

Is the Wine Made of Plantain?: An Analysis of Prosocial Action  
in Chile's Participation in the Paris Climate Agreement

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## Abstract

The COP21 Paris Climate agreement was lauded as a major success for international sustainable development by many environmental activists the world over, yet some argue that there are major flaws in the landmark accord pertaining to feasibility and equitability. The agreement grants autonomy to nations by allowing them to set their own Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs), so it is imperative that national policies be examined as they hold much of the power under the COP21 climate agreement. I examine the INDC of Chile, Latin America's poster-child for neoliberalism, given its position as a developing nation of the global South and its recent adoption of sustainable development reforms. Through a rhetorical and textual analysis of the agreement and Chile's INDC as well as various Chilean media sources, I suggest that there is a lack of meaningful prosocial considerations, and those that exist are unable to translate down to the subnational scale. Given Chile's fraught relationship with their indigenous communities, specific attention is paid to the way that Chile fails to recognize their condition, or any other vulnerable groups' conditions.

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## Prologue on Positionality

Before I get too far, it would be a crime not to point out that in this paper I examine and critique the way that Chile, a developing nation in the global South, is undertaking sustainable development efforts in response to the COP21 Paris Climate Accords. In doing so, it is important that readers understand that I am a relatively well-off, white student in a U.S. liberal arts institution who is observing processes taking place in the global South and attempting to make judgements about them. The problems associated with this are readily apparent; I am an observer able to remove myself from the situation, yet I am making suggestions about things that have very real effects on many people. There is a politics around this sort of distanced spectatorship that I will take part in, as much as I may try not to, and the paper should be read and interpreted as such.

## Introduction

On December 12, 2015 the COP21 was only minutes away from conclusion when the head delegate from the United States changed a single word within the climate agreement, drastically altering the meaning of the document: “shall” became “should.” In doing this, they ensured that no signing nation would be bound to any goal, emission target, or mitigation level, effectively making the agreement optional. This is not the first time nations in the global North were able to evade responsibility for global environmental degradation either, as the US prevented the Kyoto Protocol from carrying any weight, and the Copenhagen agreement fell apart due to disagreement on who should bear the responsibility of sustainable development. Only months earlier, President Evo Morales summoned activists and environmentalists to La Paz, Bolivia for the World People’s Conference on Climate Change and the Rights of Mother Earth, and out of this conference came the declaration “the people do not want voluntary commitments” (WPCCC 2015). This fundamental contradiction between what “the people” want

and what the governments of the North want is at the heart of the problem with the COP21 Paris Climate agreement which I interrogate below.

I find, through an examination of Chile's participation in the COP21 using a variety of media, that many of the well documented equity issues between the global North and South characteristic of the sustainable development paradigm are present in the COP21 despite being celebrated otherwise. Additionally, I argue that more attention has to be given to the way in which the agreement is enacted by individual nations and the effects it will have on the subnational scale, as equity disparities exist within nations as much as between them. The attempt to incorporate equity in the agreement in a meaningful way fails to cross from the international scale to the subnational and enables the Chilean government, the implementer of the accords, to undertake an inequitable form of sustainable development that does not consider issues of inclusion, social justice, or any of Chile's specific vulnerable populations.

My goal in this first section is to take the reader through a series of theoretical arguments so that we can come out the other side on the same field of understanding and which will hopefully add coherence to my later analysis. I begin with a brief overview of the anthropocene which will be the setting for our story and provide the context under which the Paris Climate Accords take place. I follow this with a discussion and critique of sustainable development theory as it has been defined by its practice over the past decades in an effort to add considerations to the way we view the Chile and the COP21. Vulnerability theory will serve as a way to view climate change and its adverse effects on human populations. Lastly I examine the postcolonial system in which sustainable development and climate change find themselves. Finally, I will provide a review of the COP21 and some of the questions pertaining to it before moving to a broad examination of Chile, the country where I will situate my research.

*Guiding Question: How well do sustainable development efforts support social justice and civil rights issues at international and subnational scales?*

## Background

### Anthropocene

That which is deemed natural and that which is deemed social have historically been bifurcated into essentialized, pure categories. While there are many who complicate the idea of nature (Vogel 2015, Walley 2004), it remains an entity that many see as separate from or even the antithesis of humanity and our creations. Scholars of the Anthropocene, on the other hand, argue that the new geological and philosophical epoch we inhabit signifies the “final rejection of the separation between Nature and Human that has paralyzed science and politics since the dawn of modernism” (Latour 2013, 131). In other words, they believe we have created a world in which humans have become the dominant geological force, therefore further entangling the earth’s biophysical processes and non-human actors (the natural) and the human-made (social).

Given the inextricable quality of natural and social, Anthropocene thinkers argue that environmental issues—which are typically thought of as problems that plague the non-built, non-human environment—can no longer be separated from social justice issues, if, in fact, they ever could. As Chakrabarty (2009) argues, histories of colonization and exploitation have to be taken into account when assessing environmental issues. Climate change provides a perfect illustration for this point. On the one hand, climate change is environmental in that it causes changes in our biophysical environment (e.g. sea level rise, increase in extreme weather events, etc.). On the other hand, however, it is social in that sea level rise will cause mass migration, which is likely to cause land conflict and this, in turn, will emphasize power discrepancies between people and peoples. Because of entangled quality, scholars mention the need to foster sensitivity to power and wealth discrepancies between global North and South when considering environmental issues and governance in the Anthropocene (Kotzé 2014). In addition to the international scale, authors call for more attention to subnational power relations in environmental planning and protection (Thomas and Twyman 2005). This makes sense because

power is not equally distributed within national boundaries just as it is unequal across nationalities. In response, Shannon May (2011) poignantly demonstrates the failure of subnational, top down sustainable development efforts that ignore sociocultural differences between urban and rural areas. It is important to keep in mind that while the term “Anthropocene” has been used by some to evoke images of dystopian or apocalyptic futures (Proctor, 2013), I use it here in a positive sense to signify a series of entanglements between what we label natural and social, focusing on the inequity inherent in climate change and the global sustainable development efforts aimed at combating it.

### Sustainable Development

The history of international sustainable development efforts can be traced back to the Brundtland Report—*Our Common Future*—of 1987. This document and the number of experts responsible for it envisioned sustainable development as actions that address the “needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs” (Brundtland Commission 1987). Many have raised questions and issues about this report, and the sustainable development paradigm has progressed to a certain extent over the past decades, but this report continues to play a large role in current conceptions and iterations of international sustainable development today (Redclift 2005). Redclift continues this argument contending that sustainable development efforts do not, in fact, focus on needs, rather they focus on rights. That is to say, there is a prevalent attitude that nations in the global North had a *right* to develop and industrialize in the way that they did using fossil fuels, and that nations in the global South have a *responsibility* to develop in a less carbon intensive and environmentally degrading manner. This attitude, of course, pays little attention to the *needs* of developing nations. The aforementioned shift from needs to rights can be seen as a shift toward a broadly neoliberal way of viewing the world, one that is focused on choice and markets.

Sustainable development is problematized by issues of choice and responsibility. Historically speaking, those in the global North who rode to success and industrialization on the coattails of carbon emissions will experience a relatively small share of the consequences (Chakrabarty 2009), an idea that will be explored below. What is more, these nations, led by the



U.S., are responsible for the dissemination—often times through violent means—of neoliberal policies. This places the responsibility for environmental degradation that results from capitalist exploitation even more in the hands of the global North (Chakrabarty 2009). This anti-capitalist sentiment stems from another argument that contends that capitalism inherently leads to environmental degradation (Williams 2010). This theory states that the capitalist focus on profit maximization incentivizes resource exploitation at the expense of environmental health in pursuit of improved efficiency and greater revenue. The tragic irony of this is, of course, that those nations and communities least responsible for climate change are likely to disproportionately experience its adverse impacts due to higher levels of vulnerability (Füssel 2010). This is due to the differing capabilities of nations to act and assist with climate related issues, as well as geographic characteristics and climatic variables. An arid nation with large coastal populations and a poor government, for instance, will be affected more severely and will be less able to cope with the effects. Despite this perceived vulnerability, however, Thomas and Twyman urge us not to view resource dependent communities in developing nations as simply “passive victims to global forces” (2005, 116). Authors such as these strive to vindicate the agency and capacity of these vulnerable communities in the face of climate change, and argue for their incorporation into decision making bodies in pursuit of equity. This view contrasts starkly with the common paradigm in which developed nations provide technology and solutions to less “advanced” nations in the global South (a practice observed by Shome (2011) among many others). This classic paradigm puts communities in the global South in the position of being helpless benefactors at the whim of developed nations who hold the keys to salvation, which is neither realistic nor helpful.

### Vulnerability

The topic of vulnerability is worth discussing as it plays a large role in global conversations about climate equity. In its most basic form, theories of vulnerability provide a model for understanding disaster events by framing them as products of sociocultural situations as well as earth systems processes. To illustrate this point, scholars of vulnerability provide this useful equation:  $\text{Disaster} = \text{Hazard} + \text{Vulnerability}$  (Wisner 2004). In other words, the severity of

a disaster hinges not only on the magnitude of the natural event taking place, but on the social, economic, and political realities of people in the affected areas (Fothergill and Peek 2004). Morrow (1999) names a number of other factors that help to determine a person's level of vulnerability, including personal (e.g. one's health, time, education), social (e.g. family and friend networks), and political (e.g. relationship with decision makers) resources. Additionally, she points out that women as well as racial and ethnic minorities are likely to experience additional vulnerability and suffer disproportionately due to systemic social and economic marginalization that can lead to lack of resources and diminished autonomy. Wisner et al. (2014) explain how root causes, such as social and economic structures, combine with dynamic pressures, including governance, demographic changes, environmental degradation, to create fragile livelihoods. These fragile livelihoods can take many forms, however they are unified by vulnerability to hazards both natural and human-made. With that in mind, authors are careful to stress that vulnerability does not preclude agency (Morrow 1999). That is to say, populations who suffer from systemic disadvantages are not merely passive victims of external processes, they have the capacity to powerfully influence the world around them, but they are still likely to disproportionately receive the impact of disasters.

