthermore, no information is given regarding the following points: who will oversee the fund, where the money will come from and to whom it will be dispersed. In this sense, the implications of the fund are still to be seen. This is also coherent with the speech, as Timmermans says that preparation for COP28 is underway. This is where the fund is expected to be explained in all details.

6.2.2 Speaking for the Vulnerable

In the speech, the Global South is not addressed as “you”, but “they”. This brings Spivak into the picture, who theorized how the subaltern from the Third World is represented in Western discourse. More specifically, she looks at the possibility of speaking for the subaltern. Timmermans speaks for this individual. Meanwhile, addressing the vulnerable with “you” could be perceived as directly responding to their demands. One example of using “they” is when he addresses his friends' difficult situation. Due to this struggle, they deserve support. This word is of great interest when discussing the concept of solidarity. On the one hand, the word makes it seem like there are conditions for receiving support. On the other hand, the word can be understood as a kind of apology on behalf of the Global North, a *wrong* that needs to be made right, speaking in Fairclough's terms.

Timmermans' speech hints that a dialogue between the Global North and the Global South has been established. There have been talks with actors in the Global South and by discussing loss and damages, Timmermans addresses climate justice demands. With this in mind, what type of climate justice is then prevailing in the speech? By using von Lucke's conceptualization, the third type of climate justice is visible, namely mutual recognition. This approach takes into consideration that fairness can contribute to legitimizing the outcomes of decisions.¹³⁸ In order to

¹³⁷ T. Reilly, 'COP27: Loss and Damages COP'

¹³⁸ von Lucke, 'Principled pragmatism in climate policy? The EU and changing practices of climate justice', p.3

do this, the multitude of existing voices also need to be heard. In the specific case of global climate justice, von Lucke argues that individuals from the Global South are essential and should be given the chance to state their opinions. In particular, there is a focus on indigenous, marginalized and non-state actors.¹³⁹ In fact, the implementation of a Loss and Damages Fund fits this conceptualization, since mechanisms that recognize “different ideas and capabilities of all participants”¹⁴⁰ are in focus. As the Loss and Damages Fund is a Global South proposal and builds on the shared recognition of differing capabilities, it aims to create mutual recognition between the wealthier states of the Global North and vulnerable states in the Global South. In addition, the People’s Agreement cited in the introduction of this paper shows that one approach to climate justice prevailing in the Global South is that of a united civil society and government representatives working for a common cause, which are groups mentioned by von Lucke.

In fact, von Lucke states that the approach of including perspectives from the Global South has been intensified by the EU in recent years. Namely, he writes that “listening to the concerns of others as well as bridge- and coalition building particularly concerning the Global South became central aspects” to the EU in the years preceding COP21 in 2015.¹⁴¹ An explanation for the EU’s change of approach is that the institution is adapting to other actors in the climate crisis. In fact, the EU has come to accept that its power is limited and that its own approaches are not necessarily appealing on a global level.¹⁴² Moving away from this, the EU has begun to acknowledge different pathways and their equal values, in addition to recognizing past problems related to their unilateral leadership.¹⁴³ Seeing that Timmermans’ speech includes a more inclusive approach than the Communication, which barely addresses the vulnerable people in the climate crisis, my study mirrors this development of the discourse. Meanwhile, I am not as convinced as von Lucke that the EU Commission is accepting the limitations of its normative power, since I still see strong traces of claiming power and insisting on the universal appeal of EU approaches.

