

as I suggested, that Strong's approach might seem to imply that the reader should just take his word for it. Throughout the book, the author himself is aware of the way that almost all of his theorists, not merely those he focuses on primarily but even frequent supporting actors such as Ralph Waldo Emerson, flirt with a risky elitism. He doesn't want to deny this risk; it is part of his argument that the risk is unavoidable. Interestingly, though, Strong offers a formulation of what it means to make claims on thoughts arrived at without a banister that does attenuate the worry, but which is very clearly *his*, not obviously in the framings of his authors. Like a judgment about art, a knowledge claim without a banister is an "invitation—which may be refused, accepted, or questioned—to join me and share, perhaps alter or correct, the experience I have" (p. 97). *Politics without Vision* itself is such an invitation.

Ethical Adaptation to Climate Change: Human

Virtues of the Future. Edited by Allen Thompson and Jeremy Bendik-Keymer. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2012. 336p. \$52.00 cloth, \$27.00 paper.
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— Tina Sikka, *Simon Fraser University*

This volume offers a comprehensive and insightful analysis of the ethical and moral problems raised by climate change, as well as the various approaches to mitigation and adaptation that have arisen over the last few decades. The text takes a novel approach to climate change wherein human virtues are seen as the central drivers of ethical choice.

This perspective can be contrasted with consequentialist or deontological perspectives on climate change. On the one hand, consequentialist or utilitarian ethical systems, as applied in the area of normative environmental ethics, tend to base assessments of whether an environmental action is right or wrong on the outcome—that is, whether the outcome of an action will, for example, lead to maximum environmental protection. Deontological systems of ethics, on the other hand, judge actions on the basis of their adherence to a set of predefined rules or duties. In this context, it could be considered morally wrong or prohibitive to engage in actions that might lead to the extinction of species or destruction of sensitive ecological systems—even if it is economically desirable.

In opposition to these two approaches, this volume takes a virtue-ethics perspective on environmental challenge through which the primary boundaries regulating ecological choice, both inside and outside of institutions, is shaped by an understanding of the way that "excellence in human adaptation in the face of an unfolding climate crisis leads us to understand human flourishing in new ways" (Allen Thompson and Jeremy Bendik-Keymer, p. 13).

For example, in Chapter 2, William M. Throop articulates a virtue-based approach to ecological restoration by

means of a healing metaphor that elevates the virtues of humility, self-restraint, sensitivity, and respect for others. He contends that these virtues, when guided by such metaphors as gardening, design, and healing, must become the drivers of human action as they relate to ecological restoration (p. 48). All other chapters draw on similar understandings of the role of virtues in guiding ecological decision making and action.

One of the central themes of the volume, taken up by several authors, is the virtue of historical fidelity or historicity as it relates to ecological restoration. The question asked is whether attempts at repairing human-driven environmental degradation can and should aim at a pure historical consistency or some variation of this. Eric Higgs, for instance, argues that this kind of historicity forms one of the two "moral centers of gravity of ecological restoration (the other is ecological integrity)" (p. 96). Higgs is clear that while ecological restoration based on a pure sense of historical fidelity may be desirable in theory, it may not be realizable in practice. Ronald Sandler, in his chapter "Global Warming and Virtues of Ecological Restoration," also argues that this kind of pure historicity may no longer be possible. Yet he concludes that a sense of historical integrity, in guiding future environmental stewardship, remains important—particularly since it is often the case that "historicity serves in applying brakes to unfettered [human] interventions in ecosystems" (p. 98).

Another significant contribution of this volume to the environmental ethics literature involves the use of a capabilities approach to ethical theory and justice as articulated by Amartya Sen and Martha Nussbaum. According to this perspective, persons are thought to be virtuous "if they recognize, protect and promote the capabilities that help other individuals to flourish" (p. 131). These capabilities can be extended or integrated, and are by Jozef Keulartz and Jac. A. A. Swart, to animals and our shared environment.

In her chapter, Breana Holland also makes a persuasive case for treating our shared environment as a "meta-capability" wherein ecological systems are assessed according to their ability to protect the 10 human capabilities, which include life, bodily health, practical reason, other species, and control over one's environment, among others. Climate change, as Holland argues, disrupts the actualization of human capabilities by, for example, undermining practical reason and personal control through catastrophic weather events that challenge human agency. It can also weaken control over one's environment, which "requires being able to participate in political choices." Unforeseen climate events can make such actualization impossible in the case of, for instance, climate refugees who are "likely to face unknown periods of time" in which none of the "normal rights of citizenship are within [their] reach" (p. 153).