The term "natural disaster" is hardly an apt expression in the Anthropocene considering the degree to which humans are influencing earth systems processes. However, I will use the term due to its common understandability. There is substantial evidence that anthropogenic climate change has—and will continue to have—a profound impact on the rate and severity of extreme weather events (IPCC 2007). Moreover, climate change is likely to affect conditions in ways that can make vulnerable communities more vulnerable than they once were (Young et al. 2010; Ibararán et al. 2009). Young et al. (2010) use the example of the Elqui Valley in Chile, to illustrate how the decreased amount of rainfall will make agriculture more costly and less profitable, thus inducing economic insecurity and less stable livelihoods. In this sense, climate change can be seen as a dynamic pressure (to use Wisner et al.'s term) in addition to the fact that it is increasing the number and magnitude of hazards. Scholars have begun documenting the effects of climate change on vulnerable communities, finding that it causes psychological harm (Carnie et al., 2011) and economic hardship (Ibararán et al. 2009). Similar to natural disasters,

they argue that climate change will likely disproportionately impact ethnic and racial minorities, women, children and the elderly. The term vulnerable is frequently used in this paper to describe groups of people who are disadvantaged because of their position in society, and even though they have powerful agency, they face disproportionate amounts of structural and systemic challenges.

### Postcolonial Theory

Postcolonial theory often resides in the realms of cultural, feminist, or international studies, however it is at home in the environmental studies of the Anthropocene once we acknowledge the profound entanglement of the social and the natural as we have above. One of the primary goals of postcolonial theorists is to expel the idea of a teleological path to development, one that frames lesser-developed nations as a starting point and developed nations such as the US or the EU as the finish line. More specifically, postcolonial theorists reject the idea that there is a singular progression that leads to modernity. Historically, this progression was seen as evolutionary in that other types of cultures and definitions of modernity would be weeded out because they were unfit to survive (Mascia-Lees 2010). International bodies such as the IMF and the World Bank put pressure on developing nations to adopt certain neoliberal reforms, withholding financial support unless nations comply with their guidelines. In this way, these nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) attempt to enforce a singular path to economic modernity. The idea of a linear progression is also influenced by distribution of knowledge and cultural production. The majority of published academic papers are produced in the global North, and nations like the US have massive entertainment industries which are disseminated globally at very high rates (Mascia-Lees 2010). Ideas around environmentalism and sustainable development are not exempt from this pattern and, as I have argued above, much discourse around sustainable development has been dictated by and for the North.

Frantz Fanon, in his famous treatise on postcolonialism, *The Wretched of the Earth*, emphatically denounces imitation of the European model of modernity which has haunted the developing world, claiming that this model is “running headlong into the abyss; we would do well to avoid it with all possible speed” (1961, 312). While acknowledging that the global North

has its share of valuable ideas and institutions, he points out that the modernity they have achieved is far from perfect and so should not be followed blindly. Because of this, he calls for the invention of a “new man” (of course, we would do well to update his needlessly gendered phrase) who will shed the bonds of his colonizers and recognize that trying to “catch up” to Europe and the U.S. is as fruitless as it is purposeless. Jose Martí, the emblematic Cuban essayist of the late 19th century, writes that Latin America, and the global South by extension, must stop deriving its governance from the models that Europe installed when they were colonial rulers. He evocatively claims that “‘Create’ is the password of this generation. The wine is made from plantain, but even if it turns sour, it is our own wine!” (Martí 1891, 4). Here he advocates for new, organic forms of government procured from and for the people of Latin America using the indigenous Latin American fruit, a plantain, to symbolize the essence of the continent, and wine to represent governance distilled from that which is native.

The same arguments can be applied to international environmental efforts, which often take place in the same types of institutions criticized by postcolonial thinkers (e.g., The World Bank and the UN). Lesser-developed and developing nations need not utilize the same environmental practices as developed nations or try to catch up with them. On the one hand, the developed nations and their economic policies are responsible for the majority of environmental damage, and on the other, they have been largely unsuccessful in curbing emissions and preventing degradation. Some suggest that future advances in technology and policy will take place in the developing world, as that is where energy demand is growing the most rapidly and where solutions will be needed the most (Dirks et al. 2014). To reiterate the points of Martí and Fanon, change is needed, and it should not be in the image of the North, rather it should be organic and for the benefit of those people who create it.

While elegant and inspiring, these ideas are far from complete and following them has not functioned over the long term for any nation. There is no Wakanda in the world of 2018. To reiterate an argument I heard while living in Chile, the socialist ideas of Salvador Allende were great in theory, but if he had been allowed to continue with them the country would be in the same shambles in which Venezuela finds itself after its Marxist experiment. While this may or may not be true and the two nations have profound differences, it is the case that the postcolonial

endeavors of the global South have resulted in failure more often than not. In addition, these projects have in certain parts of the world resulted in grotesque violence. There are many reasons for these failures, not the least of which is the intense pressure and economic violence that the US exerts on anything that seems to challenge the hegemony of the global capitalist system. While these failures are not by any means a reason to abandon these ideas altogether, it is important to remember that a postcolonial, sustainably developed utopia may only exist in the imaginations of Marvel's writers. Even Martí's sour wine analogy acknowledges these imperfections, despite idealizing them.

### COP 21 Climate Agreement

In the landscape of international sustainable development, the COP21 Paris Climate Agreement represents the largest recent landmark. Part of my goal in this paper is to interrogate whether or not the agreement acknowledges and addresses the theoretical concerns raised above about sustainable development in the anthropocene. The agreement, which took place in December of 2015, is generally lauded as an overwhelming success because the 197 nations present were able to reach a consensus about committing to reduce the level of global climate change to below 2 degree Celsius, and preferably below 1.5 degrees. This was met with elevated excitement due to the fact that the two previous attempts at large-scale climate change agreement, the Kyoto Protocol and the Copenhagen Conference, were largely unsuccessful. Despite this, however, many have pointed to issues with the COP21, both in its procedure and its result.

The COP21 was the twenty-first annual conference of parties within the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). The UNFCCC heads many international sustainable development efforts and concerns about equity have become central to the climate regime they have created. In fact, issues of equity and responsibility were central to the Copenhagen Conference and likely caused its failure. With that in mind, however, within the UNFCCC, "a broader and more holistic view of equity is essential, one that sees equity as a multidimensional challenge to be solved" (Morgan and Waskow 2014, 18). This is to say,

although equity is part of the conversation it may need more attention before it is to be effectively and meaningfully translated into results.

Part of the success of the accords stemmed from the facilitation by the French who hosted the conference. Dimitrov (2016) explains that the accords were structured such that deals between individual countries were made behind closed doors. The author observed that this structure enabled nations in the global North to leverage power and exert influence over debates, ultimately securing an agreement that benefitted them. This involved omitting the desires of many developing nations who came to the conference requesting redress for Loss and Damage and support in Adaptation. Instead, the COP21 mostly addresses the issue of mitigation of carbon intensive fossil fuels. This version of sustainable development contradicts the model advocated for by Thomas and Twyman who argue that the goal of sustainable development should be to create space for vulnerable communities to adapt to and prepare themselves for the effects of climate change. Moreover, research shows that adaption financing is effective for cultivating climate resilience in vulnerable communities (Barrett 2013). While the COP21 did address issues of adaptation, including a \$100 billion nonbinding annual contribution from developed nations to developing nations beginning in the year 2020, there is a lot of doubt about whether or not this will actually happen (Interview). Even if it does, as Mandel (2018) points out, the money will likely be insignificant in inducing real technological shifts throughout the entire global South, let alone compensating nations for all Loss and Damage they have suffered.

A hefty focus on mitigation is hardly the the only issue that critics have identified within the accords. Among others, critics of the agreements claim that the non binding nature of the agreement that relies primarily on transparency and social pressure will be inadequate to create change in a meaningful way. Additionally, even if the commitments are carried out, they will not lead to the desired result of keeping climate change under 2 degrees celsius (Mandel 2018). While it is too soon to know for sure what the effects of the COP21 have been and will be, as there has only been limited scholarship on the topic in its brief lifespan, its prognosis is not heartening.

## Chile

Before making any claims about Chile and its pursuit of sustainable development, it is important to examine Chile's position in the Anthropocene. That is, what is it about Chile's historical, social, political and geographic setting that brings it to where it is today? Furthermore, what about Chile makes it the right place to examine the quandary that is sustainable development?

Chile began to take the shape we see it in today on September 11, 1973 when the head of the military, General Augusto Pinochet, staged a coup backed by the CIA that overthrew and killed Salvador Allende, the first democratically elected Socialist leader the world had ever seen. This was a symptom of the international backlash against anything that looked too much like communism during the Cold War. The U.S. backed Pinochet and his heinous and violent regime because he was extremely liberal (in the economic sense). Once he was in power, he flew in Milton Friedman, the head of the economics department at the University of Chicago, to be his advisor. Over the past few decades since the end of the dictatorship in 1989, Chile has relaxed some of the neoliberal reforms, but the legacy of the dictatorship is still very much alive in the nation's collective memory as well as in economic institutions.

