Postcolonial Critique of Environmental Justice: A Discourse Analysis of United Nations Documents on Post-Invasion Iraq and Afghanistan

by

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Abstract

This thesis offers a postcolonial understanding of power relations in environmental justice discourse. The main argument of this research is that environmental justice can be seen not only *from* a postcolonial point of view, but also *as* a postcolonial issue. The intellectual contribution of the postcolonial perspective in the context of environmental justice is to reveal the colonial, neocolonial, imperial and settler colonial assumptions underlying the policies and the interlocking power structures and violence associated with making these policies. It also illuminates the foundations, prerequisites, and requirements for creating opportunities to decolonize the environmental justice discourse in particular and development discourse in general. I use the approaches of Michel Foucault, especially his notions of discourse, power/knowledge and governmentality to address discursive power struggles in the growing field of environmental justice. This qualitative research is undertaken by applying the approach of Norman Fairclough to Critical Discourse Analysis to empirically analyze the exercise of discursive power in the use of language in environmental justice scholarship and policy making.

In the first part of the research, I analyze the most referred definitions of the term environmental justice in the academic literature and discursively examine how their framing, claim-making, and interpretation of justice produce and introduce power within and around the notion of environmental justice. My findings show that all the dominant definitions of environmental justice in the academic discourse originate in the United States and implicitly include the assumption of exploiting the environment.

Analyzing United Nations policy documents on environmental aspects of rebuilding post-invasion Iraq and Afghanistan, in the second part of this research, I explore the way the concept of environmental justice is defined, represented, and institutionalized by global administrative

powers to address discursive politics and practices of policing the environment. My analysis shows that the environmental justice discourse in the documents is shaped by colonial and neocolonial assumptions about peoples of these countries as unable to govern, protect, and extract their environment and environmental resources and as in need to be 'environed'. The two cases provide a meaningful context for studying environmental justice from a postcolonial point of view since none of the dominant definitions of environmental justice in particular, and the discourse of environmental justice in general, can capture the invasions as examples of environmental injustice.

Do not say that everybody is in war and there is no benefit for my peace.

You are not one; you are a thousand. Just light your lantern.

- Jalal ad-Din Muhammad Balkhi Rumi

Dedication

This thesis is dedicated to Middle Eastern children whose parents, childhoods, and happiness have been killed by wars and warmongers.

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Chapter One - Introduction

In September 2015, more than 190 world leaders committed to 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and 169 targets. Their work, which built on the previous Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) 15 years earlier, sought to achieve "sustainable development in its three dimensions – economic, social and environmental – in a balanced and integrated manner" in order to complete the unfinished business of the MDGs (General Assembly Resolution 70/1, 2015, p. 3). In almost all of these 17 SDGs, environment and justice figure as core concepts. For instance, since "unsustainable management of the environment and natural resources is exacerbating further poverty" (UNDP, 2016, p. 5), elimination of hunger among more than 700 million people and pursuing wellbeing for vulnerable populations could not be possible without serious attention to sustainable environmental development (SDGs no. 1, 2, 3, 6 and 13[1]). Conversely, reducing different forms of inequalities, including gender inequalities and inequalities in the quality of life, is intertwined with environmental issues affecting lives and livelihoods of people in various forms (SDGs no. 5, 8, 10 and 16[2]).

Indeed, environmental issues cannot be separated from questions of social justice and human rights (Huggan, 2004, Wenz, 1988) – notably the equal rights of citizens to "a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and his family" (UN General Assembly, 1948). According to an Oxfam report,

> "the poorest half of the global population – around 3.5 billion people – are responsible for only around 10% of total global [carbon] emissions attributed to individual consumption, yet live overwhelmingly in the countries most vulnerable to climate change. Around 50% of these emissions meanwhile can be attributed to the richest 10% of people around the world,

[1] No Poverty, Zero Hunger, Good Health and Well-being, Clean Water and Sanitation, Climate Action
[2] Gender Equality, Decent Work and Economic Growth, Reduced Inequalities, Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions

> who have average carbon footprints 11 times as high as the poorest half of the population, and 60 times as high as the poorest 10%". (Oxfam International, 2015, p. 1).

However, the integration between poverty and paying environmental costs (more than others) is not a modern phenomenon. Taking a comprehensive look at what has happened in the history of environmental degradation, one might find that "the rhetoric of global environmental justice is just the latest wrapping for the old struggle between the world's rich and poor" (Jamieson, 1994, p. 201). Women, people of color, low-income communities, and minorities suffer more from environmental problems, have less access to clean water, food security and health services and therefore, are more vulnerable to different social justice issues. More importantly, they are voiceless or silenced and may not be involved in decision making to change the structures. Indeed, the disproportionate exposure of less powerful groups to environmental harms have been at the center of attention in environmental justice research (Norgaard, 2006, p. 348).

The processes of sustainable development are therefore enmeshed in systems of power. They raise important questions. Who decides who can benefit, and to what extent, from the finite resources of the earth and who should pay the ecological costs for their over-use? How do politics of exclusion and inclusion affect the distribution of environmental costs and benefits? How does the core decide on the rules of this distribution and the way it influences the periphery? These questions shaped the initial motivation to conduct the present research. A postcolonial perspective is relevant for exploring macro and micro politics of global organizational practices and processes that are either shaped in the West or by Western mindset and used to guarantee control of the Others (Essers & Tedmanson, 2014, p. 354). It reveals the colonial, neocolonial, imperial and settler colonial assumptions underlying the policies and the

interlocking power structures associated with making these policies. It also illuminates the foundations, prerequisites, and requirements of creating opportunities to decolonize the environmental justice discourse in particular and development discourse in general.

Research Question, Thesis and Objectives

The research question that I examine in this thesis is: how can we understand power dynamics in environmental justice (EJ) from a postcolonial point of view? This question helps me elucidate the potential and limitations of using postcolonial theory in EJ issues. I use the approaches of Michel Foucault, whose theory of power still inspires postcolonial thinking and analysis, to explore how power operates in the growing field of EJ. My argument is that environmental justice (EJ) can be seen not only *from* a postcolonial point of view, but also *as* a postcolonial issue. I explain the first part of the argument in chapter two, *Postcolonial Critique of Environmental Justice; A Struggle of Discursive Power*, and the second part in chapter three, *A Postcolonial Understanding of United Nations Documents on Post-invasion Iraq and Afghanistan: A Case Study of Environmental Justice*.

Through an analysis of the dominant definitions of the term 'environmental justice' in the academic literature, I first argue that the critical examination of EJ matters from a postcolonial approach. My findings show that the most referred definitions of the term environmental justice in the academic discourse originate in the United States and are all implicitly based on the assumption that environment is an entity that should be exploited. Drawing on a framework I developed inspired by the work of Gordon Walker (2012), my analysis of the way the definitions frame the environment and environmental justice highlights the following elements: problematizing (what is wrong), politics of inclusion/exclusion (who is included/excluded, what

is included/excluded), and distribution (what is distributed and what are the principles of distribution). I also examine whether, and how, each of the three dominant definitions of environmental justice make claims about evidence (how things are), claims about justice (how things ought to be), and claims about process (why things are how they are). Interpretation of justice is the last component of the framework that addresses whether the definitions consider distributive justice, procedural justice, or justice as recognition. I use Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to discursively examine how their framing, claim-making, and interpretation of justice produce and introduce power within and around the notion of environmental justice. These conceptualizations of EJ are critical as they determine "who gets to ask the questions, who gets to be heard (and listened to), and who benefits from how and if the questions are answered, researched, or considered relevant" (Haluza-DeLay, O'Riley, Cole & Agyeman, 2009, p. 9). In this regard, I use Foucault's conceptualization of 'power/knowledge' as it contributes to a better understanding of power in the academic discussions on EJ.

I then explore the way the concept of environmental justice is defined in United Nations (UN) documents to find out which understandings of the environment are implemented, and which values are attached to it. In this part, I focus on analyzing documents on environmental aspects of rebuilding post-invasion Iraq and Afghanistan to explore how EJ is represented and how the concept of EJ is reproduced by policy makers. These documents are important to examine how the concept of EJ is institutionalized and normalized by global administrative powers. Such an analysis may provide a new explanation for the legitimacy of the United Nations as representative of the international community and the 'legitimate knower' of the

practice of rebuilding environmentalized nations.[3] The critical examination of these documents contributes to a deeper understanding of the politics of inclusion and exclusion, politics of identity and construction of 'us'- 'them' divisions (North vs. South, informed vs. non-informed and active vs. passive) and discursive politics and practices of policing the environment. My analysis shows that the EJ discourse in the documents is shaped by colonial and neocolonial assumptions about peoples of these countries as unable to govern, protect, and extract their environment and environmental resources and as in need to be 'environed'. Here, I use Foucauldian conceptualizations of 'governmentality', 'biopower' and 'normalization' as they provide me the conceptual tools with which to contextualize power relations in documents and their relation to the biophysical environment.

The justification for focusing on Iraq and Afghanistan comes from a broader postcolonial perspective that I adopt in this research: the two countries were invaded and occupied by the United Stated and their Western allies based on the neocolonial assumption that these nations fail to govern themselves, there are still ongoing debates concerning the legality and legitimacy of these invasions (especially in the case of Iraq)[4], and the international community has treated the wars differently (Hooks & Smith, 2005, p. 21). Soon after the invasions, the United Nations started implementing policies about and performing actions towards rebuilding the countries (especially in the case of Afghanistan) and through these processes, environment has been always at the center of attention. The two cases provide a meaningful context for studying environmental justice from a postcolonial point of view, as I will argue and demonstrate in this

[3] Timothy Luke has used the term environmentalized in his writings (1997, 1998, 2000 & 2001) to understand the process of transforming from normal behaviors to refined environmental behaviors. However, he never defines the process of environmentalizing or the meaning of environmentalized relations of production and consumption. By '(re)building environmentalized nation', I mean a form of civilizing mission that assumes the mission of saving oriental environments from oriental peoples by the occident.

[4] Soon after invading Iraq, the occupying leaders realized that "some form of UN involvement was essential to help overcome the difficulties created by the occupation's lack of legitimacy and public support" (Berdal, 2004, p. 83).

thesis. None of the dominant definitions of environmental justice in particular, and the discourse of environmental justice in general, can capture the invasions as examples of environmental injustice. War is one form of exploitation of the environment (Scanlon, 2001), and while the economic and political benefits of starting wars and rebuilding after wars go to the Global North, the Global South pays the environmental costs of war, one of the strongest economies in the world. Indeed, by highlighting the neocolonial logic of exporting wars and weapons to the Global South, a postcolonial perspective shifts the traditional focus of EJ from, for example, siting landfills in African-American communities in the United States to relocating wars and their environmental harms as locally unwanted land uses (LULUs) in the global South.

In this study I assess three key documents: *Desk Study on the Environment in Iraq (2003)*, *Afghanistan: Post-Conflict Environmental Assessment (2003)*, and *Natural Resource Management and Peacebuilding in Afghanistan (2013).* While there is a body of literature on environmental threats as a side-effect of military interventions in environmental law (for example, Johnson, 2016), or in geopolitics and political geography (Dalby, 1992), "the environmental injustice that results from war and militarism has drawn little attention" (Hooks & Smith, 2005, p. 33). This flaw is more surprising given that the trend of redefining boundaries of EJ, as Schlosberg describes, continues to include "a broadening range of issues, and, increasingly, a global level" (Schlosberg, 2013, p. 40).

I could find only two studies on militarism in an EJ context. Scanlan (2001, p. 332) examines militarization and food security, suggesting that a "guns versus butter" debate needs to shift its attention from budget trade-offs to a realistic view of the impact of militarization on peoples' well-being, Scanlan focuses on military famines and human security. In examining the environmental injustice imposed to Native Americans at the hands of the U.S. military, Hooks

and Smith (2004, p. 558) also identify a "treadmill of destruction" that can explain why a large number of U.S. military bases, with their environmental and toxic hazards, are located in Native American lands.

However, reconstruction of Iraq and Afghanistan has never been studied from a postcolonial point of view. Environmental reconstruction of the two countries and social justice are also understudied. In such context, this research intends to show and bridge the gap and highlight why filling it matters. Focusing on United Nations published documents, I demonstrate "how programs of improvement are shaped by political-economic relations they cannot change [and] how they are constituted, that is, by what they exclude" (Li, 2007, p. 4). In this regard, UN policy-makers are the ones who "occupy the position of trustees, a position defined by the claim to know how others should live, to know what is best for them, to know what they need" (Li, 2007, p. 4) and their discursive power should be, and is, considered in my study. Their "will to improve" (Li, 2007) is situated in the field of 'government' as a form of power and, therefore, UN documents are a form of governing the environment (or environmentality).

In this context, this research is designed to address two objectives: 1) to develop a genealogical account of the term 'environmental justice' in order to illuminate the preconditions of developing a postcolonial perspective on EJ discourse, and 2) to conduct a postcolonial critique of implementation and operationalization of EJ in the published policy documents of United Nations in order to illuminate the specificities and complexities of applying a postcolonial perspective on EJ discourse.

Conceptual and Theoretical Framework

Power and the Environment

In this section, I examine how power exercises itself and its influences within and around the notion of 'the environment'.[5] Here, I suggest that there are three potential understandings of power *in relation to* the notion of the environment: a) the power to define the elements and meanings of environmental debates, b) the power to differentiate between different stakeholders, and c) the power to 'environ' — that is related to governing natural and built environments.

For the purposes of my study, there are three particularly germane operations of power around 'the environment' that I will later determine how they work through the environmental justice discourse: a) in framing the elements and meanings of environmental debates; b) in differentiations among various stakeholders in environmental issues; c) in the governing of natural and built environments, or 'environing.' As I will explain later in this chapter, Foucault never focuses on the environment either in his analysis of power or in his other theories. Therefore, and in order to explain these three elements of power in the environment, I use some elaborations of Timothy Luke as they provide a general background to the notion of the environment.

The *power to define*, stems in the first instance from the indeterminacy of the language being used. As Timothy Luke notes, "in and of itself, Nature arguably is meaningless until humans assign meanings to it by interpreting some of its many signs as meaningful" (Luke, 1995, p. 58). It carries different meanings for different people and ideologies. The potential

[5] The difference between 'nature' and 'the environment' has been discussed by environmental philosophy scholars (see Dale Jamieson (2001) and Ayhan Sol (2005) for example) but it is out of the scope of this thesis. As Luke (1995, p. 59-60) observes, 'Nature' has been deployed to make references about distinctive characteristics of the environmental and is marked as 'the environment' and therefore, in this thesis I use the two words interchangeably.

meaninglessness or "emptiness" of the concept of nature is politically important because assigning meaning to nature is a historical and political activity (Fontana, 1998, p. 223), and therefore, an exercise of power. Hence, it is crucial to analyze the power to define the environment, the environmental, environmental problems and their solutions. Having the power to define and/or frame environmental problems also means being able to decide about them, since "whoever decides what the game is about also decides who gets in the game" (Schattschneider, 1960, p. 105). The way issues are framed and problems are defined determines perceptions of causes of problems and merits of different solutions (Beder, 2002, p. 24). This form of power is also expandable to the power to frame the (state and non-state) friends and foes of the environment.