¹³⁹ von Lucke, ‘Principled pragmatism in climate policy? The EU and changing practices of climate justice’, p.3

¹⁴⁰ von Lucke, ‘Principled pragmatism in climate policy? The EU and changing practices of climate justice’, p.3

¹⁴¹ von Lucke, ‘Principled pragmatism in climate policy? The EU and changing practices of climate justice’, p.4

¹⁴² von Lucke, ‘Principled pragmatism in climate policy? The EU and changing practices of climate justice’, p.7

¹⁴³ von Lucke, ‘Principled pragmatism in climate policy? The EU and changing practices of climate justice’, p.7

The fact that the EU, through Timmermans, agrees to the implementation of a Loss and Damages Fund can be seen as a win for the Global South. In addition, by using the decolonial option, one can regard this as voices and ideas originating from the Global South being acknowledged by the Global North. María Lugones, a thinker in the decolonial school, puts special emphasis on the value of “listening and learning from others in any development away from current dominant structures of knowledge production.”¹⁴⁴ Hence, if the approach to climate justice enters the paradigm of mutual recognition, there will be more of this development in future climate mitigation. In fact, this could mean that a fully developed Loss and Damages Fund could be presented at COP28. This Fund would ensure climate justice action in the Global South’s most vulnerable areas by financing means to ease the effects of climate breakdown and a guiding principle would subsequently be solidarity.

6.3 Remarks by Gaston Browne

Having now analyzed and discussed the EU’s approach, it is clear that the EU Commission made the EU an important party in the future development of the Loss and Damages Fund. In what follows, I compare the approaches and discourses of the Global South, as represented by Browne, and the EU, as represented by the Commission and Timmermans.

While the justice aspect is not explicitly mentioned by Browne, he states that measures facilitating stability for SIDS and “the most vulnerable”, who are in already fragile situations, are needed. Therefore, a power aspect is present. The demands for climate justice have long been prevalent and during COP27, they were addressed, among other reasons because of Browne’s remarks. Thus, one can credit this development to voices from the Global South growing stronger in the international context. Taking into account von Lucke’s conceptualization of global climate justice, the transition towards mutual recognition in the EU, has led to an opening up of the discourse towards voices from the Global South. Voices that question the current system and the principles it is built upon slowly beginning to be taken into consideration.

According to the postcolonial school and, especially, the decolonial thinking, the shift towards inclusion would indicate a process of decolonization of thought and hierarchies. Whether this is

¹⁴⁴ Bhambra, ‘Postcolonial and decolonial dialogues’, p.119

the case is contestable, however. Firstly, the framework of the Loss and Damages Fund has been questioned by numerous actors, as discussed by Heyd.¹⁴⁵ The questions raised by journalists, amongst others, concern the vagueness of the plan. In addition, concerns have been raised regarding the language used in the deal. The funding is for the “particularly vulnerable”, a wording that has been perceived as limiting the number of countries that can receive funding. Subsequently, it could mean that only the most urgent cases could be eligible to receive support.¹⁴⁶ One interpretation that has been made of “the particularly vulnerable” is that it would start with the AOSIS since its 39 member states are “globally recognized to be in the front-line of climate vulnerability.”¹⁴⁷ In addition, the UN’s 46 least developed countries (LDCs) would be taken into account. This classification is deficient, however. Cases such as Pakistan complicate the image and exemplify why a categorization based on GDP is inefficient.¹⁴⁸ Pakistan is neither a SIDS nor is its GDP low enough for the state to be on the LDC list. Simultaneously, Pakistan has been affected immensely by climate change and is also deeply in debt. These complexities are also mirrored in the remarks made by Browne. In addition to mentioning unique needs, he states that the “current climate finance landscape is complex and fragmented and the harmonization across multinational funds is still nascent.”¹⁴⁹ Hence, there are clear demands for more care to go into the operationalization of climate finances. In the future, Browne urges for a unified approach to be taken. Meanwhile, Timmermans’ speech calls for this approach in urging international partners to be courageous and stop wasting time. This point illustrates an alignment in the discourses prevailing in the Global South and the EU Commission.