Neoliberalism, a word already mentioned in this paper and which is frequently discussed in relation to Chile, is an exceptionally encompassing term, so a working definition will be useful for facilitating common understanding. In an attempt to parse out the multiple uses of the word, Daniel Rogers (2018) provides four distinct, yet interconnected, meanings: (1) neoliberalism as the recent iteration of the capitalist economic system; (2) a framework of thought centered around efficiency; (3) the set of globally proliferated policies that favor business and diminish the role of the state; and (4) neoliberalism as a regime that influences us at a cultural and personal level, impacting our actions and decisions. All of these meanings have their own overlapping spheres of scholarship and debates. In this paper, I primarily utilize neoliberalism (3), the "traveling policy project" to use Rogers's phrase. Of course, these projects are intimately tied with relationships of power, especially given the Bretton Woods Agreement and the influence that gave the US over international governing bodies that facilitate the

dissemination of economic reforms. In fact, Rogers traces one of the origins of the term back to the Pinochet dictatorship saying “‘Neoliberalism,’ Chilean-style, meant to its critics nineteenth-century liberalism shorn of political liberty.” In other words, the form of free-market economics practiced in Chile embraced liberal market policies, but did not allow political freedom, opting instead for violent oppression.

Until a few months ago, Chile was one of the ten most economically liberal nations in the world, second in the Americas only to Canada (Heritage Foundation 2017). What this means is that Chile has very little trade restrictions of any kind, low taxes on business, and very little government spending. In the past months, Chile has adopted a handful of policies at the federal level that have lowered its liberal ranking, yet it remains the most neoliberal nation in Latin America and far about the international average (Heritage Foundation 2018). However, with the recent election of multi-billionaire, Sebastián Piñera, a businessman and conservative party member as president, this trend toward slight economic conservatism is likely to reverse.

Today, Chile is a developing nation with an economy that relies heavily on copper extraction and export, which make nearly half of total national exports (Agostini, Nasirov, and Silva 2016) alongside other commodities such as wine, seafood, and timber. As with all forms of resource extraction, these industries come with their share of environmental degradation. Additionally, resource dependant economies tend to be less stable as they rely on foreign demand which constantly fluctuates.

In Chile’s Intended Nationally Determined Contribution (INDC) to the Paris Climate Accords, the authors claim that Chile is one of the nations most vulnerable to the effects of climate change due to its expansive, low-lying coastline and its reliance on natural resources (Committee of Ministers for Sustainability and Climate Change 2015). On top of this, Chile is already prone to natural disasters, experiencing frequent earthquakes including some of the most violent and impactful seismic events in recent history. As Ibararán et al. note, nations and societies as a whole have different vulnerabilities to climate change. With this in mind it seems that Chile is more vulnerable than most. On the other hand, the same authors mention that vulnerability is highly variable within a country, so it is important that we dig deeper, looking



beyond the national level to discover who might be particularly disadvantaged by the effects of climate change.

According to the CIA World Factbook, over ten percent of Chile's population is comprised of indigenous peoples—*pueblos originarios* (original peoples) as they are known in Latin America—although a far larger portion of the population is mestizo, or descendant of indigenous people. The Chilean government has a relatively turbulent track record with the Mapuche people, the nation's largest indigenous group, and has received criticism from international bodies such as the UN and Amnesty International about their human rights abuses against the Mapuche (Long 2013). A number of Mapuche activists have participated in hunger strikes and sporadic violence to protest the systemic discrimination against their people. Despite this, the government has done little to address the negative feedback from abroad.

The rights of Chile's indigenous peoples are intimately tied to the environmental condition of the nation. Agostini et al. make the point that although Chile has adopted relatively stringent environmental policies, they largely fail to take into account the nation's most vulnerable communities, such as indigenous *pueblos* (Agostini, Nasirov, and Silva 2016). Chile emits only 0.25% of global carbon emissions (World Bank 2014), yet they have instituted a tax on stationary carbon emitters as well as feed-in tariffs for renewable energy systems (Agostini, Nasirov, and Silva 2016), both of which have been impossible to secure in the U.S.. While these are boons in terms of curbing emissions, implementing policies without the involvement of the communities most at risk (such as the Mapuche) may be an issue, and it is reflective of a trend of ignoring indigenous perspectives in conversations about international sustainable development efforts (Smith and Sharp 2012). This principle is well illustrated by the perpetual conflict between the Chilean government and the Mapuche people over river rights and hydroelectric dams.

For years energy companies have looked to the Araucania—the region that historically belongs to Mapuche communities— and Southern Chile for hydroelectric development project opportunities. A number of these projects have been set for development on land sacred to the indigenous communities resulting in numerous protests over the past decades, some of which have achieved success and international recognition. Unfortunately, though, situations where

multinational corporations are in legal conflict with small groups of indigenous families, big business has a strong upper hand. Businesses often claim that the energy developments will benefit local communities by creating jobs and providing cheaper and easier access to electricity, but this is small compensation for the loss of important ancestral lands and the way of life these people maintain on them (UNPO 2013, *TeleSur* 2015). This is not only the case with energy projects. International companies have heavily exploited the Araucania for its dense quantity of lumber, paying poor families minimal amounts for their land in deals and exploiting the poverty of the area which has largely been neglected by the Chilean government since the dictatorship.

Recently, intense international excitement was generated when an American philanthropist and the Chilean government created a national park roughly the size of Switzerland in the Patagonia region (Royte 2018). Despite the widespread hype, though, the state of environmental affairs is not as simple as preserving the extreme beauty of Chile's craggy peaks and blue fjords. Environmentalism and sustainable development in the Anthropocene involves more than preservation of natural areas. We have to pay attention to the people, not just the land.

In summary, Chile presents an interesting case study to explore the intricacies of sustainable development for multiple reasons. First, its ambitious integration into the global political economic system has caused Chile to internalize and subsequently represent international trends in an effort to modernize, gain legitimacy, and approach the role of a developed nation. Chile's position as a nation in the global South that is beginning to prioritize environmental ideals, combined with a fraught relationship between government and indigenous communities and a history of violent oppression allows us to examine the tensions between the often separated social and environmental development agendas.

*Focus Question: To what extent does Chile's participation in the Paris Climate Accords recognize, provide support against, or exacerbate social justice issues in Chile?*

## Methods

In order to determine the extent to which Chile's participation in the COP21 pursues prosocial action and works to better the human rights condition of the country—the importance of

which is established by Anthropocene theory—we have to examine two positions: the mandates of the accords and the way that Chile intends to satisfy them, and the way in which Chile's participation and efforts have been received by the Chilean population thus far. In other words, I will look at both the *production* and *consumption* of the agreement.

The Climate Agreement requires that participating nations submit an INDC outlining the nation's goals and how they plan to achieve them. First, I provide a textual and rhetorical analysis of the official language of the Paris Climate Agreement to establish the framework within which Chile is participating. This is accomplished through a close reading of the text paying specific attention to sections related to issues of equity and developing nations. I will then analyze Chile's INDC to ascertain the amount of attention the Chilean government pays to issues outside of the strictly (classical) environmental using Voyant Tools online Software. Using this program, I am able to map out and acquire data about specific words, as well as where they appear and how often they crop up in the document. This allows me to perform a more specific examination of the language used by quantifying word type and frequency. In order to broaden the mediums of my examination, I interrogate a propaganda video made by the Chilean Ministry of the Environment about the event, focusing on the implications of the form and aesthetics of the video as well as a content analysis of the spoken messages. Additionally, I interviewed a member of the U.S. delegation to the COP21 in order to garner background information about the event as well as to identify and examine the opinions of some of those attending the meeting from nations in the global North, as they played a powerful role in the production of the agreement. While this one person cannot stand in for the opinions of all delegates from global North countries, she did represent a prominent environmental NGO from Washington, DC at the conference, so her opinions are illustrative of a larger community and are valuable for that reason.

It is crucial to include the consumption end of the spectrum—the way that people understand and react to the agreement—because it would be inappropriate for a distant observer, such as myself, to make conclusions about the amount of prosocial intent in the agreement without attempting to determine if people actually feel supported by it. That is to say, I am not in a position to make a claim about the degree to which the agreement supports or exacerbates

social justice issues without including the opinions of the people in question, as people are the definitive authorities on their own experiences. For this reason, I include in my analysis the way that the COP21 is represented by different news sources in Chile. The way that something is portrayed by the media has “the potential to both shape and reflect societal attitudes” (Sommers et al. 2006), and for this reason it is important to examine media discourses in their dual function. Specifically, I analyze the difference between the way it is represented by *el Mercurio*, the largest and one of the more conservative news outlets in Chile alongside the way it is represented by *el Ciudadano*, a well known independent newspaper, and *Mapuexpress*, the official publication of the Mapuche people. Both of these papers are members of *el Red de Medios de los Pueblos* (Network of People’s Media).<sup>1</sup> In these comparisons, I use the way that the different types of media documented and reflected on the COP21 as evidence of the opinions of different groups within Chile. I code these articles for valence to determine general opinions about the agreement and attempt to extract the reasons why articles view the event in the way that they do to get a sense of why people might feel the way they do about it. While *el Mercurio* represents the mainstream more conservative perspective, the *Red de Meios de los Pueblos* represents the voices of more vulnerable populations such as indigenous peoples, the working class, and those of lower socioeconomic status.

## Results

### The Language of the Paris Agreement

According to a statement from the Chilean Ministry of the Environment released just after the conclusion of the event, “*El acuerdo climático contiene todo lo que vino a buscar Chile a la COP21*” (the climate accords contain everything that Chile was looking for at the COP21). Additionally, they quote the head minister, Pablo Badenier, as saying “*El acuerdo acordado en París es ambicioso, transparente y balanceado, y recoge la propuesta que llevó nuestro país a esta histórica conferencia que va a establecer un nuevo trato climático que beneficiará a las futuras generaciones*” (The accords reached in Paris are ambitious, transparent, balanced, and they recognize the proposal that our country brought to this historic conference which is going to

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<sup>1</sup> All translations in this paper are by the author.

establish a new climate paradigm that will benefit future generations; Ministerio de Medio Ambiente 2015). These sentiments were mirrored by other Chileans who attended the COP21 such as deputy secretary Marcelo Mena who claimed that the Chilean delegation had their hand in all of the important decisions of the accords. So, what is it about this agreement that merits such high marks from the perspective of these Chileans and so many others in the international community? Does it deserve this overwhelmingly positive assessment? An examination of the Paris Agreement is necessary to answer the question of how prosocial is Chile's participation, because we have to first understand the confines within which they are operating.