Discussions of environmental knowledge (or eco-knowledge) and how articulating this knowledge is a form of power are also related to the power to define. Through this understanding, schools and public education systems are key sources of power that produce eco-knowledge. The informal education people receive from different social institutions (from family to children's books, as discussed by Larsson, 2012) are other sources of power that articulate eco-knowledge. Power relations are also at work in producing environmental sciences, since during the process of "fact construction", all production circumstances and temporal qualifications may be encompassed by other processes and the facts thus produced are incorporated into a large body of knowledge drawn upon by others (Latour & Woolgar, 1986, p. 105-6).

The second potential understanding of power within the notion of the environment is the *power to make differences*. Mulligan (2010) indicates that different political and social sciences tend "to perpetuate an ideological separation of 'man' and 'nature', viewing the world of global

politics as somehow separate from the Earth upon which it takes place" (Mulligan, 2010, p. 138). This differentiation is more important for Gramsci, since, in Fontana's words, it makes "man become human":

> "He is not human until he begins to differentiate himself from the rest of the world, until he begins to distinguish himself from the rest of nature. It is in this alienation from the rest of nature that humanity acquires consciousness of itself as human, and, at the very same time, acquires consciousness of itself as 'not-nature'. Thus, it is in the consciousness of being at once nature and not-nature that it becomes possible to speak of history. In this sense, human action is always historical". (Fontana, 1998, p. 225).

The importance of acknowledging this separation stems from how it consciously and unconsciously affects the way people think about themselves and nature including the way they manage their relationship with, or define their position to, nature. Finally, and more importantly, in order to make the domination of human beings over the environment possible, it is necessary to pay attention to this separation. In fact, differentiation is the prerequisite to having domination over something that is different (or simply claimed as different). The practice of differentiation or producing differences makes things 'governable' and the domination possible. Thus, human beings, as the powerful agents in the relationship with nature, are the actors creating differences with nature. The nexus between nature and society is, therefore, "one of domination; and it is in the domination of nature that society — and hence humanity — creates itself and develops itself" (Fontana, 1998, p. 231). The practice of differentiation leads to the fundamental anthropocentrism underlying various theoretical perspectives in contemporary sociology which

have been addressed by Catton and Dunlap (1978) as the "Human Exceptionalism Paradigm".[6]

There is also another form of differentiation concerning power relations and the environment that matters for the purpose of this research: the differentiation among human beings that results from their unequal abilities to "affect both the relationship and the representation of themselves" (Sharma, 2006, p. 26). "Differences", Sharma describes, "are socially organized inequalities between human beings and between humans and the rest of the planet. The social organization of difference is the effect of practices and beliefs founded upon hierarchies of differential value and worth" (Sharma, 2006, p. 26). In this sense, power to differentiate matters for understanding power dynamics in an EJ context as it draws attention to politics of representation of environmental practices and practitioners, and how this politics affects determining value of environmental practices and environmental decision-making.

In addition to power to define and power to differentiate, I suggest there is another dimension of power in the process of understanding the environment that derives from the early origins of the word 'environment': the '*power to environ*'. Luke follows the origins of 'the environment' in Old French and explains that the environment is primitively derived from the verb 'to environ', which means "to encircle, encompass, envelop, or enclose" (Luke, 1995, p. 64). In his explanation, environing is a strategic action involving "the physical activity of surrounding, circumscribing, or ringing around something". He also notes how it is related to

[6] Catton and Dunlap challenge the implication of the following assumptions in the existing theoretical persuasions and call the set of assumptions "Human Exceptionalism Paradigm" (HEP): "1. humans are unique among the earth's creatures, for they have culture; 2. Culture can vary almost infinitely and can change much more rapidly than biological traits; 3. Thus, many human differences are socially induced rather than inborn, they can be socially altered, and in convenient differences can be eliminated. 4. Thus, also, cultural accumulation means that progress can continue without limit, making all social problems ultimately soluble" (Catton & Dunlap, 1978, p. 42-43). In contrast to HEP Catton and Dunlap develop "New Environmental Paradigm" (NEP) which implies that: "1. human beings are but one species among the many that are interdependently involved in the biotic com munities that shape our social life. 2. Intricate linkages of cause and effect and feedback in the web of nature produce many unintended consequences from purposive human action. 3. The world is finite, so there are potent physical and biological limits constraining economic growth, social progress, and other societal phenomena" (Catton & Dunlap, 1978, p. 45).

"stationing guards around, thronging with hostile intent, or standing watch over some person or place. To environ a site or a subject is to beset, beleaguer, or besiege that place" (Luke, 1995, p. 64).

By this definition, environing is a power-engaged activity. Governing lands, including how and to what extent to exploit natural resources or preserve the lands, is fundamentally related to power. Environing practices also include making decisions not only on the ownership and stewardship of natural resources, but also on who gets benefits from the earth and who pays the costs of its exploitation. In this regard, we might define all forms of environmental management and planning as practices of "policing of ecological spaces" (Luke, 1995, p. 65) and, therefore, an activity of power. Power to environ includes both direct and indirect roles of state as an environmental manager. For example, Bryant and Wilson (1998, p. 327) observe that "many states have retained direct control over forest management creating large state forest reserves, usually containing commercially valuable species". On the other hand, states affect non-state actors by regulating and making regulations on their activities. This indirect exertion of power is more important than direct power since "it may have a broader impact on a wide range of environmental management practices in civil society" (Bryant & Wilson, 1998, p. 327). That is why exploring technologies of environmental government and regulation is of benefit for both the environment as well as society (Agrawal, 2005a).[7]

Environmental Justice

Environmental justice (EJ) is a contested and problematized concept representing a multifaceted phenomenon that includes a variety of political, economic, intellectual, and cultural issues that

[7] For example, Agrawal (2005a, p. 89) shows how relying on localities as partners can be reconfigured as a new technology of government in the case of making Indian forests. This reconfiguration may lead to a successful environmental regulation.

are interrelated and cannot be separated from each other (Agyeman, 2005, p. 25, Kebede, 2005, p. 90). As Haluza-DeLay and his co-authors importantly observe, environmental justice is not only about unequal distribution of environmental risks or exposures, but also about unequal "access to information, participatory opportunities, and/or the power to shape discourse(s) or decisions" (Haluza-DeLay et. al, 2009, p. 8). It involves not only scientific assumptions and technical data but also fair treatment and equal access to participatory abilities for vulnerable and marginalized populations (Haluza-DeLay et. al, 2009, p. 9).

Previously, I discussed how the meaning of the environment is "multiple and unfixed" (Luke, 1995, p. 58). Simultaneously, the concepts of 'justice' and 'injustice' are defined, perceived, and framed differently by scholars, activists and policymakers. Therefore, "disputes about injustice are common. […] Because people have different ideas about justice, a social arrangement or environmental policy that one person considers just will be considered unjust by another" (Wenz, 1988, p. 2). Justice is a socially constructed phenomenon that, in contrast with the environment, is not objectively out there waiting for us to name and assign meaning to it. It is an ideational intersubjective phenomenon that comes into existence by the strategic activity of defining. The struggle, then, is around the definitions that let some actions and situations be considered just and others unjust. For example, "when we look across academic, activist, [or] policy literatures, we do not readily find one agreed definition of EJ being used, but rather multiple alternatives" (Walker, 2012, p. 8).

Traditionally, questions and concerns about environmental justice focus on environmental burdens people face unequally (for example see Jamieson, 1994 or Bullard, 1995). Newer interpretations of EJ, however, include unequal access to environmental benefits as well. Lewis (2011) makes an analogy between environmental inequality and income

inequality to show why we should consider 'environmental goods' alongside 'environmental bads' in EJ; as we cannot explain income inequality by studying the poor exclusively, we cannot understand environmental inequality only by focusing on contaminated communities (Lewis, 2011, p. 87). Environmental justice, therefore, focuses on

> "the distribution of benefits and burdens among all of those affected by environmentally related decisions and actions. Its chief topics include the division of the burdens of environmental protection between poor and affluent people in our society, as well as the division of natural resources between rich nations and poor nations, between the current generation and future generations, and between human and nonhuman species, especially endangered species. These topics are introduced as needed to illustrate and challenge more abstract theories of distributive justice". (Wenz, 1988, p. 4).

In addition to the 'what' question of EJ, examining the 'who' question reveals another controversy regarding its definition. For many environmental policy scholars, it is argued that it is the government who should modify its environmental planning and politics to EJ. For instance, Bullard (1995) suggests that governments should adopt five principles in order to reach environmental justice: "guaranteeing the right to environmental protection, preventing harm before it occurs, shifting the burden of proof to the polluters, obviating proof of intent to discriminate, and redressing existing inequalities" (Bullard, 1995, p. 9). By this definition EJ is about unequal and inequitable health and environmental protection that people receive from their governments (Bullard, 1995, p. 3-9). On the other hand, some scholars take a broader definition of EJ by assuming that all have an ethical responsibility for solving environmental injustice problems. Environmental justice advocacy by citizens, states, professionals and institutions is, therefore, necessary for public good and welfare (Shrader-Frechette, 2002, p. 185, Jamieson, 1994, p. 209-10). Therefore, as Agyeman and Evans (2004) argue, we need to recognize a distinction between two dimensions of EJ:

> "It is, predominantly at the local and activist level, a vocabulary for political opportunity, mobilization and action. At the same time, at the government level, it is a policy principle that no public action will disproportionately disadvantage any particular social group". (Agyeman & Evans, 2004, p. 156).

All these differences make it difficult to locate one definition over others. However, for the purpose of this research, I require a working definition in order to clarify what I am searching for, especially in the case of analyzing documents, where the term 'environmental justice' has not been explicitly employed. Nevertheless, at the end of my second chapter I will critique this working definition alongside with other definitions of environmental justice.

Rather than seeking for one absolute preferred definition of EJ, Gordon Walker discusses some concerns related to EJ upon which I build. For Walker, EJ as the connection of environment and social differences, is concerned with

> "how for some people and some social groups the environment is an intrinsic part of living a 'good life' of prosperity, health and well-being, while for others the environment is a source of threat and risk, and access to resources such as energy, water and greenspace is limited or curtailed. It is also about how some of us consume key environmental resources at the expense of others, often in distant places, and about how the power to effect change and influence environmental decision-making is unequally distributed. Most fundamentally it is about the way that people should be treated, the way the world should be". (Walker, 2012, p. 1).

Based on these concerns I define EJ as being about a) unequal distribution of benefiting from the environment, b) unequal distribution of scarcity and threats of the environment and c) unequal distribution of power to affect environmental decision making. The first justification for choosing this definition is that it is concerned with 'distributive justice' as the "chief topic" of EJ (Wenz, 1988, p. 4). Secondly, it is a normative definition and considers ethical responsibilities for solving problems of environmental injustice. Thus, it considers EJ not only as *reactive* to environmental bads, but also *proactive* in achievement and (re)distribution of environmental

goods (Agyeman, 2005, p. 26). Finally, this definition is concerned with the problematic of power and fits with the topic of the present research since "environmental justice is most certainly about power relationships among people and between people and various institutions of colonization" (McGregor, 2009, p. 27).

Before ending this section, I explain the benefit of a focus on 'environmental justice' rather than other related terms, such as 'environmental racism' and 'environmental inequity'. Since environmental racism is a branch or specification of environmental justice (Hargrove in Westra and Wenz, 1995, p. ix), I argue that focusing on EJ is more meaningful for the purpose of this research. Environmental racism is limited to practices that "expose racial minorities in the United Stated, and people of color around the world, to disproportionate shares of environmental hazards" (Wenz, 1995, p. 57), while EJ is concerned with a more diverse spectrum of social groups, issues and practices (Haluza-DeLay et. al, 2009, p. 7). The reason that I focus on environmental *justice* rather than environmental *equity* is that, as Agyeman indicates, environmental justice is "a more targeted concept than environmental equity. It has at its heart the notion of righting a wrong; correcting an unjustly imposed burden, whereas environmental equity typically focuses on sharing burdens" (Agyeman, 2000, p. 7).

Intervening on EJ discourse through a postcolonial lens is important as EJ is interested in interlocking structures of power that relate people to each other, to other societies and to different institutions of colonialization (McGregor, 2009, p. 27). The assumption guiding my postcolonial critique to environmental justice discourse is that colonial history shaped unequal access to land and other natural resources, but it also aimed to perpetuate this inequality by associating the land, and any natural resources with 'exploitation'. Neocolonialism, imperialism and settler colonialism also benefit from the same logic of colonialism around exploitation.

Therefore, colonialism, either in its past or in its present configurations has affected and still affects, has shaped and still shapes, has aimed to and still aims to *inequalize* environmental resources, and the costs and benefits of its exploitation.

Literature Review

Postcoloniality

Postcolonial studies emerged as an interdisciplinary field of inquiry in the late 1970s and early 1980s, when postcolonial thinkers and scholars begun to use the term to refer to a set of theoretical attempts in order to challenge Western colonialization as "a state of mind" (Harshe, 2013, p. 1). Before that, postcolonialism was primarily used to refer to a form of historical periodization, but not the influences of colonialism on people's (and their descendants') lives and thoughts and/or its psychological and social dimensions. The struggles to decolonize lands were contributed to by postcolonial theorists who focused on neocolonialism and imperialism as the continuation of colonial ideologies, practices, and policies. They raised questions about identity, hybridity, and representation to address various forms of oppression and domination that shape intersectional relations of neocolonialism, gender, race, class, nationality, and ethnicity in the contemporary world (Nicholas, 2010, Young, 2016). Postcolonial scholars raise these issues in the context of a dynamic dialectic between colonial history and present politics to demonstrate how that history constantly articulates and also fuels the power structures of the present (Young, 2016, p. 4). Therefore, by developing new critical and theoretical frameworks, postcolonial theory's emancipatory commitment is to contribute to the creation of dynamic intellectual, ideological and social transformations (Young, 2016, p. 11).

Foucauldian Discourse and Postcolonialism

Edward W. Said (1935-2003) employed Michel Foucault's ideas, especially his notion of discourse, in order to identify Orientalism (Said, 2003, p. 3). In *Orientalism* (1978), one of the most influential works in founding postcolonial studies as an academic discipline (Young, 2008, p. 383), Said contends that:

> "without examining Orientalism as a discourse one cannot possibly understand the enormously systematic discipline by which European culture was able to manage -and even produce- the Orient politically, sociologically, militarily, ideologically, scientifically, and imaginatively during the post-Enlightenment period". (Said, 2003, p. 3).