Assessing climate change from this perspective forms the basis of a plan for ecological resolution that alters our

perception so that, instead of looking at ecosystems passively, we see their protection as essential for justice, human capability and dignity. While, overall, the text does an excellent job of articulating a virtue-based approach to climate action, it could have been enhanced if two gaps had been addressed.

In particular, the volume could have benefited from a more sustained analysis of the fact/value or truth/justification dichotomy which, while mentioned in passing, does not get adequate treatment. This perspective argues that the status of truth of all sorts is intertwined with values and subject to change based on new knowledge and shared, intersubjective communication. While this would in no way question the universal validity of scientific studies of climate change, it would root its truthfulness in a normative and dialogic communicative action.

The discourse ethics approach that comes out of this perspective sets up the framework through which communication about such weighty issues as climate change is discussed. Such mutual recognition and free participation can, moreover, go a long way toward setting the normative context for further discussions of climate action. This might have also added another dimension to the analysis of institutional responses to climate change as articulated by Kenneth Shockley—particularly with respect to enhanced social learning. Moreover, not only would a discussion of discourse ethics have fit in nicely with the thematic focus of the text, but it also could have added a contemporary theoretical component to the overall approach.

Finally, this volume also misses out on the ways in which class, gender, and race are interconnected with the ecological challenges we face today. Cleavages along North–South divisions and concerns about general economic injustice, the unequal distribution of hazards and risk, and structural barriers to participation in environmental decision making tend to disproportionately affect minority communities and must be taken into account.

On the subject of gender and ethnicity, one of the central tensions that environmental activists need to contend with is outreach to those who, while dedicated to environmental protection, are also skeptical of, often even hostile to, the pervasive use of largely Western empirical epistemologies that ignore other kinds of knowledge systems. The notion that science is itself structured by power relations is not new. Moreover, it suggests that pluralizing knowledge claims, including non-Western and nondominant perspectives on sustainability, climate change, and environmental stewardship, are desperately needed. This kind of perspective would have fitted nicely with several of the chapters' thematic foci—including those of Steven Vogel and Jason Kawall.

Overall, this collection of essays does a compelling job of articulating a novel perspective on climate change in line with a virtue-ethics approach. On such contentious

subjects as restoration, historical fidelity, human capabilities, and institutional agency, among others, its contribution is unambiguously clear.

Linguistic Justice for Europe and for the World.

By Philippe Van Parijs. New York: Oxford University Press, 2011.

320p. \$50.00.

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— Glyn Morgan, *Syracuse University*

Philippe Van Parijs's provocative new book on linguistic justice can be read as an extended analysis of the linguistic presuppositions of a just and democratic polity. Van Parijs is not, of course, the first theorist to tackle this topic. John Stuart Mill famously argued that democratic institutions are all but impossible in a country where people speak different languages. If Mill is right, then there can be little hope that, for instance, the European Union will ever overcome its democratic deficits. Nor can we expect much to come from the various cosmopolitan proposals for some form of global democratic citizenship.

Van Parijs accepts Mill's argument concerning the importance of a common lingua franca. Indeed, he brews up this argument in an even stronger batch than Mill's. For Van Parijs, a common lingua franca is a precondition not merely for democratic institutions but for the effective pursuit of justice—and not only within Europe but throughout the world. When we share a common language, so he argues, it is much easier to incorporate others into our ethical community, much more difficult to ignore their appeals for justice. Yet where Mill dismisses the prospects for democracy in the multinational polities of the world, Van Parijs reaches a much cheerier conclusion. The lack of a common lingua franca is but a temporary state of affairs. English, so he explains, is becoming the European lingua franca and—bar “some unforeseeable apocalyptic event” (p. 29)—is likely to become the global lingua franca. The author reports these developments as a herald of good tidings. He holds that the spread of the English language—global Anglicization, as it were—is both inevitable and, on the whole, thoroughly desirable.

To understand Van Parijs's approach to a common lingua franca, it is helpful to bear in mind that political theorists tend to view language in one of two different ways: on one view—call it “the instrumental view”—language is primarily a means of communication; on the other view—call it “the romantic view”—language is the expression of a group's (typically a nation's) distinctive way of life. At least initially in this long, intricately argued and complex book, Van Parijs adopts a thoroughgoing instrumentalist view of language. Any Herderian defense of particular national loyalties is not for him. “Any honest attempt to think seriously about justice for our century,” he writes, “must downgrade nations and states from the ethical framework to the institutional toolkit” (p. 26).