The Paris Climate Accords that provide the framework for the INDC submitted by Chile pay far more heed, at least on the surface, to issues of social equity as well as international power and money inequality. The two-page preamble to the accords seems very thoughtful, paying explicit homage to vulnerable groups of people such as “indigenous peoples, local communities, migrants, children, persons with disabilities” and expressing a dedication to “gender equality, empowerment of women and intergenerational equity” (UNFCCC 2015, 2). In this sense, the Paris accords demonstrate acute awareness of what environmentalism means within the Anthropocene and how differential levels of vulnerability will be affected by the adverse consequences of climate change. That being said, despite the popularity of the agreement and the socially conscious language of the preamble, the actual structure of the agreement does not seem to reflect or deliver the same sort of commitment to equity.

In Article 2 of the agreement, the authors write that the “Agreement will be implemented to reflect equity and the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities” (UNFCCC, 2015 3). This is to say, the agreement does not ask for the same level of contribution from all countries due to the fact that countries have different circumstances and have contributed different amounts to collective environmental degradation. This seemingly acknowledges one of the principal issues of climate change within the Anthropocene. Again, they explicitly mention equity, which seems like a positive thing. However, as we can see, equity is only something that is referenced in the agreement (outside of the preamble) as an implementation consideration. Equity is not part of the structure of the agreement, rather something to keep in mind while carrying out the agreement's directions. This is not inherently

wrong, but because of this, the commitment to equity starts to look rather less convincing than it originally did, especially because the agreement does not propose any metric for monitoring equitable implementation or a specific body committed to regulating it. In fact, the relegation of this language to the preamble displays that the creators of the agreement know that these are important factors, yet they are unable or unwilling to weave them into the rest of the agreement.

Article 7, the section on on adaptation, is crucial to examine as it was a primary goal of developing nations and was labeled “weak” by observers, primarily because it was not in the interests of many in the global North. The specific language used in this section is telling. To begin with, many of the clauses in Article 7 on adaptation begin with “Parties recognize” or “Parties acknowledge” as opposed to firmer statements regarding actual goals (UNFCCC 2015, 9). It is clearly important for the agreement to recognize the importance of adaptation as they do here, however, within an agreement that has been heavily criticized for lacking teeth, this section on adaptation seems particularly feeble. All that the article mandates is that participating nations “engage in adaptation planning processes and the implementation of actions” (UNFCCC 2015, 10), and as with many aspects of the agreement, nations are encouraged to submit reports of their planning process. So we can see how this section has limited potency. It acknowledges certain important considerations, such as how adaptation is necessary for those most vulnerable individuals and communities, yet it requires very little from participating nations other than some amount of abstract planning or generic “actions.” Moreover, this section uses specific language that demonstrates a patronizing attitude toward the global South.

One of the subsections under Article 7 recommends that adaptation be supported through cooperative actions between nations, specifically asserting the importance of “Assisting developing country Parties in identifying effective adaptation practices, adaptation needs, [and] priorities” (UNFCCC 2015, 10). The sentiment expressed here is a common one throughout the agreement. This shows that despite the inability for many global North nations to significantly curb their contribution to climate change and global environmental degradation, they still believe that they know what is best for the rest of the world. The statement above shows that those wielding power at the conference feel that less developed nations cannot even figure out what their own nation needs, let alone what to do about it. This stands in violation of the ideas

expressed by postcolonial theorists who believe in self determination by and for nations in the global South without being told what to do (to put it crassly) by nations in the global North or intergovernmental bodies that are heavily influenced by the global North.

To examine a more positive angle, the agreement does take some steps to recognize methods of pursuing mitigation without the use of market mechanisms. This is important because some feel that market mechanisms such as a cap-and-trade system or carbon tax, are just a way to allow the wealthy to further exploit those with less money (WPCCC 2015). The World People's Conference on Climate Change (WPCCC) is parallel event to the COPs held annually in response to the UNFCCC. One of the slogans that came out of their event was “no al cambio climático, sí al cambio sistémico!” (No to climate change, yes to systemic change!), by which they are referring to the global capitalist and imperialist system. By recognizing the validity of non-market avenues for mitigation, the Paris agreement takes a small step away from the market which groups like the WPCCC decry. With that in mind, there is still very little done in the agreement to unsettle the idea of the international liberal economic order.

In fact, the global market and the role it plays in climate change is ignored outright in the agreement, a phenomenon which is demonstrated in the section on carbon sinks. Here, the agreement advocates for “sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks in developing countries” (UNFCCC 2015, 6). This may sound like a good idea, however, it is pertinent to note that in 2014, in the global South, there were over 75 million hectares of forestland in logging concessions to international timber companies (Global Forest Atlas n.d.). That is to say, foreign companies played a huge role in the deforestation of the developing world, in particular Latin America and Southeast Asia. In Chile, as well as many other countries, logging has had major social impacts in addition to ecosystem damage, and often times logging takes place on indigenous land. The choice of the Paris Agreement to put the onus on developing nations to increase their forest stocks and change the way they manage their forests demonstrates an unwillingness to acknowledge the role played by foreign companies, many of which are from the global North, in the degradation of the South's lands. The global capitalist system which allows for multinational corporations and foreign direct investment of this kind is never implicated in the Paris Agreement despite recognition by many that this economic system is at

the root of resource exploitation. Instead, the agreement shifts the responsibility to the global South, which has adopted the North's economic system after years of colonization and institutional pressure.

A related point that arises in this agreement pertains to host nations and international cooperation. In environmental agreements like this one, nations are allowed to pursue mitigative activities in other nations and use them for their own credit. For instance, one country might help reforest part of another country and the carbon offsets count for the external country who provides the funding. This allows nations with money and influence to use foreign soil to suit their own needs, effectively colonizing foreign soil. The Paris agreement supports the use of these cooperative mitigation actions, but clarifies that they “shall be voluntary and authorized by participating Parties” (UNFCCC 2015, 7), and additionally, that they should not interfere with local governance of any kind. This is to prevent nations from pressuring unwilling nations to shoulder the burden of mitigation activities, which is certainly an important measure to take. However, the agreement still allows global North nations to deal with their issues solely by throwing money at the problem, without making meaningful changes. Moreover, by allowing the use of host countries the agreement, as other agreements have before, opens the door for the same type of foreign meddling disparaged by Fanon and Martí.

Article 8 regarding loss and damage, as I touched upon earlier, lacks any substance to speak of. As Dimitrov points out, “All developed countries closed ranks, strongly united against provisions that could lead to liability and compensation, and blocked the creation of institutional arrangements” (2016, 4). In other words, developed nations were unwilling to provide substantial assistance for the harm that they collectively created. This fact in itself makes the former statements about common but differentiated responsibilities and international equity seem less credible. Addressing loss and damage is a substantive measure that global North nations could have taken in order to address some of the concerns laid out in the preamble of the Agreement, so its near absence from the discussion takes away from the credibility of its commitment to equity. The language used within the section asks close to nothing of countries beyond saying they “should enhance understanding, action and support . . . as appropriate” in regards to loss and



damage (UNFCCC 2015, 12). The minimal attention given to this important topic sets the stage for Chile's INDC which is silent on loss and damage as well as I will delve into below.

### INDC Textual Analysis

A textual analysis of Chile's INDC reveals a limited awareness of important considerations in terms of equity. This fails, however, to translate into policies sensitive to these considerations. As an examination of the document's language reveals, the authors of the INDC refrain from acknowledging many social issues crucial to sustainable development in the Anthropocene. In the few instances when they do identify issues, they have no associated plans to address them. What is more, throughout the document there is very little mention of anything related to justice of any sort, with the words "equity, equality, justice, fairness, and inclusion" remaining completely absent throughout the entire thirty-four page document. Nor is there any mention of "immigrants, refugees, indigenous groups, the Mapuche, the Araucanía, gender" any other subaltern groups, or potential power relations.



Fig. 1 Frequency (per 1000 words) of terms within the climate agreement. Including all forms of these terms.

The document does demonstrate understanding of vulnerability, albeit in a limited fashion. Figure 1 illustrates how Chile's proposed contribution to the COP21 pays relatively less attention to their vulnerable populations than it does to other issues such as development and growth. These two together are mentioned four times as often as vulnerability. Similarly, causes of climate change (carbon, CO<sub>2</sub>, and greenhouse gases) when combined are mentioned more than six times as often as forms of the word vulnerability. So, even though the idea of vulnerability—structural and social factors that contribute to the amount and severity of impacts experienced by different populations—is raised in Chile's INDC, it is seemingly less important than other factors like quantifying pollution emissions or economic development. Additionally, vulnerability is never mentioned in conjunction with any specific communities, as can be seen in the complete lack of specific disadvantaged groups. Rather, the theoretical allusions to vulnerability are more often in reference to the condition of the nation as a whole given its position on the coast and as a resource dependent nation. This suggests that equity, which should be at the center of environmentalism in the Anthropocene, is relatively insignificant to the authors of this document which focuses on growth and science rather than the people who are being affected by climate change. What is more, the places where vulnerability is referenced often refer to the nation as a whole, suggesting attention to international inequities but not subnational micro-scale inequities.

<b>Term(s)</b>	<b>Number of Appearances</b>
Vulnerable	9
Growth/ Development	36
Carbon/CO <sub>2</sub>	37
Greenhouse gas	22
Equity related terms	0

Fig. 2 Terms in the INDC and how often they appear. This includes all forms of the search terms.