¹⁴⁵ Wyns, ‘COP27 establishes loss and damage fund to respond to human cost of climate change’

¹⁴⁶ Reilly, ‘COP27: Loss and Damage COP’

¹⁴⁷ Reilly, ‘COP27: Loss and Damage COP’

¹⁴⁸ Reilly, ‘COP27: Loss and Damage COP’

¹⁴⁹ ‘Remarks by the Honourable Gaston Browne, Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda, and Chair of the Alliance of Small Island States at a High Level Round Table at COP27’

7. Future research

Seeing that the Loss and Damages Fund will be presented and put into action at the end of 2023, it would be of great interest to follow this development and examine whether global climate justice will be implemented. I expect a multitude of reactions to the coming climate conference, considering that the question of climate change is only becoming more urgent. In future studies, one could also investigate government actors in combination with civil society. The climate justice question is discussed in academia, activist circles, indigenous peoples' movements and politics, and to fully outline the demands, one could analyze the full spectrum. Similarly, one could study a variety of actors to see how global climate justice is discussed in Europe by politicians and civil society. This inclusive approach would contribute to outlining the current discourse on global climate justice and one could subsequently see where actors from the whole globe meet.

8. Conclusion

Having analyzed three documents that together give a glimpse into the complex discourse of climate justice, both in the Global North and South, I conclude by returning to my research questions. I will discuss the social *wrong*, its implications, the obstacles that stop it from being addressed, and finally, solutions to move forward.

In the EU Commission's discourse regarding global climate justice, there is an element of hesitation. While the importance of supporting vulnerable states is underlined, the EU emphasizes its own role as a powerful leader. This power aspect is consistent in the discourse while some openness for other voices to influence the discourse exists. In fact, the Commission expresses its wish to be a mediator, which Timmermans' speech exemplifies. In agreeing to the proposal of the Loss and Damages Fund, climate justice demands are noticed by the Commission, which indicates that a dialogue with the Global South is taking shape.

Moreover, I establish that *climate financing*, rather than *climate reparations* prevails in the EU Commission's approach. This is exemplified by the fact that the Commission focuses on the present and avoids discussing the past. Today, the EU works with climate financing by investing in sustainability, but this is not motivated by the wish to correct past wrongs. Simultaneously, climate reparations are one of several ways to put concrete climate justice into action. As exemplified by Browne's remarks, accessibility to funding is an urgent need for the most vulnerable states. In order for this to happen, however, actors such as Browne point to the fact that a shift in the dominant discourse needs to happen. Without addressing the conditions for today's inequality in managing the climate crisis, climate reparations are impossible to implement.

Considering Fairclough's methodology, the social *wrong* studied is clear: some regions are more vulnerable to climate change than others and this inequality has a concrete historical underpinning and there is not enough financial aid coming to these countries. One obstacle to addressing this social wrong is a dissonance in the studied discourse: the EU's role as a leader that has issues in addressing its past. While bringing up the past, one could undermine the

legitimacy of the current system of power. Therefore, I conclude that a paradigm shift is required in order for the EU, and the wider Global North, to implement global climate justice through climate reparations. My study shows that the EU Commission is already opening its ears to voices from the Global South and the Loss and Damages Fund, presented in detail at COP28 at the end of 2023, could possibly mirror this approach as well if the EU is willing to address its climate debt.

9. Bibliography

Alliance of Small Island States. 07.11.2022. 'Remarks by the Honourable Gaston Browne, Prime Minister of Antigua and Barbuda, and Chair of the Alliance of Small Island States at a High Level Round Table at COP27'.

<https://www.aosis.org/aosis-chair-prime-minister-gaston-browne-discusses-areas-of-innovative-finance-at-cop27/>

Bhambra, G. K. 2014. 'Postcolonial and decolonial dialogues'. *Postcolonial Studies*. 17:2.

Boréus, K. & Bergström, G. 2018. *Textens mening och makt*. Lund: Studentlitteratur.

Chakrabarty, D. 2000. *Provincializing Europe*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press.

De Cristofaro, D. 2021. 'Patterns of Repetition: Colonialism, Capitalism and Climate Breakdown in Contemporary Post- Apocalyptic Fiction'. *Parallax*, 27:1.