This formulation of Said, secured not only Foucault's position as a central figure in postcolonial theory, but also his concept of discourse in postcolonial scholarship. Moreover, "it provided an authoritative reading of Foucauldian discourse as a 'textual attitude' or a system of textual representation" (Nicholas, 2010, p. 120).

Whilst Foucault is not the only theorist who uses the term 'discourse', his conceptualization of it has been extremely influential in cultural theory (Mills, 2004, p. 7). This influence (and popularity) comes from the fact that he encourages thinkers not to treat discourses as groups of signs, but as "practices that systematically form the objects of which they speak" (Foucault, 1972, p. 49). In this sense, discourse is able to be something that produces something else, rather than something that exists in and of itself and can be analyzed in isolation (Mills, 2004, p. 15). Therefore, by treating discourse "sometimes as the general domain of all statements, sometimes as an individualizable group of statements, and sometimes as a regulated practice that accounts for a number of statements", Foucault has added to its meaning (Foucault, 1972, p. 80), making it conceptually more productive and beneficial (Mills, 2004, p. 15).

In addition to Said, who has identified his work as being "greatly indebted" to Foucault (Said, 2003, p. 23), other postcolonial thinkers, namely Homi K. Bhabha, Aijaz Ahmad, Gayatri

Chakravorty Spivak and Robert J. C. Young are influenced by the Foucauldian perspective, or at least his notion of discourse (Nicholas, 2010, p. 139). Nicholas (2010) explores Foucault in postcolonial studies and claims that "Foucault has, firstly, meant something to postcolonial theory — specifically a space of questioning about 'discourse' and related questions about the production of knowledge within colonial power" (Nicholas, 2010, p. 119). In the same way, Willaert (2012, p. 5) tries to break the relative silence about Foucault's role in postcolonial studies and observes that "many of the postcolonial texts […] explicitly acknowledge Foucault as a source of inspiration, whose work makes visible things that we would not see if it were not for him, and whose scholarship deserves to be emulated" (Willaert, 2012, p. 7).

Postcolonial Perspective on Environmental Justice

While there are ideational potentials in postcolonial theory that provide scholars with theoretical tools to rethink and redefine 'environmental justice' (Mousie 2012, p. 12), applying a postcolonial perspective to EJ does not have a long history nor an established body of literature. In fact, most of the literature on 'Postcolonial Environmental Justice' is not about postcolonial theoretical and critical accounts in an EJ context, but focusses on discussing environmental justice practices in post-colonial 'contexts' or 'states' and considers post-colonial as a time period rather than a critical way of thinking (see for example, Randeria, 2003; Byrne et. al, 2014).[8] In fact, I could find only one study that is conducted based on applying a postcolonial perspective on EJ. That research is focused on the case of India in order to explore how postcolonial patterns of government and governance influence goals, tools and representation of environmental justice struggles (Williams & Mawdsley, 2006, p. 660). Williams and Mawdsley

[8] As both groups of scholars utilize the same term, whether in form of 'postcolonial' or 'post-colonial' arbitrarily, I use the word 'post-colonial' to refer to the time period after colonialism era and 'postcolonial' as the critical theory expanded by Edward Said and other postcolonial thinkers.

discuss three implications of differences in the conditions of promoting EJ for theoretical work in this field:

> "First, whilst there are good reasons for the EJ literature to engage with the excesses of capital's exploitation of the environment, this should not foreshadow other important sites where justice is being contested. Second, research on environmental justice needs to pay careful attention to injustice expressed through lack of recognition. […] Finally, environmental justice research rightly looks to have a global reach, but this entails a responsibility to think through the ways in which it treats the differences of the non-West". (Williams & Mawdsley, 2006, p. 668-9).

As such, filling this gap in the literature and exploring potential and limitations of postcolonial accounts in EJ is one of the main objectives of this research.

Foucault, Power and Environmental Justice

Foucault and the environment.

> *[T]here has been an ecological movement — which is furthermore very ancient and is not only a twentieth-century phenomenon — which has often been, in one sense, in hostile relationship with science or at least with a technology guaranteed in terms of truth ['nature-endorsing']. But in fact, ecology also spoke a language of truth. It was in the name of knowledge concerning nature, the equilibrium of the processes of living things, and so forth, that one could level the criticism ['nature-sceptical']*. (Foucault, 1988, p. 15 in Darier, 1999, p. 4)

As Darier (1999, p. 6) observes, Foucault never addressed environmental issues directly except in the above quote. It was never at the center of his personal or intellectual attention (Rutherford, 2007, p. 294; Eribon, 1991, p. 46). Nevertheless, his writings have profound, even if indirect, effects on environmental thought and also on environmental thinkers (Darier, 1999, p. 6).

Using Foucault to Understand Power and Environment.

A range of Foucauldian concepts and ideas have been used by different scholars to understand and explain environmental issues and the exercise of power. Specifically, Foucault's thinking and conceptualization of 'power/knowledge', 'biopower' and 'governmentality' are essential to analysis of power and the environment. Influenced by these ideas, in 1995 Timothy Luke coined the term 'environmentality' to explore power and discourses of the environment. For him, the practices of environing engender environmentality which "embeds instrumental rationalities in the policing of ecological spaces" (Luke, 1995, p. 65). In a later publication, Luke (1999, p. 121) introduces environmentality as 'green governmentality' to illustrate how most environmentalist movements in the United States work as a manifestation of governmentality.

Darier (1996) also finds the concept of governmentality beneficial in studying environmental policy. Focusing on Canada's Green Plan as a case of 'environmental governmentality', he argues that Foucault's concept of 'governmentality' provides us a better understanding of policy in general and environmental policy in particular (Darier, 1996, p. 586). Governmentality is the unique combination of "institutional centralisation, intensification of the effects of power and power/knowledge" (Darier, 1996, p. 589). Yet, Darier neither uses the term 'environmentality' in his analysis nor mentions Luke's environmentality article in his paper. While he intended to use the word 'environmentality' in the title of his forthcoming book and name it as *Foucault and the Environment: Eco-Discourse, Environmentality and the Self* (Darier, 1996, p. 604), he changed his mind eventually and named it *Discourses of the Environment*.[9] Darier's edited volume was based on recognizing a tendency in the literature to ignore Foucault in most critical studies in the field of environmental theory and to fill the gap by exploring

[9] The book also includes Luke's article *Environmentality as Green Governmentality*.

potential synergies between Foucauldian perspectives and environmental criticism (Darier, 1999, p. 4).

Agrawal's 2005 publications[10] also used the term 'environmentality' to "denote a framework of understanding in which technologies of self and power are involved in the creation of new subjects concerned about the environment" (Agrawal, 2005b, p. 166). While he acknowledges that the term has been coined by Luke, Agrawal uses 'environmentality' with different meaning and intent; Luke, taking a Marxist approach, "views it as an attempt by transnational environmental organizations to control and dominate environmental policy and activities around the world but especially in developing countries" whereas Agrawal, taking a Foucauldian approach, aims to examine "the shifts in subjectivities that accompany new forms of regulation" (Agrawal, 2005a, p. 233).

Rutherford argues that the works of Luke, Darier and Agrawal can be read under the umbrella concept of 'green governmentality'. Green governmentality suggests the importance of Foucault's work in understanding discourses of nature, their production, and their circulation (Rutherford, 2007, p. 297). A green governmentality framework provides us with an understanding of the environment "not only as biophysical reality, but also as a site of power, where truths are made, circulated, and remade. Green governmentality allows for the understanding of nature as artifact, where knowledges and subjectivities are made in and through discursive and nondiscursive practice" (Rutherford, 2011, p. xvii).

Malette (2009) also developed the concept of 'eco-governmentality' by expanding Foucauldian perspective to include ecological rationalities of government (Malette, 2009, p.

[10] See *Environmentality: Technologies of Government and the Making of Subjects* (Duke University Press) and *Environmentality: Community, Intimate Government,* and *the Making of Environmental Subjects in Kumaon, India* (*Current Anthropology*, *46*(2), p. 161-190).

221). Through 'ecology', Malette suggests, we can see "how the ordering of things connects different theaters of governmentality" (Malette, 2009, p. 221). As the term 'eco-governmentality' leads to the reorganization of the nexus between Foucault's conceptualizations of population, security, and political economy, "governmentality studies should recognize 'eco-politics' as one of the leading rationalizations of government for the 21st century" (Malette, 2009, p. 222). Governmentality is also investigated by other scholars to study forest management and efforts to politicize the Canadian north (Baldwin, 2003), power struggles in environmental planning and public engagement (Masuda et. al, 2008), climate-induced migration and resilience (Methmann & Oels, 2015), and environmental governance and the REDD+ programme[11] (McGregor et. al, 2015).

Environmental researchers have also employed Foucauldian perspectives on environmental studies to understand power dynamics. Hargreaves (2010), for instance, shows how Foucault's understanding of disciplinary power helps to explain the micro-political processes of social control involved in individuals' environmental behavior changes. Furthermore, discourse analysis has increasingly gained popularity amongst environmental policy researchers (Vainio & Paloniemi, 2012, p. 119). Lastly, ethics is also explored as one of the rarely examined possible contributions of Foucault to the environmental (Hanna, Johnson, Stenner & Adams, 2015).

Foucault, Power, and Environmental Justice Discourse.

While Foucault's ideas are vastly explored and used in environmental studies to investigate a variety of environmental issues, there has not been, to date, an examination of possible

[11] Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation

connections and relevance of Foucault's work to environmental justice. In the only study I could find related to this topic, Stanley (2009, p. 1003) highlights the benefits of applying discourse analysis in environmental justice scholarship as "its analytical core is a focus on the production and normalization of difference and can be used to enable and make evident the political work of difference making". Drawing on examples from research on management of nuclear fuel waste in Canada, she illustrates the important conceptual position of normalization of difference as the main context of producing power and discourse (Stanley, 2009, p. 1004-5).

Therefore, in this research I address this gap in the literature by addressing the synergies of environmental justice and Foucauldian discourse, especially its relations to knowledge and governmentality, in order to suggest possible theoretical and conceptual benefits of applying Foucault to EJ.

Methodology

This qualitative research is undertaken by applying Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) in order to empirically analyze the exercise of discursive power in the use of language and "reveal the role of discursive strategies and practices in the creation and reproduction of (unequal) relations of power, which are understood as ideological effects" (Maeseele, 2013, p. 282). Focusing on the active role of discourse in constructing the social world, CDA aims to "investigate and analyse power relations in society and to formulate normative perspectives from which a critique of such relations can be made with an eye on the possibilities for social change" (Jorgensen & Phillips, 2002, p. 2). Following Foucault's conceptualization of discourse, most of contemporary discourse analysis approaches see truth as a discursively created existence (Jorgensen & Phillips, 2002, p. 13). Meanwhile, the approach of Norman Fairclough to CDA focuses on social

"wrongs" including injustice and inequality (Fairclough, 2013, p. 231) and applies to studies of social injustice, including environmental injustice. For him, CDA is not a "politically neutral" form of academic analysis (Jorgensen & Phillips, 2002, p. 64); it has "aspirations to take the part of those who suffer from linguistic-discursive forms of domination and exploitation" (Fairclough, 1995, p. 186). By revealing the role and importance of discursive practices in reproduction of unequal power relations, "explanatory critique" and "critical language awareness" contribute to the emancipation of oppressed social groups (Jorgensen & Phillips, 2002, p. 64). Therefore, as Fairclough indicates, CDA contributes and is politically committed to social and cultural change (Fairclough, 1995, p. 159, Jorgensen & Phillips, 2002, p. 64). I firstly use CDA to analyze definitions of EJ in academia. In order to develop a genealogical account of the term 'environmental justice', I collected academic articles and textbooks in the field of EJ (those that include the term 'environmental justice' in their title), reviewed how they define the term environmental justice, identified the most referred definitions, and analyzed them using Critical Discourse Analysis. In the analysis, I identified the elements most cited definitions hold (power to define), the way they understand the environment, social justice, and their relation, and the way they construct environmental values and the value of environmental justice.

A Postcolonial perspective directs me to examine the dominant definitions and their origins (that is, which scholars, and from which regions of the world have produced them), how non-Western peoples are represented in these definitions, what images of the West are reproduced in the definitions (power to differentiate), how they justify, explain or condemn environmental injustice, and more importantly, whether or not they paid attention to history and diversity (Nicholas, 2010, p. 120). In this discourse analysis, postcolonial perspective also

inspires me to raise questions about framing, politics of inclusion and exclusion, and how they are practiced and normalized.

In this research, therefore, I am concerned with analyzing knowledge production in the field of EJ. The most important contribution of Foucault in understanding power dynamics in environmental justice studies is his notion of 'power/knowledge' which acknowledges and shows how knowledge and power are inseparable. Power "forms knowledge" and "produces discourse" (Foucault, 1980, p. 119) and therefore, "there is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time power relations" (Foucault, 1984, p. 175). This strong reciprocal relationship between knowledge and power is foundational to this part of the research as it supports my assumption that knowledge is (not more than) a field for the powerful to exercise their power and reproduce it. Therefore, "any process of transferring knowledge demands for renegotiation of power. Postcolonial theory [in this regard] asks whether those receiving knowledge are enabled through this process" or not (Mahadevan, 2011, p. 61). In this context, a postcolonial perspective helps me to critically examine the homogenous discourse of EJ as it addresses heterogenous environmental justice problems in diverse context. Global South academia is the receiver and consumer of this knowledge on environmental justice, mainly produced in the Global North, and moreover develops knowledge about environmental justice based on this discourse. The Global South is also the receiver of policies that are made based on this discourse, but originating in the Global North.