In the document Chile commits to “reduce its CO<sub>2</sub> emissions per GDP unit by 30% below their 2007 levels by 2030.” The addition of “per GDP unit” here suggests that they do not intend to reduce actual emission levels by 30% because they assume that the economy will continue to grow. In other words, if the economy was to grow an outlandish amount between now and 2030, it is possible they would not (even according to their proposal) have to reduce their emission levels at all. The decision to structure their mitigation goal in this way illustrates Chile’s determination to continue developing economically despite participating in the climate change agreement. The methods they propose to achieve this goal are similarly noteworthy.

The mechanisms Chile intends to implement to reduce CO<sub>2</sub> emissions per unit GDP are notable in their similarity to those used in the global North, despite the clause in the Paris agreement supporting the use of non-market mechanisms. The INDC explains that the government plans to—and at this point in 2018, has—instate a carbon tax on large-scale, stationary source polluters as well as an indirect tax on vehicles that will be borne by consumers. The document also promises to reforest 100,000 hectares (one hectare= 10,000 square meters) of deforested land in the name of carbon sequestration to help them meet their goals. While Chile is one of only a few nations worldwide to implement a carbon tax, nearly all of the other nations with carbon taxes are in the global North including Australia, Finland, parts of Canada, Sweden, Britain. As Fanon, Martí, and other postcolonial thinkers argue, the oppressed in the global South need to invent themselves anew with their own institutions and not follow in the footsteps of the global North. While it makes some sense that Chile would utilize this type of tool as they have embraced the “free” market and carbon taxes are a classic market mechanism for reducing CO<sub>2</sub> pollution, this goes against the logic of those trying to rid the world of neocolonialism. This is not to say that carbon taxes are bad, but it is notable that in this respect Chile is trying to take the path of the global North where mitigation efforts have often been unsuccessful, and where there are different contexts and histories than those of Latin America.

Chile's INDC dutifully follows the directions of the climate agreement by including a section on Adaptation. This section, however, is reminiscent of the Climate Agreement's Article 7 on adaptation which Dimitrov refers to as one of the "weaker sections" in the Paris Accords (2016, 7). The portion of the INDC dedicated to adaptation seems extremely preliminary in that it only expresses a plan to begin further planning, without any proposed concrete actions. With that in mind, the authors of this document do claim that "it is key for all relevant players, particularly the sub-national governments and the citizens, to become involved" in order to accomplish the task of appropriately adapting to climate change (Committee of Ministers for Sustainability and Climate Change 2015, 22). This interest in participation at multiple scales of subnational governance represents a contrast to the problematic, top-down sustainable development regime. With that in mind, this could be a double edged sword in that the government seems to be putting the onus on individuals to get involved, rather than stating any plan to actively incorporate their perspectives. Even though there are no concrete plans expressed in the section on adaptation, this interest in multiscale involvement is an important step towards inclusivity in the planning process, something that seems to be absent at this point in the process. They follow up on this stating a need for a "decentralized perspective and seeking to integrate efforts among the different decision-making levels (national, regional, and municipal)" (22). This effort to broaden the scope of decision-making and include other voices could be an important step toward equity, however they make no explicit mention of this being their goal. Additionally, they intend to fund future adaptation efforts through international financing mechanisms, the implications of which will be explored below.

While the section on adaptation, represents a small amount of resistance against a paternalistic, top-down form of sustainable development, it is in the Capacity Building section where this document exerts the most pressure against the classic regime by stating "the country currently has valuable information and learning which it can make available to its citizens, particularly the most vulnerable sectors, but which it can also put to the service of its peers under the UNFCCC" (Committee of Ministers for Sustainability and Climate Change 2015, 25). In this statement, Chile directly asserts the need to support the country's most vulnerable populations. Moreover, the way they intend to do that, at least in terms of capacity building, is through

education instead of financing. In other words, this is something that might cause systemic change rather than a mere cosmetic fix. Finally, in this statement we see the first and only example in the INDC of resistance against the “North leading the way” logic when they claim that Chile has information and capacities that should be shared between nations in the UN. This represents South to North based solutions which are far from the norm.

Even though the inclusion of sections 3 and 4 on adaptation and capacity building is important in that they contain theoretical resistance to the dominant sustainable development regime that focuses on mitigation, they are also arguably two of the weaker sections in that they are only two and three pages respectively. Moreover, none of the plans laid out in them are at all concrete, and will not even enter the development stage until 2021. This stands in contrast to the section on Mitigation which is twice as long as both of these sections combined and includes multiple plans and proposed laws that are well thought out. So, by including these sections Chile’s INDC demonstrates some amount of commitment to including prosocial action in their efforts, however minimally, through education of vulnerable communities and diversifying the perspectives involved in planning and making decisions. Moreover, they include theoretical resistance to the typical sustainable development regime through an interest in global South based solutions.

#### Movie Propaganda

These types of international agreements can often feel removed from local populations, and people typically do not have time or desire to go through and read the pertaining documents let alone understand them and what they might mean for the individual. One of the ways the Chilean government tackled this obstacle was through the release of a short propaganda cartoon, explaining what the agreement was and how it will affect Chile. This video, released by the Ministry of the Environment during the summit, is highly value laden and demonstrates some of the potential issues with the way that Chile participated in the accords.

Jorge Sanjinés and Grupo Ukamo (1979) in their discussion of revolutionary film and art claim that aesthetics matter as much as message when making a statement with film. In other words, the form and aesthetic of a video has bearing on the way in which the message of the

video is received and the effect that it has on viewers, in addition to what the video explicitly says. In the context of the COP21 propaganda video, the messages have varying degrees of subtlety, however, some of the problematic messages conveyed through the form and aesthetic of the video are particularly salient and worth interrogating as well as the more apparent, stated messages.

The narrator of the video says “*Sabemos que no hacer frente las consecuencias del cambio climático tendrá un impacto en la población más vulnerable del país, nuestras ecosistemas, y también en nuestra economía*” (We know that not confronting the consequences of climate change will have an impact on the most vulnerable populations of the country, ecosystems, and on our economy). Even though this line acknowledges the fact that vulnerable human populations will be impacted by climate change, the only figures visible at this point are cows and a waterfall with a mountainous backdrop. In fact, no humans even appear in the video until well after this point, which suggests that the priorities of the video do not include supporting their vulnerable human populations (prosocial activities) as much as their ecological and biophysical environment (proecological). It is when the video does finally show humans, however, that the video displays its true colors.

The people the video makers choose to show makes clear which types of populations the climate accords are intended to support. The first figures to appear are the presidents of Chile, Bolivia, and Argentina from the time of the accords, who are distinguishable by their genders and the flags they wear as can be seen in figure 3. What is odd to note, however, is that Evo Morales, the president of Bolivia and the first indigenous president of a Latin American country, as well as the other two presidents are represented as very light skinned figures. Michelle Bachelet and Mauricio Macri are in reality light skinned, but the erasure of Morales’s indigenous identity as a person of color in this way makes a statement. Morales’s presidency has been an important step in the Bolivian anti-colonial, indigenous rights movement as well in the larger movement in South America against the global capitalist system. The choice to display the president of Bolivia as a white, red-haired man in contradiction of reality—as opposed to the presidents of Chile and Argentina who are abstractly recognizable as their real selves—demonstrates the type of people that the producers of the video deem should be ruling.



Fig. 3 The presidents of Chile on the left and a representation of the Chilean populus on the right with the movie's slogan hanging above them.

Later in the video, a globe appears with different figures standing scattered across the continents. They, too, all appear as white. The video concludes with the narrator explaining that by participating in the COP21 agreement, “*estamos fijando claramente el tipo de desarrollo que queremos para Chile . . . que finalmente permite que nuestros hijos puedan vivir mejor*” (we are arranging the type of development we want for Chile . . . that will eventually allow our children to live better).” The video then shows a group of people who appear to represent Chilean citizens. We see a fireman, a policeman, a miner, a baker (all quintessential Chilean occupations) and a handful of others, all of whom, again, are white. The complete absence of any bodies of color in this video sends a message to viewers that this agreement intends to benefit white people more than any other population. When the narrator talks about the children whose lives will be improved by the agreement, it seems clear that it does not actually refer to the most vulnerable populations that it mentioned earlier in the video. As mentioned above, over 10% of Chileans are indigenous and many more are at least partially indigenous, not to mention other significant populations of color such as immigrants from Haiti and Colombia. This video demonstrates a continued lack of attention to these communities' rights and wellbeing. Additionally, it displays the dominance of whiteness in Chile by showing all bodies, even those who would be black or brown in reality, as white.

Over the group of white cartoon heads in the last frame of the video hangs the slogan “*si no cambio yo, cambia el clima*” (if I do not change, the climate will) a testament to incremental environmentalism. The narrator echoes this argument throughout the video by saying that sustainable development is “*un esfuerzo de todos*” (an effort for all) and that it is the responsibility of the individual to choose to live, transport, heat, and consume in environmentally friendly ways. Images of people on bikes, recycling, and performing “green” activities are prominent throughout the video. Arguments such as these about individual consumption and action are often elitist in that they assume that the majority of people have the means to choose the way that they consume, heat, or transport themselves. Moreover, it assumes that if they do have the means, that environmental friendliness should be their first priority over other issues that may be pressing in their lives. Some scholars reason that these types of individualist arguments are inherently neoliberal because they relegate “regulatory responsibility to consumers,” ignoring the systems that encourage individuals to consume in particular ways (Guthman 2007). So, by placing the onus to change on the people, this video entrenches itself in an elitist form of individualism that has also been proven ineffective at creating change (Maniates 2001).