Deivanayagam, T. A. Selvarajah, S. Hickel, J. Guinto, R. R. de Moraes Sato, P. Bonifacio, J. English, S. Huq, M. Issa, R. Mulindwa, H. Nagginda, H. P. Sharma, C. Devakumar, D. 2022. 'Climate change, health, and discrimination: action towards racial justice'. *Science Direct*. Vol 401. Iss 10370.

European Commission. 14.7.2021. 'Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee of the Regions', Brussels.

<https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52021DC0550>

European Commission. 'International Climate Finance'.

https://climate.ec.europa.eu/eu-action/international-action-climate-change/international-climate-finance_en

European Commission. 20.11.2022. 'Speech of Frans Timmermans at the COP27 Closing Plenary'.

https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/SPEECH_22_7042

European Council. 'Climate Change: What the EU is doing'.

<https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/policies/climate-change/>

European Council. 'European Green Deal'.

<https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/policies/green-deal/>

Fairclough, N. 2010. *Critical discourse analysis: the critical study of language*. Harlow: Longman.

Harvey, F., Morton, A., Greenfield, P. 18.11.2022. 'Cop27: EU agrees to loss and damage fund to help poor countries amid climate disasters'. The Guardian.

Hickel, J. 2020. 'Quantifying national responsibility for climate breakdown: an equality-based attribution approach for carbon dioxide emissions in excess of the planetary boundary'. *Lancet Planet Health*.

Hickel, J. & Slameršak, A. 2022. 'Existing climate mitigation scenarios perpetuate colonial inequalities'. *The Lancet*. Vol. 6. Iss. 7.

Heyward, C. & Roser, D. 2016. *Climate justice in a non-ideal world*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Jensen, L. 2020. *Postcolonial Europe*. London; New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group.

Klintman, M. 2019. *Knowledge resistance: how we avoid insight from others*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Meyer, L. & Sanklecha, P. 2017. *Climate justice and historical emissions*. Cambridge, United Kingdom; New York, NY: Cambridge University Press.

Mignolo, W. & Walsh, C. 2018. *On Decoloniality: concepts, analytics and praxis*, Durham: Duke University Press.

Moe-Lobeda, C. D. 2016. 'Climate Change as Climate Debt: Forging a Just Future'. *Journal of the Society of Christian Ethics*. 36. No 1. Spr-Sum.

Nazarova, Y. 'Loss and Damages in the Context of Small Islands'. International Organization for Migration Blog.

<https://weblog.iom.int/loss-and-damage-context-small-islands>

Intergovernmental Negotiation Committee for a Framework Convention on Climate Change. Working Group II. 17.12.1991. 'Negotiation of a Framework Convention on Climate Change'.

<https://unfccc.int/resource/docs/a/wg2crp08.pdf>

Reilly, T. 16.12.2022. 'COP27: Loss and Damages COP'. Global Policy Watch.

<https://www.globalpolicywatch.com/2022/12/cop27-loss-and-damage-cop/>

Shahid, A. M. 1998. 'Colonialism and Industrialization: Empirical Results'. Northeastern University: Boston.

<https://mpira.ub.uni-muenchen.de/37866/>

Siddi, M. 2021. 'Coping With Turbulence: EU Negotiations on the 2030 and 2050 Climate Targets'. *Politics and Governance*. Vol 9. Iss 3.

UNFCCC. 8.3.2023. 'Five Reasons Why Climate Action Needs Women'.

<https://unfccc.int/news/five-reasons-why-climate-action-needs-women>

von Lucke, F. 2021. 'Principled pragmatism in climate policy? The EU and changing practices of climate justice'. Political Geography.

World People's Conference on Climate Change and the Rights of Mother Earth. 22.04.2010.

'People's Agreement of Cochabamba'.

<https://pwccc.wordpress.com/2010/04/24/peoples-agreement/>

Wyns, A. 2023. 'COP27 establishes loss and damage fund to respond to human cost of climate change'. The Lancet. Vol 7.