In order to understand EJ in practice and track the way it is institutionalized and employed, in the second part of the study [chapter three] I explore the operation of the United Nations in the field of EJ (power to environ). As a contemporary example, I examine UN

discourses in Iraq and Afghanistan that are planned and implemented to promote and (re)distribute EJ in the region. For this purpose, I examined UN-published documents on environmental issues in Iraq and Afghanistan to explore how these documents incorporate and represent environmental justice. Further scrutiny of the documents helps me to investigate politics of identity in these conceptualizations, who is benefiting from these kinds of conceptualizations, and how the imposition of certain values and understandings transpires in the documents. This critical examination of documents helps me explore the formation and different conceptualizations of the phenomenon of EJ and power dynamics involved in these conceptualizations. I assessed three key documents using a modified version of CDA: *Desk Study on the Environment in Iraq (2003)*, *Afghanistan: Post-Conflict Environmental Assessment (2003)*, and *Natural Resource Management and Peacebuilding in Afghanistan (2013).*

Foucault's notion of 'governmentality' is useful for an analysis of the exercise of power in EJ discourse in this part. As Darier indicates, "the concept of governmentality has potential for an environmental critique, because it explicitly deals with the issue of (state) 'security', techniques of control of the population, and new forms of knowledge (*saviors*)" (Darier, 1999, p. 22). In terms of UN actions to (re)distribute EJ in the Middle East, governmentality helps to understand "the ensemble formed by institutions, procedures, analyses and reflections, the calculations and tactics that allow the exercise of this very specific albeit complex form of power" (Foucault, 1991, p. 102-3 in Darier, 1999, p. 22). Moreover, I draw upon Foucault's discussion on 'biopower' which describes the power which controls both the body and life, or "the power to guarantee life" (Foucault, 2003, p. 254). The "power to *foster* life or *disallow* it to the point of death" (Foucault, 2012, p. 297) is helpful in analyzing how UN decisions on actions and non-actions (that usually made in this part of the world) affect peoples' lives and deaths in

the other parts. In this regard, 'thanatopolitics' would also be beneficial as an analytical tool to describe "the process where bodies are abandoned to death [that] takes place within the spaces of exception: under the exception bodies can be legally outstripped from their juridico-political rights and constituted as a bare life, which can hence be killed (or simply left to die) without consequences" (Joronen, 2015, p. 350).

Conclusion

In this chapter, I explained the research question, thesis, and objectives of this research. This research explores power dynamics in environmental justice (EJ) discourse applying a postcolonial point of view. I use the approaches of Michel Foucault, especially his understanding of discourse as it relates to knowledge and government, to explore how power operates in the academic and policy debates around EJ. My argument is that environmental justice can be seen not only *from* a postcolonial point of view, but also *as* a postcolonial issue. In the conceptual and theoretical framework, I discussed power and the environment and suggested three potential understandings of power within and around the notion of 'the environment': a) the power to define, b) the power to differentiate, and c) the power to 'environ'. Then I reviewed the notion of environmental justice and the working definition of EJ I am adapting in this research. I then reviewed the literature on Foucault and postcolonialism, postcolonial perspective on environmental justice, and finally Foucault, power and environmental justice. In the methodology section I explained how and why I employed Critical Discourse Analysis in this research.

In the next chapter, I analyze the most referred definitions of the term 'environmental justice' and illustrate why critical examination of academic discourse of EJ matters from a

postcolonial approach. Using Foucault's conceptualizations of 'discourse' and 'power/knowledge', I explain why and how environmental justice could and should be seen *from* a postcolonial point of view.

In the third chapter, I examine how the concept of EJ is perceived and reproduced by United Nations policy makers. Focusing on UN documents on environmental aspects of rebuilding post-invasion Iraq and Afghanistan, I explore how EJ is represented and how this representation is normalized. Applying the concepts of 'governmentality', 'biopower' and 'normalization', I critically analyze *Desk Study on the Environment in Iraq (2003)*, *Afghanistan: Post-Conflict Environmental Assessment (2003)*, and *Natural Resource Management and Peacebuilding in Afghanistan (2013)* to demonstrate why and how environmental justice should and could be seen *as* a postcolonial issue. In the last chapter, I review the concluding points of the research, followed by an overview of research contributions, limitations, and directions for future research.

Chapter Two - Postcolonial Critique of Environmental Justice; A Struggle of Discursive Power

Introduction

"Environmental justice is not an American innovation" (Gosine & Teelucksingh, 2008, p. 1); nor is the idea of justice and the desire to protect the environment. However, the most popular definitions of the term 'environmental justice' (EJ) originate in the United States. This homogeneity amongst EJ scholars has a variety of consequences in EJ theory and practice for a non-Western reader/writer and activist/policy-maker. It also has different consequences for EJ movement in different geographical and cultural contexts and affects its future around the world. This agreement is associated with discursive power in different ways including politics of identity and inclusion/exclusion articulations.

As McGregor (2009, p. 27) discusses, environmental justice, as a crucial component to human well-being, is "most certainly about power relationships among people and between people and various institutions of colonialization". It is about rationalities of cultural supremacy, environmental degradation, and power dynamics that control who and how might be impacted by environmental destruction (McGregor, 2009, p. 27).

In this chapter, I explore the relationship between power and environmental justice discourse to enhance understanding of power dynamics in environmental justice from a postcolonial point of view. Through this examination, I intend to discover the potential and limitations of applying postcolonial theory to environmental justice. In this regard, I draw on the work of social theorist Michel Foucault, especially his notions of 'power/knowledge' and 'discourse', to examine how discursive power operates in the growing academic field of EJ. I

examine the most referenced definitions of EJ in academic writings and critically investigate formations and different conceptualizations of the phenomenon to study how dominant academic definitions of EJ produce and introduce power within and around this notion. These explorations and conceptualizations of EJ are critical as they determine "who gets to ask the questions, who gets to be heard (and listened to), and who benefits from how and if the questions are answered, researched, or considered relevant" (Haluza-DeLay, et. al, 2009, p. 9). I apply Fairclough's approach to Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to explore how the most widely cited definitions frame environmental justice. This critical exploration contributes to "critical environmental justice studies", which is crucial to the development of EJ scholarship (Pellow & Brulle, 2005, p. 4). As observed by Pellow and Brulle (2005, p. 4), the environmental justice movement needs to "become more self-reflexive in developing a more efficacious political practice" and critical studies are the most important contribution that scholars can make to this project. In this chapter, I apply self-reflexivity in examining how environmental justice is and should be defined by examining my working definition alongside with other definitions. In order to be clear what I mean by EJ, I require a working definition in this research as my starting point. However, I will eventually critically examine how it frames and makes claims about the environment and environmental justice.

In the sections that follow, I briefly discuss environmental justice and the working definition I am adopting in this research, which is derived from the ideas of Gordon Walker (2012). The next section provides an overview on 'power/knowledge' and 'discourse' as the main Foucauldian concepts I utilize to conduct this research, followed by a brief discussion on postcolonial theory as my critical framework. I then review the literature and outline some main methodological considerations, including the importance of focusing on definitions of

environmental justice to analyze the environmental justice discourse. Next, I present my findings that show that the three most popular definitions of environmental justice originate in the United States and explore each of them in turn. I then analyze these definitions based on a framework that I created inspired by the ideas of Gordon Walker (2012) to examine framing, claim-making, and interpretation of justice in each of the definitions. I also use intertextuality and interdiscursivity, heterogeneity and homogeneity, and power, to present my discourse analysis of the definitions. The final sections include the conclusion and future directions.

Theoretical/conceptual Framework

Environmental Justice

Environmental justice should be considered as a contested and problematized concept representing a multifaceted phenomenon that includes a variety of political, economic, intellectual, and cultural issues that are interrelated and cannot be separated from each other (Agyeman, 2005, p. 25, Kebede, 2005, p. 90). As Haluza-DeLay and his co-authors discuss, environmental justice is not only about unequal distribution of environmental risks or exposures, but also about unequal "access to information, participatory opportunities, and/or the power to shape discourse(s) or decisions" (Haluza-DeLay et. al, 2009, p. 8). It involves scientific assumption and technical data and also fair treatment and equal access to participatory abilities for vulnerable and marginalized populations (Haluza-DeLay et. al, 2009, p. 9).

The meaning of *the environment* is "multiple and unfixed" (Luke, 1995, p. 58). Simultaneously, the concepts of 'justice' and 'injustice' are defined, perceived, and framed differently by scholars, activists and policymakers. Therefore, "disputes about injustice are common. […] Because people have different ideas about justice, a social arrangement or

environmental policy that one person considers just will be considered unjust by another" (Wenz, 1988, p. 2). Justice is a socially constructed phenomenon that, in contrast with nature, is not objectively out there waiting for us to name and assign meaning to it. It is an ideational intersubjective phenomenon that comes into existence by the strategic activity of *defining*.

Traditionally, questions and concerns about environmental justice focus on environmental burdens people receive unequally (for example see Jamieson, 1994 or Bullard, 1995). Newer interpretations of EJ, however, include unequal access to environmental benefits and suggest that environmental justice should focus on the distribution of natural resources and access to other environmental benefits, including clean water, air and soil and the distributions of environmental and health burdens (Wenz, 1988, p. 4).

Gordon Walker (2012) discusses a variety of concerns covered by EJ. For Walker, EJ as the connection of the environment and social differences, is concerned with

> "how for some people and some social groups the environment is an intrinsic part of living a 'good life' of prosperity, health and well-being, while for others the environment is a source of threat and risk, and access to resources such as energy, water and greenspace is limited or curtailed. It is also about how some of us consume key environmental resources at the expense of others, often in distant places, and about how the power to effect change and influence environmental decision-making is unequally distributed. Most fundamentally it is about the way that people should be treated, the way the world should be". (Walker, 2012, p. 1).

Drawing on these discussions, I consider EJ to be about a) unequal distribution of benefits from the environment, b) unequal distribution of scarcity and threats from the environment and c) unequal distribution of power to affect environmental decision making. This definition is concerned with 'distributive justice' as the "chief topic" of EJ (Wenz, 1988, p. 4). It is also a normative definition and considers ethical responsibilities for solving problems of environmental injustice. Thus, it considers EJ not only as *reactive* to environmental bads, but also *proactive* in

achievement and (re)distribution of environmental goods (Agyeman, 2005, p.26). Finally, this definition is concerned with the problematic of power since "environmental justice is most certainly about power relationships among people and between people and various institutions of colonization" (McGregor, 2009, p. 27). I return to this definition, as my working definition, from time to time in the reminder of this chapter.

Discourse, Power and Knowledge

For Foucault, knowledge could not and should not be seen as a pure reflection of reality, or truth. "There is no power relation without the correlative constitution of a field of knowledge, nor any knowledge that does not presuppose and constitute at the same time power relations" (Foucault, 1984, p. 337). This intimate intertwinement of scientific knowledge with existing power relations is the main idea that Foucault intends to represent by suggesting the word 'power/knowledge' (Darier, 1996, p. 589). Indeed, "through this relationship [between power and knowledge] certain ways of being are made possible and normalised, particular 'truths' accepted, and subjectivities offered" (Hanna et. al, 2015, p. 305). Therefore, power/knowledge has three implications for our understanding of power: a) that the powerful "have the authority to determine which social constructions of reality become 'truths'" (Vainio & Paloniemi, 2012, p. 119), b) that "knowledge is relative to the historical, [geographical, social and cultural] context from which it emerges" (Darier, 1999, p. 10), and c) that nobody should assume/can claim that they have been able to discover the truth (Gruenewald, 2004, p. 94). These implications show why power/knowledge and the idea behind it have widely been employed by postcolonial scholars who put emphasis on "revealing the interests behind the production of knowledge and introducing an oppositional criticism that draws attention to, and thereby attempts to retrieve, the wide range of illegitimate, disqualified or 'subjugated knowledges' (…) of the decolonised peoples" (Omar, 2012, p. 45).

Another Foucauldian conceptualization that has been and continues to be employed by postcolonial scholars is the concept of 'discourse'. For Foucault, discourse is

> "a group of statements in so far as they belong to the same discursive formation; it does not form a rhetorical or formal unity, endlessly repeatable, whose appearance or use in history might be indicated (and, if necessary, explained); it is made up of a limited number of statements for which a group of conditions of existence can be defined". (Foucault, 1972, p. 131).

Whilst Foucault is not the first or only thinker who used or defined the term discourse (Mills, 2004, p. 7), he has "added to its meanings" (Foucault, 1972, p. 80), "treating it sometimes as the general domain of all statements, sometimes as an individualizable group of statements, and sometimes as a regulated practice that accounts for a number of statements" (Foucault, 1972, p. 80). Foucault encourages discourse scholars to go beyond the perceptions that are normalized within the text (Vainio & Paloniemi, 2012, p. 124). However, only if we consider discourse as a practice or a group of practices does it start to be productive. Discourses as practices that "systematically form the objects of which they speak" (Foucault, 1972, p. 49) can produce other and different existences (Mills, 2004, p. 15). In this meaning, discourses articulate argumentations and regulate norms (Kane, 2000, p. 315) and when/as soon as they are successfully established, they start to be "employed by various regimes of power and are subjected to investment and control" (Dunne, 2009, p. 44).

Postcolonial Theory

Postcolonial studies emerged as an interdisciplinary field of inquiry in the late 1970s and early 1980s, when postcolonial thinkers and scholars began to use the term to refer to a set of theoretical attempts to challenge Western colonialization as "a state of mind" (Harshe, 2013, p. 1). Before that, postcolonialism primarily or exclusively was used to refer to a form of historical

periodization, but not the influences of colonialism on people (and their descendants)'s lives and thoughts and/or its psychological and social dimensions. Yet it was the Gandhian struggles to decolonize lands that were continued by postcolonial theorists who were more focused on "what happens after this process" and "questions of identity, representation, hybridity, diasporas, [and] migration" (Nicholas, 2010, p. 115). For example, Edward W. Said (1935-2003) employed Michel Foucault's ideas, especially his notion of discourse, in order to identify Orientalism (Said, 2003, p. 3). In his book *Orientalism* (1978), one of the most influential works in founding postcolonial studies as an academic discipline (Young, 2008, p. 383), Said contends that:

> "without examining Orientalism as a discourse one cannot possibly understand the enormously systematic discipline by which European culture was able to manage -and even produce- the Orient politically, sociologically, militarily, ideologically, scientifically, and imaginatively during the post-Enlightenment period". (Said, 2003, p. 3).

This formulation of Said, Nicholas suggests, secured not only Foucault's position as a central figure in postcolonial theory, but also his concept of discourse in postcolonial scholarship. Moreover, "it provided an authoritative reading of Foucauldian discourse as a 'textual attitude' or a system of textual representation" (Nicholas, 2010, p. 120).

In addition to Said, who has identified his work as being "greatly indebted" to Foucault (Said, 2003, p. 23), other postcolonial thinkers are influenced by the Foucauldian perspective and his notion of discourse (Nicholas, 2010, p. 139). Nicholas (2010) explores Foucault in postcolonial studies and argues that "Foucault has, firstly, meant something to postcolonial theory - specifically a space of questioning about "discourse" and related questions about the production of knowledge within colonial power" (Nicholas, 2010, p. 119). In the same way, Willaert (2012, p. 5) tries to break the relative silence about Foucault's role in postcolonial studies and observes that "many of the postcolonial texts […] explicitly acknowledge Foucault

as a source of inspiration, whose work makes visible things that we would not see if it were not for him, and whose scholarship deserves to be emulated" (Willaert, 2012, p. 7).

