



*Intersectional Analysis of the Climate Justice Movement: Austrian Visions for Climate Justice*

*Véronique Ananké Nebeská*

(Supervisor's Review)

Véronique Ananké Nebeská's thesis is undoubtedly touching upon a topical issue – it follows two important accents in critical appraisal of the current climate justice movements, i.e. reflection of gender justice and its intersectional nature, as well as the movement's reliance on science and its legacies of social hierarchies and inequalities (As per the formulation of research questions in thesis introduction and then again, p. 20).

Conceptually, the thesis is grounded in four key concepts – ecofeminism, intersectional environmentalism, intersectionality, and climate justice, three of which (ecofeminism, intersectional environmentalism, and climate justice) might be read as concepts growing from each other while building off each other's respective limitations. The conceptual section of the thesis is rather brief and sketchy and has clearly suffered from the rush of the deadline. Despite this, it does reflect author's clear argument, and the thesis focus. I do believe however that more direct engagement with the discussed theory in the analysis might be helpful. Would for instance discussions within ecofeminism be drawn upon to make sense of the rather limited understanding of gender withing CJM that the author discusses?

The work on the thesis has been made difficult by the epidemic. The lockdowns and other preventive measures have forced Véronique Ananké Nebeská to completely redefine their project; the intended ethnography with climate justice activist groups needed to be transformed into discourse and interview-based analysis of how activist conceptualise climate justice and its intersectional politics rather than how "it is done in the field". All the more difficult, since Véronique Ananké Nebeská has already left for their field research (and study) in Austria. As the supervisor, I do want to emphasise the difficulty of the situation and even more to draw out how Véronique Ananké independently navigated and resolved the situation. After we have discussed several alternatives (e.g., moving the research to follow the online presence of various CJM groups, and their social media groups) Véronique Ananké has been able to find research partners in the Austrian CJM and conduct semi-structured interviews. All this speaks to their capacities as the researcher and their ability to come to terms with the unexpected obstacles in the research field. The processual nature of the research reflects in the iterative approach and the ways in which Véronique Ananké reframed their research questions based on the data and what was emerging from them. The first question, suggestion for the defence is based on this – I would like to invite Véronique Ananké to speak to this iterative process and to how and why specifically the research questions shifted (beyond the focus on the positive CJ narratives, p. 25).

One chapter that stands out of the methodology is the one discussing author's positionality; it is well written and argued and partners well with the chapter discussing ethical consideration of the project, in particular considering the ways in which knowledge produced is being taken up in political strife, and specifically, MA theses being weaponised by political agents against critical movements. Here, I would be interested to hear more about the position of the "passionate participant" (Guba, Lincoln, here p. 22) – what does it mean to be "participant" in leading interviews? Further, the author presents this researcher's positionality (only) in positive terms, in relation to "representing the multitude of voices in the field" (Guba and Lincoln 1994, here p. 22). Could the author reflect on the ways their affects and passions might have spilt into the interview situations and into the whole projects in more complicated ways? And also how affects translated into the online interviewing process?

Véronique Ananké's work succeeds in offering a rather plastic insight into how justice is being thought about within this analysed niche of CJM activists. I really appreciate that the author was able to draw out and name the conflicting visions of the overarching and driving agenda – climate vs. social inequalities, as well as how this potential bifurcation reflects onto the paradoxical relationship to feminism/gender. The author also highlights how care work remains invisibilised even in movements that profess to centre other forms of care (for environment, non-human and non-animate lives etc.). And lastly, Véronique Ananké's discussion reveals how CJ movement is grappling with how to reflect the varieties axes of oppression and most importantly their simultaneity. The chapter's 4.4. structure also reflects this – the 'categories' are listed separately, rather than in their enmeshed nature. However, this is where I believe the fact that the work needed to be based on interviews rather than on-site, activities, "making and doing" of climate justice is to blame.

The analysis of Véronique Ananké's work is its forte, it offers new and innovative insights into a field that deserves more attention and interaction from researchers. I do have few critical notes and suggestions for further elaboration: I do not believe that the work needs to claim to lean on critical discourse analysis, if then it offers an analysis of a discourse/discourses of climate justice. Secondly, it loses the second question of science and its critical reflection out of sight, in my opinion, the short chapter on knowledge hierarchies does not suffice to justice this as one of the leading research questions. Further – as suggestions to further work, I believe the last chapter bringing articulations of individual utopias is powerful and actually offers itself for a detailed – critical discourse—analysis that would really zoom on the metaphors and other figures of speech used, affects and emotions shared and embodied, as well as the limits in our social imaginaries (not as individual failures in the personalised utopias, but what do they tell us collectively about what we cannot imagine). Covid-19: the author briefly mentions it—as reflected by the research participants—in relation to government help and its potential to deepen structural inequalities. Would it be possible to discuss how much in fact the pandemic was reflected as a climate/a social justice issue within the CJM? Lastly, since the author talked about the androcentric nature of science, would it be possible to reflect on the anthropocentric position of the CJM, the positionalities of the activist the author got to talk to? And would critical reflections on Anthropocene, the survival of non-human lives vs. survival of human lives (human race) be helpful here?

In closing, as a supervisor, I would want to emphasise the independency with which they surpassed the restrictions of the Covid pandemic. To a certain point, we discussed the work regularly, and they have always taken feedback and considered how to work it into the thesis. The work has clearly benefited by the cooperation with other academic colleagues, namely with Barbara Smetschka, and the time at BOKU.

Despite my critique stated above, I want to reiterate that I view Véronique Ananké's as excellent thesis. She has demonstrated her ability to conduct original research and articulate her own interpretation of the data. I recommend the thesis for the defence and suggest an evaluation of A (1). However, the final decision and appraisal is in the hands of the committee and depends on the response to the questions posed by me and the reviewer.

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Kateřina Kolářová