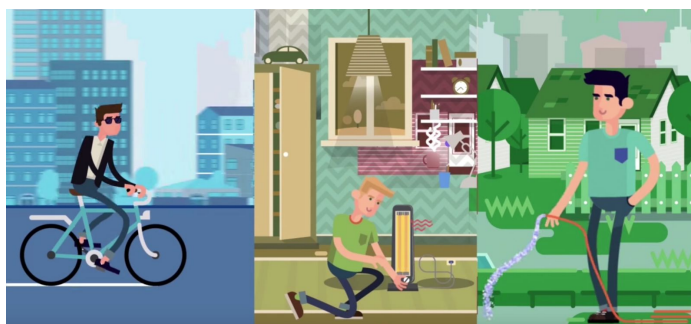


Fig. 4: Images from the video of white men undertaking typical tasks within a backdrop of modernity and sustainability.

The refusal to depict any people of color in the video, despite the fact that the majority of Chileans are indigenous or mestizo, tells viewers that the environmental changes and the new



“sustainable” era that they refer to is not for everyone. Moreover, the video and its slogan shift the responsibility to change onto the very people who are most vulnerable to the dangers of climate change, in a way that is both impractical, neoliberal, and elitist. Problematically, there is no acknowledgement of the capitalist system as an antecedent of the issue, despite the history of exploitation that Latin America has suffered at the hands of capitalists. Figure 4, along with other such images from the video, makes clear that the vision of modernity the ministry of the environment is striving for looks like the modernity of the global North, in keeping with the path Chile has taken since 1973. It would be easy to write off these findings as being hypersensitive especially because they deal with a cartoon. It would be callous, though, to assume that aesthetics were selected carelessly, so we must ask ourselves how they ended up the way that they did, and what this tells us.

#### News Sources

News media has a fraught history in Chile due to its role in the Pinochet dictatorship. During the violent dictatorship, many news sources were heavily censored and journalists were persecuted, killed, or disappeared if they spoke out against the regime. On the other hand, Pinochet and his government received strong support from some news sources, namely *El Mercurio*, the nation’s largest and longest running newspaper. *El Mercurio* was and continues to be owned by the Edwards family, one of the richest families in the country, who were sympathetic to the CIA and those hoping to overthrow socialist president Salvador Allende (O’Brien and Roddick 1983). The Edwards family accepted funding from the Nixon and the CIA in return for spreading anti-Allende rhetoric, contributing to the loss of national stability that preceded the coup. Today, *El Mercurio* remains the most widely circulated newspaper in the country despite maintaining a notoriously conservative bent. I use this paper to represent a conservative view in Chile. The recent election of conservative Sebastián Piñera demonstrated a shift to the right in Chilean politics, and *El Mercurio* and the Edwards family provides a voice and expression of many of these conservative views. In this sense, *El Mercurio*, given its strong government ties, can be seen as representative of the official national perspective likely shared by many of the higher class.

On the other side of the political spectrum is *El Red de Medios de los Pueblos*, mentioned above, which comprises news sources of and by Chile's indigenous communities as well as other independent news outlets. I use these sources to represent the opinions of indigenous groups, and the Chilean *pueblo*—that is to say, the common people and workers of Chile. Of course, none of these sources are perfect representations of large segments of the population of the country, however, as collectors, creators, and distributors of information, they do offer a gauge of different political opinions held by many citizens. So, here we find a metric of the consumption of the Accords and the way in which different members of society think and feel about them. Media has a dual function of reflecting and influencing public opinion, and both of these news varieties should be viewed in this way. While they reflect different ends of a political spectrum, they both reflect the views of certain political groups as well as influence those same people to believe certain things.

In my analysis, I examine the valence (positive, neutral, or negative) of articles as well as the stated rationales for why authors feel this way. An article is labeled positive if it explicitly expresses positive views for the Paris Agreement or if it quotes a majority of positive views without posing a substantial amount of evidence refuting these positive views. If the views expressed in the article are balanced, or if there are only facts and no judgements shared about the agreement, I label it neutral. Negative articles specifically cite issues with the agreement without equivalent positive aspects to balance them out, or quote negative remarks about the agreement without refuting them in any way. The articles examined span the period from the month leading up to the event until the first half of 2018.

The results gathered here and displayed in the pie charts below, while limited (n=24 with equal representation from the two source types), suggest that the mainstream, conservative media tends to view the COP21 Paris Agreement significantly more favorably than do independent news sources. Half of all mainstream articles indicated positivity towards the agreement while only about 17% of independent sources expressed positive sentiments. Similarly, only 25% of mainstream articles had a negative view of the agreement while 58% of independent articles viewed the agreement negatively. Both mainstream and independent articles were ambivalent or neutral 25% of the time. This fairly drastic difference in the way in which the agreement is

viewed by the two types of sources potentially illuminates a difference between official narratives of the Paris Agreement and narratives formed by everyday people affected by the event.

The positivity with which mainstream newspapers view the event suggests that Chile likely feels supported by the agreement at the governmental, national level or that it is popular among the upper class. This reflects the statements given by the environmental ministers after the conference. The other side of this, however, is that Chile's *pueblo*, that is to say the people, do not seem to feel supported by the agreement.

### Perceptions of COP21

#### Mainstream News

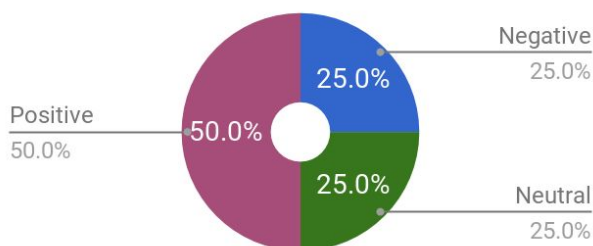


Fig 5. Division of valences within the mainstream news media.

### Perceptions of COP1

#### Independent News Media

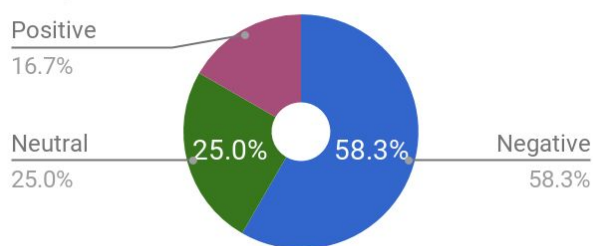


Fig 6. Division of valences within the independent news media.

Chilean newspapers, when taking into account independent and mainstream sources together, find the Paris Agreement to be unsatisfactory 42% of the time and give it a positive review only 33% of the time. This leads one to believe that as far as all Chileans are concerned, the agreement was more harmful or wasteful than it was helpful overall. With that in mind, in an effort to determine whether or not Chileans feel that the agreement supported them and was in their best interests, we must look at the reasons they identified for and against it. By examining these rationales, a picture starts to take shape from which we can identify not only what the agreement and the INDC intend to happen, but what people's experiences and perceptions of the agreement actually are.

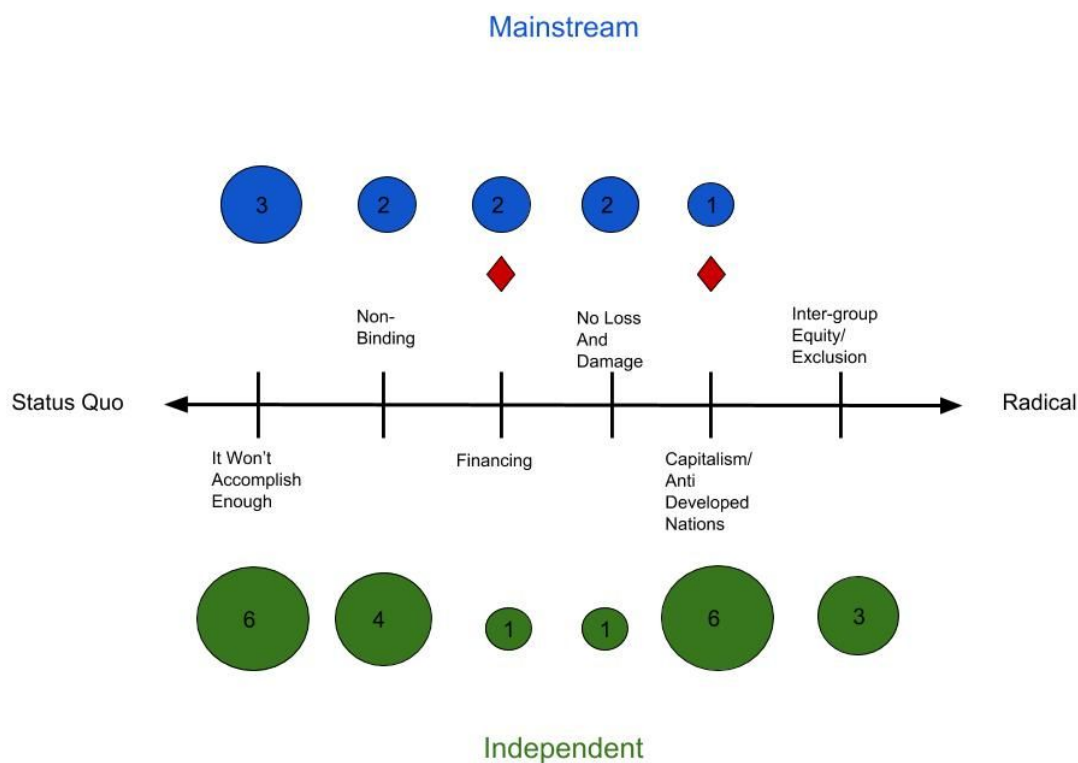


Fig. 7 Degree to which rationales challenge the status quo is plotted on the horizontal axis while the different media types are separated on the vertical axis. Relative size shows frequency of each rationale and diamonds demarcate rationales that were used to support positive arguments as well.