The idea of power/knowledge – the inescapable links between 'power' and 'knowledge' (Darier, 1996, p. 589) – has also inspired postcolonial theorists. As Blunt and McEwan (2002, p. 6) discuss, "[p]ostcolonial approaches demonstrate how the production of western knowledge is inseparable from the exercise of Western power. They also attempt to loosen the power of Western knowledge and reassert the value of alternative experiences and ways of knowing". Joshi (2011), for instance, shows "how Western knowledge production continues to be complicit in the preservation of the status quo between Global North and South and the countries therein. For in denying the North-South dichotomy, these scholars (of the Global North) lend strength to the assertion – […] – that more and less powerful countries do not exist, and that the material wellbeing of the poor in the Global South can be addressed without challenging the fundamental structures of the global political economy that are skewed towards the Global North" (Joshi, 2011, p. 27-28). As Omar discusses, postcolonial critique directs its attention on how the non-European knowledge has been "denigrated and silenced by colonial canonical systems" (Omar, 2012, p. 43). In fact, "as a project of cultural analysis, the postcolonial critique seeks to investigate the role of cultural forms and systems of knowledge in legitimising and sustaining asymmetrical power relations and the associated processes of exclusion and domination" (Omar, 2012, p. 46). In this chapter, therefore, I address the unequal power relations and politics that underpin production of knowledge of and about environmental justice.

Literature Review

For a long time, environmental justice literature has been focused on and inspired by social theories on racism, classism, and sexism as the significant contributors to environmental

injustices (Panayiotis, Manolakos & Hopkins, 2013, p. 384, Cutter, 1995, p. 112). The anti-racist environmentalists, red-greens, and ecofeminists expanded EJ movement based on different understandings of environmental harms and the root causes of unequal distribution of them (Lynch & Stretsky, 2003, p. 223). Sustainable development theories have also focused on EJ by considering the rights of future generations, marginalized and voiceless groups, ecological biodiversity, and the nonhuman dimensions of the natural world (Haughton, 1999, p. 233). Environmental justice has been also addressed by moral philosophical and normative theoretical approaches which raise important challenges for environmental planning and policy making (Haughton, 1999, p. 233). Revaluating EJ as a human right and a as tool to examine quality of life is the outcome of integrating EJ with international law scholarship (Quirico, 2017). Addressing the compatibility between EJ and environmental principles has been also generated a body of literature on environmental justice laws and regulations. Focusing on the violation of these laws and regulations has attracted social scientists to study green criminology, environmental crime prevention, and corporate environmental crime from an environmental justice perspective (for example Greife, Stretesky, Shelley & Pogrebin, 2015 and Lynch & Stretesky, 2003). Environmental justice has been also examined by other theoretical perspectives including theories of well being (Edwards, Reid & Hunter, 2015), urbanization and distribution of desirable land uses (Clement, 2010).

While the ideational potentials in postcolonial theory provide scholars with theoretical tools to rethink and redefine 'environmental justice', the application of a postcolonial perspective to EJ does not have a long history or a vast literature (Mousie, 2012, p. 12). In fact, most of the literature addressing 'Postcolonial Environmental Justice' is not about postcolonial theoretical and critical accounts in an EJ context, but rather focuses on environmental justice practices in

post-colonial 'contexts' or 'states' (see for example, Randeria, 2003, Byrne, Sipe & Dodson, 2014). This literature considers post-colonial as a time period rather than a critical paradigm to challenge the domination and adaptation of Western knowledges. To avoid any misunderstandings, and since both groups of scholars utilize the same term, whether in form of 'postcolonial' or 'post-colonial' arbitrarily, I will use the word 'post-colonial' to refer to the time period after colonialism era and 'postcolonial' as the critical theory expanded by Edward Said and other postcolonial scholars.[12] Exploring the potentials and limitations of postcolonial accounts while filling this gap in the EJ literature is one of the main objectives of this chapter.

Methodological Considerations

In this research, I focus on the definitions of environmental justice from a postcolonial point of view. The use of definitions produces discourses that affect the production of knowledge. More specific to environmental justice, definitions generate discourses while discourses produce knowledge. This knowledge produces consumers, identities and beneficiaries by allocating specific rights and including or excluding specific groups, topics and categories (who benefits from this definition and how, and who is excluded from this definition). These identities, as active objects, affect the ways in which these definitions may be consumed. I suggest that the relationships can be captured by the following diagram:

[12] However, we need to bear in mind that "using the term post in postcolonialism is problematic because it assumes that colonialism as a historical reality has somehow ended (Mani, 1989) without acknowledging the complicity of colonial relations in contemporary discourses of 'development' and 'progress' in North-South relations […] [and] the post absolves itself of any claims for present consequences of the damages caused by colonization (Said, 1986)" (Banerjee, 2003, p.146).

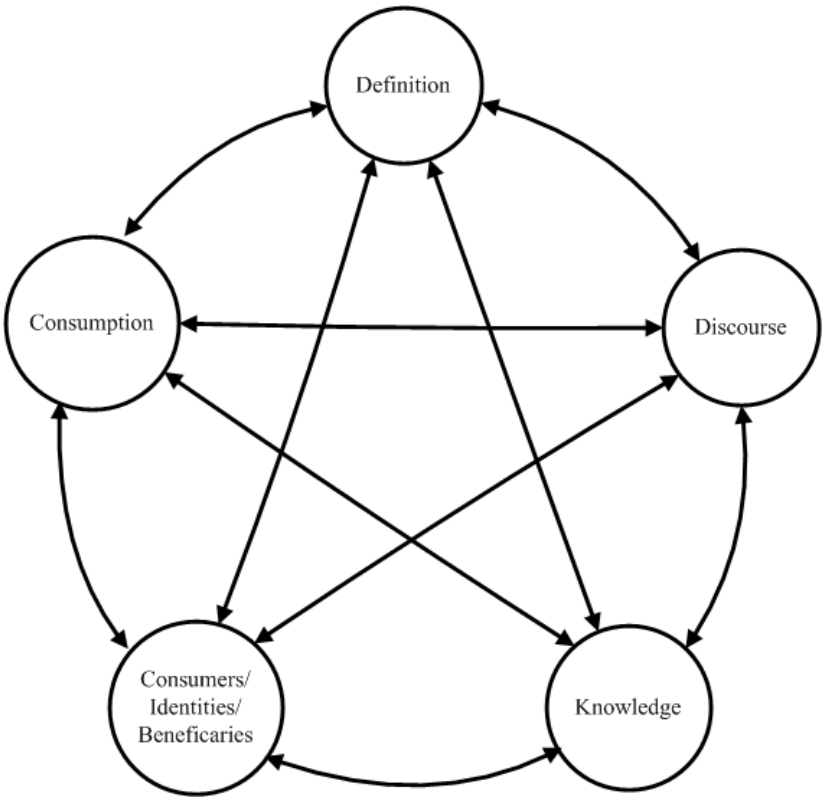

Figure 1-Discursive Power of Definitions

How and what discourses these definitions produce not only determine the way that the discourses are consumed, or should be consumed, but they also produce their consumers. A key point we need to consider, regarding the study of definitions, seems to be that they are indeed statements of claiming; they construct what can be claimed. By this, I mean that EJ definitions grant claims to claimants, problems to decision makers and rights to beneficiaries. They produce the suitable conditions within which claimants can frame their demands. Therefore, the conflict between different claims about EJ could be considered as conflicts between different discourses in the discursive world which offer different worldviews and produce different identities. Furthermore, when we talk about a basic definition; for instance, the definition of a 'field' called EJ, we are talking about what goes inside its circle of inclusion and what remains outside, or

untold. Indeed, definitions that are presented for fields of study, form the boundaries scholars will follow when they think/write about and design their research, norms within the field, and shared ideas that eventually shape traditions of it. For this reason, these definitions have more discursive importance as they show us what is at the centre of scholar's attention and what stays out.

I applied a two-fold methodology to conduct this research. For the first part, I reviewed books and articles that had the expression 'environmental justice' in their titles. Deriving from an exhaustive literature search, I came to a list of 109 books and 84 articles. I undertook a content analysis of this material to examine how they defined the term. The majority of writings did not define the term throughout their texts. Others either presented their own definitions or expressed a summary of different definitions based on others' works. I did not record definitions in cases where the writer preferred to use their own definitions rather than referencing other, as I was searching for dominant definitions and their frequency.[13] Some writers have drawn on EJ literature but did not mention which of these definitions is their preferred or accepted one. I did not record them either. Overall, I only recorded the definitions writers acknowledge that they have adapted and drawn on.[14] Some books entailed different chapters/articles from different authors. In these cases, I looked through each chapter and recorded each author's definition of EJ.

For the second part, I applied a modified version of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to understand how the most popular definitions of EJ introduce power. Focusing on the active role of discourse in constructing the social world, CDA aims to "investigate and analyse power

[13] X suggests …, Y suggests …, but I think …
[14] EJ, as X suggests, is …

relations in society and to formulate normative perspectives from which a critique of such relations can be made with an eye on the possibilities for social change" (Jorgensen & Phillips, 2002, p. 2). Following Foucault's conceptualization of discourse, most of contemporary discourse analysis approaches see truth as a discursively created existence (Jorgensen & Phillips, 2002, p. 13). Meanwhile, the approach of Norman Fairclough to CDA focuses on social "wrongs" including injustice and inequality (Fairclough, 2013, p. 231) and applies to studies of social injustice, including environmental injustice. For him, CDA is not a "politically neutral" form of academic analysis (Jorgensen & Phillips, 2002, p. 64); it has "aspirations to take the part of those who suffer from linguistic-discursive forms of domination and exploitation" (Fairclough, 1995, p. 186). By revealing the role and importance of discursive practices in reproduction of unequal power relations, "explanatory critique" and "critical language awareness" contribute to the emancipation of oppressed social groups (Jorgensen & Phillips, 2002, p. 64). Therefore, as Fairclough indicates, CDA contributes and is politically committed to social and cultural change (Fairclough, 1995, p. 159, Jorgensen & Phillips, 2002, p. 64).

Fairclough defines CDA as an approach which aims to explore

> "often opaque relationships of causality and determination between (a) discursive practices, events and texts, and (b) wider social and cultural structures, relations and processes; to investigate how such practices, events and texts arise out of and are ideologically shaped by relations of power and struggles over power; and to explore how the opacity of these relationships between discourse and society is itself a factor securing power and hegemony". (Fairclough, 1995, p. 132-3).

In this research, I utilize the guidelines Fairclough establishes in *Critical Discourse Analysis: The Critical Study of Languag*e (1995), for example his analysis of advertisements for academic posts in the *Times Higher Education Supplement.* However, I have not addressed social practice

as I did not have access to some of the data necessary for analyzing wider context where my sample definitions have been emerged within.

Findings

Not defined

Most of the texts I reviewed did not define the term EJ. This action of not-defining likely assumes that the reader is familiar with the meaning. This assumption, that the current [academic] common sense can identify the meaning of environmental justice suggests that the dominant discourse of EJ, at least in the academic environment, is a successful one. From a Foucauldian perspective, "the most successful discourses are those that are accepted as intuitive, normal and 'common sense' and the purpose of discourse analysis is to go beyond such perceptions of 'normality'" (Vainio & Paloniemi, 2012, p. 124). Such analysis also reveals the importance of identifying what power structures constitute the common-sense knowledge and thinking of environmental justice and how this common sense has been built upon an unimagined ambiguity of 'the environment' and 'justice'. The ambiguity has consequences both for environmental policy making, as I will show in the next chapter, and for environmental justice.

Most referred

> Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

The most referred definition of EJ in the reviewed books and articles was from the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). The oldest version of it appeared in section 1.1.1. of

the *Final Guidance for Incorporating Environmental Justice Concerns in EPA's NEPA Compliance Analysis* in 1998:[15]

> "The fair treatment of all races, cultures, incomes, and educational levels with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies. Fair treatment implies that no population of people should be forced to shoulder a disproportionate share of the negative environmental impacts of pollution or environmental hazards due to lack of political or economic strength". (EPA, 1998).

This definition has been adapted and repeated in numerous sources and was eventually developed to a new version which appears on the EPA Website:[16]

> "Environmental justice is the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income, with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies. EPA has this goal for all communities and persons across this nation. It will be achieved when everyone enjoys:
> - the same degree of protection from environmental and health hazards, and
> - equal access to the decision-making process to have a healthy environment in which to live, learn, and work". (EPA, 2017).

Differences between these two definitions will be discussed and analyzed in the analysis section.

Robert Bullard.

The second most referenced figure in EJ literature is Robert D. Bullard. He has defined and discussed EJ in a number of his publications referenced by EJ scholars. Chronologically, his first publication on EJ, *Dumping in Dixie: race, class, and environmental quality* (originally published in 1990, republished in 1994[17] and 2000[18]) precedes the EPA's section on EJ. In this book, he is mostly focused on how "low income communities and communities of color bear a

[15] Final Guidance for Incorporating Environmental Justice Concerns in EPA's NEPA Compliance Analysis. Washington, D.C.: U.S. EPA Office of Federal Activities, April 1998, section 1.1.1
[16] https://www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice
[17] 2nd Ed.
[18] 3rd Ed.

disproportionate burden of the nation's pollution problems" (Bullard, 1994, p. xv). However, between class and race distinctions, he gives the priority to the latter and eventually focuses on race and communities of color in the rest of his writings, inspired by environmental justice movement in Warren County in 1973:

> "While both class and race determine the distribution of environmental hazards, racial minorities are more likely to be exposed to environmental threats than are whites of the same social class. Race is a powerful predictor of many environmental hazards, including the distribution of air pollution, the location of municipal solid waste facilities, the location of abandoned toxic waste sites, toxic fish consumption, and lead poisoning in children". (Bullard, 1993a, p. 319-320).

In Bullard's conceptualization, EJ is about:

> "who benefits from and who pays for our modern industrial society? Environmental and health costs are localized: risks increase with proximity to the source and are borne by those living nearby, while the benefits are dispersed throughout the larger society. Communities that host hazardous waste disposal facilities (importers) receive fewer economic benefits (jobs) than do communities that generate the waste (exporters). The people who benefit the most bear the least burden". (Bullard, 1993b, p. 11).

> Bunyan Bryant.

Bunyan Bryant is the third most referred figure in the field of EJ. He suggests that:

> "Environmental justice (EJ) is broader in scope than environmental equity. It refers to those cultural norms and values, rules, regulations, behaviors, policies, and decisions to support sustainable communities, where people can interact with confidence that their environment is safe, nurturing, and productive. Environmental justice is served when people can realize their highest potential, without experiencing the "isms." Environmental justice is supported by decent paying and safe jobs; quality schools and recreation; decent housing and adequate health care; democratic decision-making and personal empowerment; and communities free of violence, drugs, and poverty. These are communities where both cultural and biological diversity are respected and highly revered and where distributed justice prevails". (Bryant, 1995, p. 6).

Analysis

To present my analysis on the three definitions in this section, I created a framework based on the ideas of Gordon Walker in *Environmental Justice: Concepts, Evidence and Politics* (2012). He introduces framing and claim-making as the two main components of environmental justice discourse (Walker, 2012, p. 8). Framing acknowledges that "the world is not just 'out there' waiting to be unproblematically discovered, but has to be given meaning, labelled and categorised, and interpreted through ideas, propositions and assertions about how things are and how ought to be" (Walker, 2012, p. 8). Different framings of EJ suggest different interpretations of the world around us and our (re)actions towards it. Similarly, claim-making highlights the possibility of different understandings of the world. Walker argues that claim-making has three elements (2012, p. 40):

1) Claims about evidence (*how things are*) [descriptive]

2) Claims about justice (*how things ought to be*) [normative]

3) Claims about process (*why things are how they are*) [explanatory]

Therefore, in presenting my analysis, I examine how each definition frames the environment and environmental justice and which descriptive, normative and explanatory claims they include and highlight. I also investigate whether they emphasize on *Distributive Justice* ("justice is conceived in terms of the distribution or sharing out of goods (resources) and bads (harm and risk)", or *Procedural Justice* ("justice is conceived in terms of the ways in which decisions are made, who is involved and has influence"), or *Justice as Recognition* ("justice is conceived in terms of who is given respect and who is and isn't valued") (Walker, 2012, p. 10).

Environmental Protection Agency Definition

1998 Version.

This version of EPA's definition problematizes EJ mainly as fairness in carrying environmental burdens. As EPA is a national agency, it is a nation-wide definition, acknowledging that the American identity consists of a variety of "races, cultures, incomes, and educational levels". In constructing this identity, there is no reference to gender, sexual orientation, age, and religion as distinctive or legitimate identity differences.

The EPA definition highlights that all these groups, which are not representing all groups of people[19], should be treated fairly but it does not indicate how this fairness can be reached and assessed. This neglect of the 'process' is ironically linked to the language of policy-making and the legitimate position EPA constructs for itself as the knower and decision-maker: there is no need to list ways of reaching the goal of 'fair treatment' as appropriate "development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies" that are produced by EPA will guarantee it. Therefore, the problem comes from the inappropriate enforcement of laws that already consider environmental justice.

The EPA definition is only concerned with the distribution of environmental bads, and there is no mention to unequal distribution of environmental goods and also unequal distribution of power to affect environmental decision making. There is also no sign of 'equality' or 'justice'. Inconsistent with the policy-making language, this definition applies the word 'fair', instead of 'equal' or 'just'.

The latter sentence of the definition, ["Fair treatment implies that no population of people should be forced to shoulder a disproportionate share of the negative environmental impacts of

[19] And therefore, this reference to 'all' is an exclusive reference

pollution or environmental hazards *due to lack of political or economic strength*"] suggests that the lack of political or economic strength is tolerable [or legitimate/ or we do not want to talk about the issue of *fairness* widely] but the negative environmental impacts that they produce are not. The fact that some populations are "forced to shoulder a disproportionate share of the negative environmental impacts of pollution or environmental hazards" not because of the lack of political or economic power, but because of lack of other forms of power, or as a result of flaws in policy-making, or unsustainable environmental planning in *environmental laws, regulations and policies*, or the current laws and policies may cause different forms of environmental justice issues, are completely untouched. A more detailed analysis on EPA definition based on the EJ framework is indicated in table 1. In this table, I list the three elements of my analytical framework (framing, claim making, and interpretation of justice) and the related clues. I discuss framing as problematizing (what is wrong), politics of inclusion and exclusion (who is included and who is excluded), and distribution (what is distributed and which principles are enacted). In claim making, as the second element of discourse of environmental justice, I examine whether the EPA definition highlights claims about evidence (how things are) [descriptive], claims about justice (how things ought to be) [normative], and/or claims about process (why things are how they are) [explanatory]. Finally, I explore if the definition emphasizes on distributive justice, or procedural justice, or considers justice as recognition. I repeat this examination for each definition.

Table 1- Analysis for EPA Definition of EJ (1998)

Discourse of EJ	Components		EPA Definition (1998)	
Framing	Problematizing	What is wrong	*no population of people should be forced to shoulder a disproportionate share of the negative environmental*	Carrying environmental burdens due to lack of power

			impacts of pollution or environmental hazards due to lack of political or economic strength	
	Politics of inclusion/exclusion	Who is included	*all races, cultures, incomes, and educational levels* (It addresses racism, cultural diversity, class distinctions, and level of education as factors might be affected by environmental injustices)	'Us' is made up of a variety of races, cultures, economic classes and holders of different education levels.
		Who is excluded	'Other' genders, beliefs, religions	'Us' is not made up of various genders, sexual identities and orientations, and religious beliefs
		What is included	*fair treatment*	Based on *environmental laws, regulations, and policies*
		What is excluded	Equal access to environmental benefits, involvement in public decision-making about environmental issues	
	Distribution	What is distributed	[-][20]	
		Principles of distribution	Are regulated by legitimate power sources	
Claim-making	Claims about evidence	How things are	Some politically and/or economic less strong/weak population of people are forced to shoulder a disproportionate share of the negative environmental impacts of pollution or environmental hazards	This is the result of lack of political or economic strength
	Claims about justice	How things ought to be	all races, cultures, incomes, and educational levels should be treated fairly	

[20] This sign means that there is no reference to this element in the text.

			less strong populations should not be forced to carry more negative environmental impacts	
	Claims about process	Why things are how they are	There is a problem with the processes of *development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies*	But not with environmental laws, regulations and policies themselves, or with the processes of law/policy-making
Interpreting justice	Distributive justice		[-]	
	Procedural justice		[-]	
	Justice as recognition		Justice is conceived as fairness to all races, cultures, incomes, and educational level	

Website version.

In its more recent modified version, the EPA's definition equates EJ to the "fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income". In the previous statement, *race*, *culture*, *income*, and *educational level* were mentioned as identity qualifiers of Americans whereas here, instead of *culture*, we see a combination of *color* and *national origin.* Culture is indeed connected to the color of one's skin or one's original nationality while there is no mention of language, faith, and lifestyle. To recognize which identities are excluded here, we need to deconstruct the assumed neutralities: non-dominant genders [Women], non-dominant religion believers [non-Christians], non-dominant sexual orientations [non-heterosexuals]. In addition, ageism and ableism have been also untouched. While the literature on environmental justice suggests women are exposed to more environmental inequalities and poverty, the EPA definition does not consider gender as an important predictor of receiving less environmental benefits and carrying more environmental hazards.

In addition to unequal distribution of environmental 'bads', this definition also pays attention to the third pillar of EJ; that is, the unequal distribution of power to affect environmental decision making ["meaningful involvement"]. Yet, there is still no reference to the second pillar of EJ which is unequal access to the distribution of benefits from the environment.

In this newer version, which is more specific, the level of attention is expanded and includes individuals as well as communities. Instead of the statement of *being forced to shoulder a disproportionate share* of environmental bads, here, the definition suggests *the same degree of protection* from them. It also suggests more active places both for citizens and policy makers. In the previous version people were *forced* to carry more environmental burdens while here they are offered *the same degree of protection against* them. In table 2, I show how environmental justice is imagined as a goal for EPA and how its interpretation of justice is, in comparison to the older version of EPA definition, expanded to distributive justice, procedural justice, and justice as recognition.

Table 2- Analysis for EPA Website Definition of EJ (2017)

Discourse of EJ	**Components**		**EPA Website**	
Framing	Problematizing	What is wrong	Unequal protection from environmental and health hazards, unequal access to the decision-making process to have a healthy environment	EJ is a 'goal' EPA is seeking
	Politics of inclusion/exclusion	Who is included	*all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income* (It addresses racism, skin color, national origin, and class distinctions as factors might be affected by	'Us' is made up of a variety of races, colors, national origins and income levels

			environmental injustices)	
		Who is excluded	'Other' beliefs, religions, women, LGBTQ persons	
		What is included	*fair treatment*	Based on *environmental laws, regulations, and policies*
		What is excluded	Equal access to environmental benefits	
	Distribution	What is distributed	*Protection from environmental and health hazards*, and *access to the decision-making process to have a healthy environment in which to live, learn, and work*	
		Principles of distribution	Are regulated by legitimate power sources	
Claim-making	Claims about evidence	How things are	Some communities and/or persons across America do not receive *the same degree of protection from environmental and health hazards,* and/or *equal access to the decision-making process to have a healthy environment*	This is the result of inappropriate development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies
	Claims about justice	How things ought to be	All communities and persons across America should enjoy: *the same degree of protection from environmental and health hazards, and* *equal access to the decision-making process to have a healthy environment in which to live, learn, and work*	
	Claims about process	Why things are how they are	There is a problem with the processes of *development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies*	But not with environmental laws, regulations and policies themselves, or with the processes of law/policy-making
Interpreting justice	Distributive justice		Distribution of environmental protection, distribution of access to environmental decision-making process	

	Procedural justice	Every communities and/or persons should have equal access to decision-making process
	Justice as recognition	Justice is conceived as fairness to all races, colors, national origins, and income levels

Robert Bullard Definition

Robert Bullard is the EJ theorist that focuses on the "who" question in EJ for the first time. He directs scholars' attention to the "ethical and political questions of "who gets what, why, and in what amount" and "who pays for, and who benefits from, technological expansion?" (Bullard, 1994, p. 11) He also brings to the surface the question of who should do what to remedy an unjust environmental situation. Considering EJ as a "right" for all Americans (Bullard, 2000, p. xiii), in contrast to EPA which discusses it as a "goal" (EPA, 2017), Bullard sees governments responsible for implementing EJ in the society. He suggests that governments should adopt five principles in order to reach environmental justice: "guaranteeing the right to environmental protection, preventing harm before it occurs, shifting the burden of proof to the polluters, obviating proof of intent to discriminate, and redressing existing inequalities" and therefore, highlights procedural justice (Bullard, 2001, p. 9).

Bullard's conceptualization of EJ covers two of the three pillars; "Communities that host hazardous waste disposal facilities (importers) receive fewer economic benefits (jobs) than do communities that generate the waste (exporters). The people who benefit the most bear the least burden" (Bullard, 1993, p. 11). While he does not discuss guaranteeing equal access of all people to affect environmental decision-making as one of his principles for governments to reach EJ, he believes that we need to "make environmental protection more democratic" (Bullard, 1994, p. 11). Indeed, the level of 'protection' people receive against environmental hazards is a key for

him. He equates environmental justice to equal environmental protection: "If a community is poor or inhabited largely by people of color, there is a good chance that it receives less protection than a community that is affluent or white" (Bullard, 2001, p. 3). Environmental justice, in this meaning, "embraces the principle that all people and communities are entitled to equal protection of environmental and public health laws and regulations" (Bullard, 1996, p. 493) and stresses distributive justice. In the following table, I illustrate how environmental protection is at the center of Bullard's definition of EJ and how his discourse of EJ is shaped around anti-racism.

Table 3- Analysis for Bullard's Definition of EJ

Discourse of EJ	**Components**		**Bullard**	
Framing	Problematizing	What is wrong	Communities/people that pay more environmental costs receive fewer benefits and those who *benefit the most bear the least burden.* [Race is an important predictor]	EJ is a right that should be guaranteed by the government
	Politics of inclusion/exclusion	Who is included	*All individuals*	As individuals are emphasized, the inclusion of various collective groups and collective identities is inconspicuous
		Who is excluded	[-]	
		What is included	Receiving equal environmental protection, environmental and economic benefits and environmental and health costs	
		What is excluded	Equal access to environmental decision-making	
	Distribution	What is distributed	Environmental goods and bads	
		Principles of distribution	Should be regulated by governments	
Claim-making	Claims about evidence	How things are	*Environmental and health costs are localized, … Communities that host hazardous waste disposal facilities*	

			(importers) receive fewer economic benefits (jobs) than do communities that generate the waste (exporters). The people who benefit the most bear the least burden
	Claims about justice	How things ought to be	The right to environmental protection should be guaranteed, harm should be prevented before it occurs, the burden of proof should be shifted to the polluters, proof of intent to discriminate should be obviated, and the existing inequalities should be redressed
	Claims about process	Why things are how they are	[-]
Interpreting justice	Distributive justice		Distribution of environmental protection, distribution of environmental and health costs and environmental and economic benefits
	Procedural justice		Governments are responsible for *guaranteeing the right to environmental protection, preventing harm before it occurs, shifting the burden of proof to the polluters, obviating proof of intent to discriminate, and redressing existing inequalities*
	Justice as recognition		[-]

Bunyan Bryant Definition

Bryant suggests a definition that is more complex and exhaustive than the previous reviewed definitions. For Bryant, EJ includes not only rules, regulations, policies, and decisions, but also cultural norms, values, and behaviors. Therefore, EJ is a multilateral phenomenon with social, environmental, economic, and cultural components and consequences. The goal of EJ is to reach social and environmental sustainability and cultural and biological diversity. A sustainable environment is free of environmental and health hazards and provides people with a variety of benefits. Likewise, a sustainable society is free of "violence, drugs, and poverty" and different 'isms' and provides people with several factors of welfare and democratic processes for

decision-making. Citizens of this society enjoy a sustainable economy and a safe environment where they can improve and focus on their self-fulfilment.

This definition has no reference to the process that EJ policy-makers can or ought to follow to reach an ideal state where almost every social and economic problem is solved. It also does not indicate how individuals should contribute to this goal. In fact, combining all 'wrongs' of the world in one phenomenon and arguing that they can be addressed by reaching environmental justice make this definition ultra-idealistic. It focuses on differences EJ makes to the extent that neglects where they may come from. In terms of its emphasis on distributive justice, its focus on what should be distributed overshadows the important questions of "who are the recipients of environmental justice?" (Walker, 2012, p. 42) and "what is the principle of distribution?" (Walker, 2012, p. 44). In table 4, I show how in Bryant's discourse of EJ, the focus on claims about justice (how things out to be) has eclipsed making claims about evidence, and process.