Figure 7 represents the various rationales given by articles explaining their dissatisfaction with the Paris Agreement. The horizontal axis displays a continuum onto which I placed the six most essential causes for discontentment in regards to the agreement. On the left side of the graphic are the arguments that fit within the status quo; that is, a complaint that does not question established regimes or the way the agreement was created. Conversely, on the right side are the most radical ideas, those that would require some amount of systemic change to address. The relative frequency that the arguments cropped up are expressed by the size of the bubbles and the media type is shown through color and along the vertical axis. The diamonds demarcate items which have also been identified as positive characteristics of the agreement. For instance, some articles view the North to South financing scheme as a good thing, while others think it is not enough or that it is a hollow promise. The chart makes apparent that the most popular rationale

identified in the news was that the agreement was not ambitious enough to have substantial global or local benefits. This rationale includes such arguments as pointing out that countries' commitments in reality fail to limit climate change to 2 degrees Celsius, or that 2 degrees is not enough to prevent significant harm and negative consequences. This mirrors the idea that one unifying idea throughout Chile may be that the agreement is not structured for the benefit of global South nations.

As might be expected, the mainstream newspapers make arguments that fall toward the status quo side of the spectrum, tapering off as they approach the more radical arguments. These conservative sources with close ties to the government are more likely to express a positive view of the agreement, yet even so they identify pertinent issues of climate justice. The issue of the global capitalist system is raised, as well as multiple criticisms about the absence of loss and damage. This suggests that even the more conservative views about climate change and sustainable development in Chile recognize that the agreement disadvantages nations in the global South.

In contrast, the independent newspapers appear somewhat polarized. Issues are frequently identified on either ends of the continuum, with the centermost arguments only cropping up once each. The relatively high incidence of the status quo justifications could be because they are relatively low hanging fruit that are not hard to identify or explain. It also suggests that the common people feel that their government, and the governments of the world, have to be held more accountable and work harder to combat climate change. This certainly differs from the US, where that is not a majority opinion, and many wish the government would dedicate less energy to climate change. That being said, the more radical opinions held by independent newspapers show that there is awareness and concern among the people about the equity of the agreement. Here, as opposed to the mainstream sources, we see equity issues at the subnational level raised in addition to frequent criticism of capitalism and the developed world. If these newspapers are reflecting already-held opinions as well as further promulgating these ideas, it seems that these communities feel that the agreement excluded them and people like them from the agreement, in that it ignores the rights and opinions of indigenous communities, and generally works to the advantage of those in the global North.

Financing, discussed below, crops up in multiple capacities in both varieties of articles; some find it to be a good thing, others want more of it, others do not believe it will actually happen. With that in mind, it is never mentioned that the idea of financing might be problematic in itself. The underlying assumption is always that money from the global North is a good thing and that more is better. In fact, one of the article points out that financing was a focus of the Latin American coalition going into the agreement (El Mercurio S.A.P 2015). This is understandable given the disproportionate contribution of the global North to environmental issues, however, the idea of relying on foreign money from the North has potentially problematic implications which are never raised in any of the articles.

A notable trend that is not visible in these graphics may shed some light on why the distributions turned out how they did. In both independent and mainstream news sources, the Paris Agreement was more likely to be viewed in a positive or neutral light if Donald Trump was also mentioned. Of the 5 independent articles that were either neutral or positive in valence, 3 of them, including both positive articles, referred to President Trump and his plans to exit the Paris agreement. This seems to indicate a certain defensiveness about the agreement, despite the fact that the same news sources have an otherwise negative view of it. This is not altogether surprising, however, when we think back to what happened in Kyoto: nations reached an agreement, but the US failed to ratify the agreement which prevented it from carrying substantial weight. Even if people are unhappy with the Paris Agreement, it is understandable that they would not want to see this happen for the second time in as many decades. The production of these articles suggests that although people were dissatisfied with the Paris Agreement, the arrival of Trump in international politics since the signing of the accords represents a further step back, possibly causing some to reflect fondly on the Obama administration and its environmental actions, even if they were far from perfect.

The articles examined here display a divide between the feelings of the people and official narratives about the Paris Agreement, with some moments of unity. Specifically, the people's media has a far more negative view of the event than do the conservative newspapers with state ties suggesting that the agreement promises to support Chile at the macro scale more

so than at the micro scale. It does seem, though, that many agree that the agreement could have been more ambitious in its requests from nations.

### Financing

The issue of financing within the sustainable development paradigm is fraught and deserves discussion as it cropped up in so many areas of my research. As mentioned above, the Paris Accords mandate that \$100 billion must be sent from developed nations to developing nations annually to help the nations of the global South adopt less carbon intensive technologies and reduce dependence on fossil fuels by helping these nations afford expensive renewable energy sources. Obviously, this is a very large sum of money, although it seems less impressive when we consider that it is to be divided between all the nations in the global South. However, as was observed with the Kyoto protocol, it is very possible that only a small fraction of this money will actually end up changing hands, especially when we consider that this commitment is to be non-binding and that the primary method of enforcement is transparency. Making matters more complex, though, are the political implications of this type of foreign investment.

In the recent blockbuster, *Black Panther*, T'Challa, the leader of Wakanda states that his nation achieved its success in part by never accepting foreign aid. Wakanda, which represents a successful, never-colonized version of Africa, uses its own natural resources and invests in itself rather than relying on the global North. This is a not-so-subtle statement by the makers of the movie about the role of foreign investment in international politics. In 1973 when Pinochet seized power, Allende had nationalized huge amounts of Chile's economy, spurning the idea of foreign investment, opting instead for marxist intra-national investment. The plan laid out by the Paris Accords to finance nations in the global South and Chile's corresponding plan to accept one third of funding for its INDC from abroad continues in the tradition started in 1973 of opening Chile's market to foreign forces. Fanon, Martí, and the writers of *Black Panther* espouse the value of creating anew, separate from the Western paradigm, and foreign investment often comes at the price of foreign influence. A demonstrative example of this is the International Monetary Fund's (IMF's) money lending scheme. For the IMF to be willing to lend a government money, it requires that the government adopts certain neoliberal reforms to its

economy in compliance with the Washington Consensus. In this way, the international body is able to exert pressure on nations, pushing the free market economics championed by much of the global North.

A concern about the money lending plan of the Paris Accords is that it involves a similar flow of money from the global North to the global South. One possible consequence of this is that sustainable development *financed* by the global North will look like the sustainable development *practiced* in the global North. As mentioned above, however, sustainable development is place specific (May 2011) and has not been very effective in many areas of the global North. One area where this concern has become reality in Chile is the aforementioned issue of hydroelectric projects. Many of these ecologically and socially damaging projects are investments by large MNCs from the North, but some such as the Quilleco project are the result of financing under the Kyoto Protocol (World Bank n.d.). This type of foreign intervention runs the risk of upsetting already very delicate social dynamics, such as further exploiting the land of the Mapuche people.

The resource curse theory claims that natural resource wealth can impede a nation's growth because economic dependence on natural resources impedes the development of sound, productive institutions that can bring long term stability and prosperity. Although this theory has been questioned, it is generally accepted as convincing with the exception of a few minor points (Badeeb, Lean, and Clark 2017). In this sense, financing from abroad under the name of sustainable development has the potential to cause the same sort of institutional instability as do quick profits from natural resource exploitation. If this is the case, then the financing plan of the Paris Agreement can be seen as an easy out for developed nations to rid themselves of responsibility for causing climate change. It may not cause lasting, helpful change, and in fact has the potential to do harm and fit into the neoliberal pattern of the North sending money toward nations in the global South in exchange for control of land, resources, and governance. Of course, not everyone holds this view, as is demonstrated by Barrett (2013) who observes that small, vulnerable communities receiving climate financing are better able to address the threats of climate change than are comparable communities without this funding. With this in mind,



financing is integral to Chile's plan to meet the demands of the climate agreement, which potentially dilutes the small prosocial steps they take in the document.

## Conclusion

Through a rhetorical analysis of Chile's INDC, the Paris Agreement, and the Ministry of the Environment's propaganda video, as well as analysis of mainstream and independent newspaper articles, I find that although the *idea* of equity was central to the Paris Agreement, it was unable to be effectively passed down through multiple scales to the people that the agreement claims to protect. The agreement was progressive in that it included sections on adaptation and loss and damage and that it acknowledged many vulnerable groups in the preamble, however, the agreement did not provide adequate structure to turn these ideas into meaningful action by the Chilean government. As a close examination of their INDC displays, the Chilean government addresses the required (minimal) elements under the overarching agreement, and in some areas acknowledges important concerns regarding vulnerability. With that in mind, there is a notable absence of language related to equity, inclusion, social justice issues, or any specific vulnerable populations within the country, which suggests that Chile's national contribution does not intend to focus on prosocial activity as much as it does emissions mitigation, which it includes substantive steps for accomplishing. This idea is further reinforced through a viewing of a propaganda video about the conference. Even though the words voiced in the video raise a few important considerations of sustainable development in the Anthropocene, the form of the video clearly demonstrates the populations that the agreement means to serve and who is to be excluded, completely ignoring indigenous groups and struggles, and opting into a westernized view of modernity in contradiction of the recommendations of postcolonial thinkers. In response, newspaper articles reflect a substantial amount of discontentment amongst those consuming the agreement. That is to say, the agreement affects countries at the national level in terms of international legitimacy and respect, but it also affects people on the ground. Those who are or who expect to be affected by the agreement, express frustration for a number of reasons ranging from the typical to the more radical.

Without trying to impose my own ideas on these potentially vulnerable populations, this leads me to the conclusion that despite the recognition of social equity and human rights issues associated with environmentalism and international sustainable development in the Paris Agreement, recognition failed to be translated down from the international scale to the national and then subnational level in Chile. The lack of inclusion or meaningful attentiveness to prosocial action on the part of the Paris Agreement and the Chilean government suggests that some of the core issues that have plagued sustainable development in the past have not yet been overcome. Specifically, the agreement and its enactment by Chile ask for contributions from those below without reciprocating support. For example, despite the lack of strong sections on adaptation or loss and damage, the Paris agreement asks for contributions from the global South who have historically contributed very little to climate change. On the national scale, Chile imposes national laws like their carbon tax, which can disproportionately impact poor populations, but does little to demonstrate any commitment to supporting these vulnerable peoples in return.

#### Comparison and Generalization

Shortly before the COP21, Morgan and Waskow (2014) delved into the idea of equity within the UNFCCC, and found that although the idea had become incorporated into many discussions of sustainable development, it had not yet been woven into the framework in a meaningful way. Similarly, through my research I find that although the *idea* of equity was central to discussions around the Paris Agreement, it was unable to be passed down through various scales to the people that the agreement claims to support. Despite being lauded by many participants as a success for international environmentalism, there has been no shortage of literature criticizing the agreement and pointing to its shortcomings (Mandel 2018). The majority of critics take issue with the flimsiness of the compromise, which they view as problematic, maintaining reasonable skepticism that participating nations will follow through on their commitments, let alone pursue the more stringent concessions necessary to keep climate change below 2 degrees Celsius. That being said, there has been little analysis of the theoretical undercurrents and implications of the agreement. For instance, while Dimitrov points out that

adaptation was a weak section and loss and damage was virtually absent, he does not examine what this means.

Fiction writer Amitav Ghosh's recent book, *The Great Derangement*, provides an antidote to this issue, writing about the Paris Agreement that "there is not the slightest acknowledgement that something has gone wrong with our dominant paradigms" (2016, 154). In other words, the agreement does nothing to question how we arrived at where we are at right now. Ghosh points his finger of blame at the perpetual drive for growth inspired by the global economic system. He writes that the poorly disguised intention of the agreement is "to create yet another neo-liberal frontier where corporations, entrepreneurs, and public officials will be able to join forces in enriching each other" (156). This critique, which in many ways corroborates my own, is particularly disparaging of the neoliberal tendencies of the agreement. With that in mind, it is important to remember that an immediate shift away from neoliberal policies would not necessarily remedy the current global situation, not to mention the potential equity issues inherent to centralized political and economic systems.

Thomas and Twyman (2005), writing over ten years ago, agree that more attention has to be directed to the subnational scale in conversations about climate justice. One area where our conclusions differ, however, is that they conclude—along with Barrett (2013)—that increasing funding for vulnerable communities is one of the most effective way to empower these communities to help themselves. While I do not deny that this is possible, I think that there are likely more effective ways to give agency to these communities. In Chile, giving the indigenous peoples money, for example, would not change the fact that they are systematically discriminated against. Perhaps education or support in developing self-sustaining institutions combined with political work around reducing the social pressures that cause vulnerability would be more effective than money in these situations.

Given the similarities in the findings that I have cited here, it is hopefully clear that my scholarship does not exist in a vacuum. It is important to note, though, that Chile is not a representative setting in which to explore these ideas. More accurately, it is something of a caricature of a neoliberal nation, due to the way that the economic system was imposed by the CIA through what Naomi Klein labels the "shock therapy" treatment. This does not mean that

these findings are not applicable to other contexts or countries, but it does suggest that they be understood with a grain of salt. Chile is an exceptional mix of developed, demonstrated by the fact it is one of thirty-five members of the OECD, and not developed depending on where one is in the country. The government's tumultuous relationship with the Mapuche people is by no means unheard of, however the racist dynamics are more open and pronounced than in many other countries. While this does not invalidate my conclusion about a lack of prosocial action in the agreement, it is necessary to consider the limitations of my situated context.

Other limitations of my research include my objects of analysis. While the two types of news sources represent the opinions of some, they clearly cannot be assumed to represent entire communities accurately. Being able to talk to Mapuche community members, Chilean workers, or government officials would have allowed me to garner more nuances and better understand why people feel the way that they do. Moreover, in my analysis of the consumption of the agreement, I used the two news types to represent two sides of a political spectrum, therefore artificially creating a dualism that might be misleading. In all likelihood, there is a wider range of opinions that I was not exposed to by limiting myself to the conservative versus independent binary.

### Next Steps

In my interview with a member of the US delegation to the CO21, she raised the question of whether or not it was the responsibility of the Paris Agreement to meaningfully address human rights and social justice issues. After all, there are entire branches of the UN outside of the UNFCCC that specialize in these areas. This same question underpins much of the rhetoric about the Paris Climate Agreement. Without a doubt, it was not within the scope of the agreement to substantially alter the international capitalist system or roll back the global proliferation of neoliberal policies, and as Ghosh points out, it certainly did not try to do so. Short of this, however, there was much the agreement could have done to pursue prosocial action in a more meaningful way and move the topic of equity out of the preamble and into the heart of the agreement.

The Climate Agreement states that it should be implemented with an eye for equitability, and while the agreement has yet to go into effect, if the opinions of Chile's independent news sources are to be trusted, this goal does not seem to have been accomplished. The entire agreement is non binding, however if I were able to add one clause to the agreement it might be that in order to be recognized as a participating nation, every country would have to instate a representative panel tasked with the oversight of national implementation. In order to remain a signing member of the agreement, the panel would have to retain a representative from all minority communities that make up a substantial fraction of the population (e.g. groups that make up more than 1% of the population). Race is not the only demographic to keep in mind, however, as gender and class diversity within the panel would be important to maintain as well. This committee would have to be granted power by the UNFCCC, in the case of the Paris Climate Accords, to monitor the plans of the government, the way in which foreign aid is used, and to ensure that the interests of national minority groups are not ignored. The hope here is that if the committee could get their nation released from the agreement, therefore losing legitimacy and facing international embarrassment, this would give them leverage to ensure that equity was meaningfully incorporated into the agreement. While I believe that including a greater variety of voices into the agreement's formation and implementation could accomplish the goal of effectively incorporating equity, this may require that some autonomy is taken out of the agreement.

It appears that the flexible nature of the Climate Agreement served a dual purpose: on the one hand this made it approachable for developing nations by allowing autonomy to determine contributions to the agreement, and on the other it failed to provide adequate structure to encourage Chile to include equity into the agreement or to empower such developing nations to pursue creative, non-market mechanisms to combat climate change. In regards to past global environmental agreements such as the the Kyoto Protocol, Bosello et al. claim that efforts to make the agreement more equitable likely reduced the effectiveness of the agreement. This is because "each country is assumed to set its policy variables in order to maximise its welfare function under the constraints" (2001, 3). In other words, flexible constraints may have allowed nations to set weaker goals for themselves due to a belief that it was best for the country.

It is tempting to argue, as the WPCCC seems to, that global capitalism is the one obstacle to be overcome, and that if only this system was changed and market solutions were disposed of climate change could be readily prevented. After all it seems that the capitalist emphasis on choice and profit maximization is at the root of both the causes of climate change and the failure of the climate agreement to promote prosocial action. That being said, we must move beyond the duality of capitalism bad, marxism good, especially as this has not proven to be the case historically. Both systems invariably come with their sets of issues and strengths. In order to think beyond this binary, we have to consider what lies outside of these political and economic systems. Ghosh argues that “the formal political structures of our time are incapable of confronting this crisis on their own,” and that religion may be a more effective avenue through which to mobilize sustainable development and action against climate change (159). Organized religion, which is sometimes cited as the cause of humanity’s mistreatment of the earth, is rarely regarded as tool for environmental salvation. Otherwise it may be that a cultural shift is needed, as many insist, although it is hard to argue that culture is not intimately connected to economic systems. Regardless, it is important to note that these issues are not as simple as they may seem when divided into two neat categories.

As Morgan and Waskow advocate, there is a need for a more comprehensive definition of equity in today’s sustainable development paradigm. As I have suggested, this might not involve national autonomy in deciding contributions to climate agreements. Rather, it must involve considerations of multiple scales, from international power relations to subnational dynamics. Equity in its current form was unable to translate down through scalar levels to Chile’s vulnerable populations despite the stated intentions of the Climate Agreement. Acknowledging my inability to prescribe what is best for others, it follows that implementing procedural justice is the safest road to arrive at prosocial action. The people and communities in question have to become integral to the planning and implementation processes. In Chile, this would involve consulting with Mapuche people. The Mapuche are famous for their horizontal system of governance; they have no real rulers. This may make them excellent candidates for helping to implement sustainable development in a way that supports social betterment.

## Further Research

There are of course substantial limitations to the research done here. To begin with, the agreement in question was written less than three years ago and is not meant to begin in force until 2020, so all of the conclusions drawn in this paper are speculative and based off of the plans made by Chile, a participating nation. Accordingly, this means that the reactions collected in the form of newspaper articles are purely reactions to the agreement itself, not reactions to what the countries are actually doing to maintain accordance with the agreement. In the future, it will be important to analyse the way in which countries actually carry out the plans they have written for themselves. Specifically it will be necessary to investigate the way that nations such as Chile incorporate equity into the implementation of their plans. As I have shown, Chile's INDC does not provide much of a framework for including equitable distribution of benefits, so it will be interesting to see if they find a way to improve in the future. Other limitations of this paper include its narrow scope, in that I only examine the way Chile is interacting with the agreement and no other country. Further research should investigate the ways other nations are dealing with the agreement to determine if the Paris Agreement is successful at instigating equitable approaches to climate change in different situations. Part of this research should include an examination of the methods adopted by other countries to pursue accordance with the agreement. In other words, how do other nations plan to follow up on their mitigation goals? Are these methods equitable, inclusive, and original? Or, do they follow the same market oriented pattern championed by the North?

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