Table 4- Analysis for Bryant's Definition of EJ

Discourse of EJ	**Components**		**Bryant**	
Framing	Problematizing	What is wrong	Unsustainability	EJ is a multilateral phenomenon with social, environmental, economic, and cultural components and consequences
	Politics of inclusion/exclusion	Who is included	[All] *people*	
		Who is excluded	[-]	
		What is included	Sustainability, benefiting from the environment, environmental protection,	Three dimensions are discussed: policy making, individual

			democratic decision making	behavior and empowerment, and societal norms and values
		What is excluded	[-]	
	Distribution	What is distributed	Environmental, social, and economic goods	
		Principles of distribution	[-]	
Claim-making	Claims about evidence	How things are	[-]	
	Claims about justice	How things ought to be	Communities should be sustainable, the environment is safe, nurturing, and productive. People should be able to *realize their highest potential, without experiencing the 'isms.'* People should have access to *decent paying and safe jobs; quality schools and recreation; decent housing and adequate health care; democratic decision-making and personal empowerment; and communities free of violence, drugs, and poverty*. Both cultural and biological diversity should be respected and distributed justice should be prevailed.	
	Claims about process	Why things are how they are	[-]	
Interpreting justice	Distributive justice		When EJ is implemented, distributed justice will have prevailed	
	Procedural justice		[-]	
	Justice as recognition		[-]	

Discussion

Intertextuality and Interdiscursivity

Intertextuality indicates the situation where earlier events affect all subsequent communicative events (Jorgensen & Phillips, 2002, p. 73). In this condition, "one cannot avoid using words and phrases that others have used before" (Jorgensen & Phillips, 2002, p. 73). Drawing on other specific texts, for example by citing them, is the case that Fairclough refers to as "manifest intertextuality" (Fairclough, 2006, p. 117). By contrast, interdiscursivity is a "matter of how a discourse type is constituted through a combination of elements of orders of discourse" (Fairclough, 2006, p. 118). New articulations of different discourses and genres change the boundaries both within and between different orders of discourse. While creative discursive practices are signs and motivations for discursive and socio-cultural change, discursive practices in which discourses are combined in current ways suggest the stability of the dominant social order and dominant relations of power (Jorgensen & Phillips, 2002, p. 73). Indeed, as Fairclough indicates,

> "the seemingly limitless possibilities of creativity in discursive practice suggested by the concept of interdiscursivity -an endless combination and recombination of genres and discourses- are in practice limited and constrained by the state of hegemonic relations and hegemonic struggle. Where, for instance, there is a relatively stable hegemony, the possibilities for creativity are likely to be tightly constrained". (Fairclough, 1995, p. 134).

In the context of this research, citing specific texts to refer to the meaning of a phenomenon/field of study and policy shows the high intertextuality in the EJ literature. Citing EPA to define EJ, for example, is a case of 'manifest intertextuality' where several communicative events around and about environmental justice draw on one specific text (EPA's definition). Likewise, the action of not-defining EJ indicates the high intertextuality in the EJ

literature and can be analyzed with an intertextual account of set of presuppositions about EJ and the environment as the "already-said" or "preconstructed". The concept of "preconstructed" gives us an intertextual understanding of presuppositions and what is taken as "the already-said-elsewhere" (Fairclough, 1995, p. 6).

Amongst the three reviewed definitions, Bryant's definition is most interdiscursively complex, as it articulates together a variety of genres and discourses, including social welfare, economic security, and public health care genres. Bullard's definition is more creative and complex than what the EPA suggests for the meaning of environmental justice. He combines racism and class struggle genres with environmental justice discourse by placing emphasis on these two elements as important predictors for environmental inequalities. The EPA website definition of EJ is also more hybrid than its 1998 version, adding participation in environmental decision-making to the defining elements of EJ.

Homogeneity and Heterogeneity

While all reviewed definitions offer an 'interdiscursive mix' showing a variety of possible views towards EJ, their similarities prevent us from considering them as inclusive enough to address all forms of environmental injustices. They all come from the United States, and are influenced by the civil rights movement in the country. Above all, they are also implicitly based on the common assumption that environment is something that should be exploited, and environmental justice is the conflict and procedure about the distribution of the costs and benefits that result from this exploitation. From a postcolonial perspective that I utilize in this research, we need to uncover this similarity between the definitions that are being used in different cultural, social, and political contexts and how this similarity produces a process of homogenization of

heterogenous environmental justice problems, problematizations, policies and solutions. For instance, when a scholar from global South applies United States Environmental Protection Agency definition of environmental justice to understand, formulate and investigate EJ problems in their societies, where the meanings of the environment, justice, human rights and integrity, decision-making processes and public participation vary, they are using similar literature and expressions to indicate other problems and issues. The homogenization of heterogenous environmental justice problems is especially important when it comes to regulating environmental policies. That is why there is a need to have new definitions that are not only cultivated from other discourses and genres, but are also derived from other social and political contexts. These new definitions can be used to address and affect social-environmental injustices in various context.

Lack of diversity within the mainstream academic literature in the discourse of EJ also deprives us from understanding the world and its 'wrongs' in ways other than we are used to thinking. It prevents EJ discourse from addressing other and new possible genres, including sexism, neocolonialism, ableism, and other forms of discrimination. Indeed, discursive homogeneity causes difficulties in accepting diversity in identities, diversity in constructing problematics, and diversity in the kinds of claims that should and could be included in EJ definitions. Diversity in possible worldviews that provide different definitions of EJ lead to the emergence of an environment where newer goals, methods, empirical problems, and principles can be exposed to EJ scholars. Addressing diversity in this regard, is a form of resistance to the exercise of power in environmental justice discourse.

Power and the Discourse of Environmental Justice

As Jorgensen & Phillips (2002) indicate, while in principle we have "an infinite number of ways to formulate statements, the statements that are produced within a specific domain are rather similar and repetitive. There are innumerable statements that are never uttered, and would never be accepted as meaningful" (Jorgensen & Phillips, 2002, p. 13). Indeed, "power is responsible both for creating our social world and for the particular ways in which the world is formed and can be talked about, ruling out alternative ways of being and talking" (Jorgensen & Phillips, 2002, p. 14). Power affects the emergence and shapes the discourse of EJ and its qualities. In fact, studies of power have led to the emergence of the discourse of EJ as an academic field of study and the particular ways of defining it. Power is also responsible for the possibilities for talking about EJ and its definitions. Both the repetition of particular definitions of EJ in the academic world and the possibilities for criticizing these particular definitions of EJ can be also explained by power dynamics. Finally, power is responsible for the negation of the possibility for alternative definitions of EJ, and the negation of the possibility for talking about these alternatives.

From the postcolonial perspective that I am adapting in this research, the homogeneity of environmental justice definitions is problematic for EJ discourse and indicates that they might not be able to address diverse environmental injustices in heterogenous contexts, including Global South, as this discourse does not address 'diversity' and 'history', especially colonial histories. They all assume environment as something that must be exploited, and this exploitation is associated with colonial and neocolonial worldviews towards 'the Other'. The working definition that I picked as my starting point for this research is not an exception, as it originates in the United States academia as well and presumes exploitation of the environment implicitly.

Therefore, the problem of environmental justice from my working definition's assumption is to distribute the environmental costs and benefits of this exploitation equally alongside with the equal distribution of power to influence decision making about the exploitation of the environment.

Conclusion and Future Perspectives

In this chapter, I critically analyzed the dominant definitions of the term 'environmental justice' in order to illuminate the preconditions of developing a postcolonial perspective on EJ discourse. The overall findings of my content analysis, reviewing 109 books and 84 articles with the expression 'environmental justice' in their titles, indicate that the most cited definitions of EJ are born in the United States. A critical discourse analysis of these definitions reveals different levels of intertextuality and interdiscursivity in the discourse of environmental justice. They address different elements of EJ and combined various genres, including racism, to reproduce or change the order of the discourse of environmental justice.

My discussion on the homogeneity and heterogeneity in the discourse of environmental justice addressed the relationship between power and environmental justice and indicated the need to expand definitions of EJ to be able to address different forms and patterns of environmental injustices and also to be able to understand and analyze it in diverse contexts. In this chapter I explored the specificities and complexities of applying postcolonial theory to environmental justice and address that ignoring 'diversity' and 'history' as two of the most essential elements of postcolonial approach in the practice of defining environmental justice deprives us from understanding and considering other important issues in the field of EJ. Therefore, there is a need to fill this gap in future research.

For instance, introducing exporting wars and weapons to the South, which leads to the increasing process of militarization in their regions, by the North as one of the most profitable industries to develop Northern economies may change the traditional focus of EJ from siting waste facilities in African-American communities to relocating wars and their environmental harms, as locally unwanted land uses (LULUs), in the South. A postcolonial understanding of environmental justice may also contribute to a new definition of the phenomenon that does not commodify the environment as characterizing it only by material benefits and/or harms. It may also shed light on the fact that the domain of our *backyard* should be expanded and an ethical definition of EJ should not presume any kind of backyard for any exceptional nationality or rationality. Finally, a postcolonial practice of defining EJ can encourage non-Western scholars to draw on local environmental knowledge and legitimize the recognition of new and other identities as recipients of environmental justice including new groups of human and non-humans.

Chapter Three - A Postcolonial Understanding of UN Documents on Post-invasion Iraq and Afghanistan: A Case Study of Environmental Justice

Introduction

The human-nature relationship has been always problematic due to the number of philosophical, ontological, theological, political, social, economic, and ethical questions it raises constantly. Only since the 1960s has it been accepted that humankind can no longer afford to neglect the environment. Concern for environmental degradation was, therefore, raised as one of the challenges in the emerging global order (Arora, 1995, p. 97). Concurrently, the growth-oriented model of development with its goals and strategies were questioned and eventually altered to a broader concept entailing social, cultural, and political factors, including justice and equality (Kothari, 1980, p. 440, Arora, 1995, p. 100). Thereafter, "environmentally responsible development" has challenged any technological or economic growth programs at the cost of *others*, including other nations, the poor, the underrepresented, and future generations (Arora, 1995, p. 97).

Different environmental practices and performances that are planned and problematized by international institutions aiming for environmentalizing societies, including implementation of environmental justice (EJ), affect and are affected by the discourse of 'sustainable development'.[21] As Omar (2012) observes, "the most conventional theories and practices of development are still framed within the ambit of the same logic of the civilising mission that synthesises the idea of the supremacy of the West and its dominating relation with the 'rest'"

[21] In *Our Common Future*, sustainable development is defined as "development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (World Commission on Environment and Development, 1987, no. 27). In this chapter, I refer to sustainable development as the development that meets the needs of a population without compromising the ability of other populations living in distant places and future generations that will live in the same region or other ones to meet their own needs.

(2012, p. 44). The *civilising mission* appears in different articulations, namely missions to implement 'democracy', 'sustainable development', and building 'environmentalized nations'[22], which should be explained by power theories.

Power is inherent in the concept of environmental justice. As a twofold phenomenon, EJ is on the one hand, a form of social justice originating from grassroot activism and on the other, it is a goal and, idealistically, a human right issue that should be considered in policy-making (Agyeman & Evans, 2004, p. 155). In both of these directions, environmental justice is a matter of power as it challenges social stratifications and political arrangements. In this chapter, I explore the problematic relationship between power and EJ from a postcolonial point of view in the context of discourses around rebuilding post-invasion Iraq and Afghanistan.

Drawing on the work of Gordon Walker (2012), I consider EJ as a phenomenon that focuses on a) unequal distribution of benefits from the environment, b) unequal distribution of scarcity of the environmental resources and threats that people receive from the environment, and c) unequal distribution of power to affect environmental decision making (Walker, 2012, p. 1). Based on this working definition, I examine how the concept of EJ is perceived and reproduced by policy makers.

In this chapter, I analyze United Nations (UN) documents on environmental aspects of rebuilding Afghanistan and Iraq after invasion and occupation (2001 and 2003, respectively) to explore how EJ is framed and represented. These documents are important in an examination of how the concept of EJ is institutionalized and normalized by global administrative powers. Such

[22] Timothy Luke has used the term environmentalized in his writings (1997, 1998, 2000 & 2001) to explore the process of transforming from normal behaviors to refined environmental behaviors. However, he never defines the process of environmentalizing or the meaning of environmentalized relations of production and consumption. By building 'environmentalized nations', I mean a form of civilising mission that assumes the mission of saving oriental environments from oriental peoples by the occident.

an analysis provides a new explanation for the legitimacy of the United Nations as representative of the international community and as the architect or "legitimate knower" of the practice of (re)building environmentalized nations (Shepherd, 2015, p. 887).

I apply Fairclough's approach to Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) in the analysis of my sample policy documents that are focused on the environmental assessment and rebuilding in Iraq and Afghanistan. My samples, *Desk Study on the Environment in Iraq (2003)*, *Afghanistan: Post-Conflict Environmental Assessment (2003)*, and *Natural Resource Management and Peacebuilding in Afghanistan (2013),* are introduced in the methodology section. A critical examination of the documents contributes to a deeper understanding of the politics of inclusion and exclusion, politics of identity and construction of 'us'- 'them' divisions (North vs. South, informed vs. non-informed and active vs. passive), and discursive politics and practices of policing the environment. On this subject, I use Foucauldian conceptualizations of 'governmentality', 'biopower', and 'normalization' since they provide a capacity for studying environmental policy and critique (Darier, 1999, p. 2, Darier, 1996, p. 585).

The justification for focusing on Iraq and Afghanistan comes from the postcolonial perspective that I am adopting in this research: the two countries were invaded and occupied by a US-led coalition based on the neocolonial assumption that these nations fail to govern themselves, there are still ongoing debates concerning the legality and legitimacy of these invasions (especially in the course of the 'regime change' in Iraq), and the international community has treated the wars differently (Hooks & Smith, 2005, p. 21). For example, consider discussions on the use of depleted uranium by United States forces in Iraq. In the past century, as Cole (1997) describes,

> "chemical weapons have been used by many of the leading military powers, including those who condemn Iraq's use of chemical weapons in the 1980s (weapons and technologies supplies by the United States and other capitalist democracies) in its war against Iran and against its own citizens". (Cole, 1997, in Hooks & Smith, 2005, p. 32).

Furthermore, based on Resolution 687 in 1991, Iraq is liable for (especially environmental) damages resulting from not only its military actions, but also the actions of the other side of the conflict during the Persian Gulf War. It is, therefore, a norm within international law that "holds aggressors responsible for damage arising from the legitimate exercise of a self-defence by the state that is the victim of the aggression" (McManus, 2006, p. 445). Moreover, "Iraq is liable to the UNCC [United Nations Compensation Commission] for damage resulting from the breakdown of civil order in Kuwait and Iraq" (McManus, 2006, p. 445). This raises a troubling question which remains unanswered: is the UNCC going to establish Coalition nations' civil liability for environmental damages given that the Iraqi army was defending its nation for two years? Unfortunately, it has not been the case for the past 14 years that the invasion and occupation has happened, and United Nations never raised this challenge for the Iraq war.

Although the United States overthrew fourteen governments around the world in the past 120 years that displeased them for various reasons (Kinzer, 2006, p. 1), Iraq and Afghanistan are the most current examples and the international community is concentrating efforts and finance to 'rebuild' them. While the rebuilding of Iraq and Afghanistan has been studied from a postcolonial point of view, the environmental reconstruction of the two countries and social justice are understudied. In this context, my research will bridge that gap and in doing so will examine why we need to understand the rebuilding practice with a postcolonial lens. Focusing on the United Nations published documents, *Desk Study on the Environment in Iraq (2003)*, *Afghanistan: Post-Conflict Environmental Assessment (2003)*, and *Natural Resource*

Management and Peacebuilding in Afghanistan (2013), I explore "how programs of improvement are shaped by political-economic relations they cannot change [and] how they are constituted, that is, by what they exclude" (Li, 2007, p. 4). In this regard, the producers of these documents, as policy makers who interpret current situation and direct future practices of international community, are the ones who "occupy the position of trustees, a position defined by the claim to know how others should live, to know what is best for them, [and] to know what they need" (Li, 2007, p. 4).

In the sections that follow, I briefly review the literature on applying postcolonial theoretical perspective to EJ, analyzing United Nations documents, and studying Iraq and Afghanistan from a postcolonial angle, followed by a discussion on power in environmental policy. In the theoretical/conceptual framework section, I provide an overview on governmentality, biopower, and normalization as the main Foucauldian concepts that help me to analyze the documents. Next, I present my main methodological considerations followed by an analysis of documents. The final sections provide a discussion and conclusion, respectively.

Literature Review

While power theories can explain characteristics of distribution of environmental burdens, policy formulations, and social mobilizations as the main topics of environmental justice thought (Taylor, 2000, p. 508), they have been rarely employed by environmental justice scholars. Traditionally, attention is given to case studies in environmental justice studies (Taylor, 2000, p. 508) while little attention has been paid to ideological and theoretical analyses of power in EJ. Power exercised by corporations to influence media reporting of environmental injustices (Leonard, 2014), and the power exercised by local communities to affect environmental decision

making in order to address environmental inequalities (Berry, 2003) are typical topics that have been examined by EJ scholars. However, power relations in environmental justice discourse has not been addressed from a postcolonial point of view and this research contributes to fill this gap as it may challenge and change the mainstream understanding of the notion of EJ.

Analyzing official documents and reports published by United Nations is a conventional method used by scholars to provide critical assessments on its ideas and understanding on the development question (Butcher, 2006), climate change (Banerjee, 2012), and its policies and practices around the world. However, scholars rarely employ either critical discourse analysis or Foucauldian concepts/theories in their critiques on United Nations documents. A few scholars have used a postcolonial perspective to criticize UN legislations, policies and practices. Grahn-Farley (2008), for instance, suggests a postcolonial analysis of the United Nations convention on the rights of the child and challenges the Eurocentricity of international law. In 2013, Anna Kadar conducted a feminist and postcolonial analysis of "how and why peacekeeping missions are involved in the very horrors they seek to address". Based on an in-depth review of the existing literature and a content analysis of United Nations resolutions and documents, Kadar argues that inherently orientalist narratives, including the peacekeepers' militarized masculinities and their ideas about the exploitable native women could explain problems of sexual misconduct in post-conflict contexts (Kadar, 2013, p. 2). Her research shows that investigating the narrative and perceptions of program developers contributes to explanation and understanding of the practices that are conducted in crisis and post-crisis contexts.

Focusing on Afghanistan in her PhD dissertation, Maliha Chishti (2014) offers a postcolonial analysis to explore the power relations that affect reconstruction and state-building interventions (Chishti, 2014, p. ii). She reveals that the interventions embrace colonial

worldviews and reassert the Western meaning and purpose, "ensuring that westerners, and not necessarily Afghans, are the primary beneficiaries of post-conflict interventions and that westerners are never made to feel 'out of place' in Afghanistan". Therefore, interventions respond to the needs and desires of the international community rather than the majority of Afghans (Chishti, 2014, p. ii). The invasion of Iraq has also been studied by postcolonial scholars. In 2006, the journal of *New Formations* published an special issue titled *After Iraq: Reframing Postcolonial Studies* suggesting that "the invasion and occupation of Iraq present a challenge to postcolonial studies of such magnitude and importance that practitioners in the field are not free not to rise to it" (Gopal & Lazarus, 2006, p. 7). While the issue contains ten articles, a few of them are relevant to the case of Iraq war and they essentially invite postcolonial writers to expand the literature on this topic rather than exploring the post-conflict situation. Hence, the present study aims at responding to this invitation and examine environmental aspects of rebuilding Iraq and Afghanistan from a postcolonial point of view.

Theoretical/Conceptual Framework: Power and Environmental Policy-making

In this research, I use the concepts of governmentality, biopower, and normalization as different forms of power which produce both subjects (of policies) and objects (of studying and addressing) of environmental justice discourse. I study this discursive power through the critical examination of policy documents as critical discourse analysis focuses on the processes of production and normalization of differences (Stanley, 2009, p. 1003). Indeed, it provides the necessary theoretical framework and methodological tools for a study of the exercise of power (Hastings, 1999, p. 93). Discourse analysis also provides methodological instruments for going beyond the written texts and can help to "disentangle political 'spin' from the underlying substance or rationale of a policy" (Hastings, 1999, p. 104).

From a Foucauldian perspective, "it is not a linguistic coincidence that the word 'policy' comes from 'police'" which demonstrates how political power takes distance from naked violence/power and turns to "more subtle mechanisms of implementation" (Darier, 1996, p. 589). Simultaneously, the word 'the environment', as Luke observes, primitively derives from the verb "to environ", which means "to encircle, encompass, envelop, or enclose" (Luke, 1995, p. 64). In Luke's description, environing is a strategic action involving "the physical activity of surrounding, circumscribing, or ringing around something" and further explains "stationing guards around, thronging with hostile intent, or standing watch over some person or place" (Luke, 1995, p. 64). Drawing from this we might argue that environmental policy making is a practice of "policing of ecological spaces" (Luke, 1995, p. 65) and therefore, an exercise of power.

In a Foucauldian sense, environmental policy making (and in the case of this research, environmental policy making *in* a post-conflict situation, *for* a Global South country, *in order to* build an environmentalized nation, *by* a legitimate international source of power, and *from* a postcolonial point of view) can be explained by theories of power. As such, 'governmentality' helps us to understand power dynamics within the discourse of development, including democratizing mission, and mission to build a sustainable environmentalized nation. Invasions, as legal/legitimate practices to 'regime change' and 'free people from their dictator governors', and post-invasion practices to rebuild the country are also explainable by the concept of 'biopower' since they affect people's lives, bodies, their right to live or die, their quality of life, and their environment. Guaranteeing the legitimate position of knowing and acting for international administrations, U.N. in this case, and the reliable resource that donors should trust can also be explained by 'normalization', which takes place through policies, documents

indicating these policies, their language, and the ways these policies affect future laws and regulations.[23]

Hence, governmentality, biopower, and normalization are different forms of power which "produce"; they "produce reality" and "domain of objects and rituals of truth" (Foucault, 1979, p. 194) and I will use them in analyzing what they produce (discourses in the sample documents). Before that, I will briefly discuss each of the concepts in this section.

Governmentality

Foucault coined the word 'governmentality' in the late 1970s suggesting that technologies of power and technologies of the self are connected and hardly function separately (Foucault, 1988, p. 18-19). Considering the linking of governing and modes of thought illustrates that studying the technologies of power is not possible without analyzing the political rationalities supporting them and enables us to analyze the subject and the processes of subjectification in the modern world (Lemke, 2000, p. 2-3, Foucault, 1993, p. 203). From this understanding, governing people

> "is not a way to force people to do what the governor wants; it is always a versatile equilibrium, with complementarity and conflicts between techniques which assure coercion and processes through which the self is constructed or modified by himself." (Foucault, 1993, p. 203-4).

Therefore, describing a new form of political power that seeks to form everyday behaviors of people (Darier, 1996, p. 587, McGregor et. al, 2015, p. 140), governmentality represents a "theoretical move beyond the problematics of consensus and will on the one hand and conquest and war on the other" (Lemke, 2000, p. 4).

Biopower

[23] And also, the media representation of the United Nations which is out of scope of this research.

Foucault's archeological and genealogical studies on biology, and natural sciences in general, had an important outcome for social sciences and it was the birth of the concept of 'biopolitics' which implies different governmental strategies that are centred on 'life' (Darier, 1999, p. 22). Characterizing society as an independent existence made up of bodies, not individuals, which becomes possible by biopower, enables us to look at it at the level of the population and to utilize statistical data to observe and control that population. (Thrasher, 2015, p. 36). These series of tactics make controlling all aspects of human life possible and direct them to specific ends (Darier, 1999, p. 22-23). Indeed, "in contrast to disciplinary power, biopower takes root through the regulatory controls of the population (rather than the individual) through the management of life" (Rutherford, 2007, p. 296). Power over the administration of conditions of life, including public health, race, natality, longevity, and hygiene (Darier, 1999, p. 22), rather than making decisions about subject's right to live (Raman & Tutton, 2009, p. 713), provides governors with necessary tools to govern populations and shape how it "conducts itself to the best end for the continuation of that government" (Rutherford, 2007, p. 296).

Normalization

Normalization is a form and an instrument of power that, by homogenizing and individualizing target populations simultaneously, exercises subtle authority over individual behavior. It is a mode of observation, examination, judging, ordering, hierarchy, and exclusion (Koro-Ljungberg et al., 2007, p. 1077-1078). For Foucault, the power of normalization

> "imposes homogeneity; but it individualizes by making it possible to measure gaps, to determine levels, to fix specialities and to render the differences useful by fitting them one to another. It is easy to understand how the power of the norm functions within a system of formal equality, since within a homogeneity that is the rule, the norm introduces, as a useful imperative and as a result of measurement, all the shading of individual differences". (Foucault, 1995, p. 182).

It is during normalization that subjects become objects of control and intervention (Koro-Ljungberg et al., 2007, p. 1077). In the normalization processes, therefore, individuals assume their agency and individuality only can be fulfilled through participation in and reproduction of the current system (Koro-Ljungberg et al., 2007, p. 1078). Normalization provides governments with legitimacy through shared norms and models beyond the legislations and by linking them with knowledges (Ahonen & Tienari, 2009, p. 661). Foucault considers the norm as playing a principal role in the "emergence, legitimation, proliferation, and circulation of modern power" (Taylor, 2009, p. 52). Techniques of normalization and normation, therefore, make normal and abnormal individuals and populations and reproduce the norms of conformity and the necessity to accept them (Taylor, 2009, p. 53). However, from a Foucauldian perspective, norms perform as "nodal points within a broad power matrix. Power passes through and along norms, and these points of intersection can either facilitate or inhibit the further circulation of power" (Taylor, 2009, p. 53).

Methodological Considerations

As Stanley (2009, p. 1003) suggests, "because of their mutual analytic concern with production of difference, justice-oriented scholarship might benefit from the insights of discourse analysis". Discourse analysis focuses on the processes of production and normalization of difference and can be employed to reveal political importance of difference making (Stanley, 2009, p. 1003). Applying Fairclough's approach to Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), I analyze the exercise of power in the use of language to "reveal the role of discursive strategies and practices in the creation and reproduction of (unequal) relations of power, which are understood as ideological effects" (Maeseele, 2013, p. 282). While Fairclough's formulation of CDA aims to map three forms of analysis namely analysis of texts, analysis of discourse practice and analysis of

sociocultural practice (Fairclough, 1995, p. 2), in this research, I solely focus on analysis of language texts and discourse practice. This modified application of CDA helps me to concentrate on the discourses within the texts. Analyzing the sociocultural contexts of production, contribution, and consumption of each of the UN documents would involve attention to the complicated relationships between UNEP partners, donor governments, and UN Afghan/Iraqi staff and their economic, institutional and administrative practices and is beyond the scope of this master's research.

Discourse Practice

A US-led coalition invaded Afghanistan in October 2001 and removed the Taliban regime. The attack was followed by international efforts to "rebuild" the country (Robertson, 2003, p. 26). The outcome, however, serves the opposing view that increasingly raises concerns about how military attacks cannot lead to stabilization and democracy. The reason is that the international efforts to stabilize the country "has yielded neither security nor political stability in Afghanistan" after more than a decade as there was no "strategic thought" nor "coherent strategy" in these efforts (Paris, 2013, p. 538, 546). Following its interests in the Persian Gulf and in order to protectorate over the world's second largest oil reserves, in 2003 the United States also invaded Iraq (Hinnebusch, 2007a). Although "hard-liners in the Bush administration who had advocated an attack on Iraq even before 9/11 saw it as an opportunity to mobilize support for a war they thought would be decisive in transforming the Middle East to suit US interests", this war did not start until designated 'Operation Enduring Freedom' as a response to the 9/11 attacks (Hinnebusch, 2007b, p. 11). Meanwhile, the way the United Nations acted (or failed to act) towards these two attacks and military presence is significantly important and meaningful, especially for the purpose of this research.

Soon after the invasions took place (starting in 2003), the United Nations Environmental Program (UNEP) began publishing documents on the environment in the two invaded countries. UNEP published 15 documents on Afghanistan and 5 documents on Iraq, including monographs, assessment reports, annual reports, technical reports, brochures, booklets, and factsheets.[24] After overviewing all the 20 available documents, I selected three documents that were more general rather than specific (I dismissed Technical Reports and Progress Reports). I also dismissed law materials (*Afghanistan Environment Law* (2007) and *A Guide to Afghanistan's 2007 Environment Law* (2007)) as there were no similar text in the case of Iraq. Finally, I came up with three documents which will be introduced in the next section.

Texts

Document no. 1: Desk Study on the Environment in Iraq.

Desk Study on the Environment in Iraq was initiated at a humanitarian meeting convened by the Government of Switzerland in Geneva in February 2003 and first published in Geneva in April 2003 by the United Nations Environment Programme. This document is conducted as a guide on the next steps for addressing key environmental concerns in Iraq (UNEP, 2003a, p. 7).

Document no. 2: Afghanistan: Post-Conflict Environmental Assessment.

This document is produced by the United Nations Environment Programme and funded by the governments of Canada, Finland, Luxembourg and Switzerland. Cooperating with the Ministry of Water Resources, Irrigation and Environment, UNEP has published this report in 2003.

Document no. 3: Natural Resource Management and Peace-Building in Afghanistan.

[24] http://www.unep.org/publications/

This report is developed in collaboration with the Natural Resources Contact Group of the United Nations in Afghanistan and produced at the request of the United Nations Country Team in Afghanistan in 2013. It was delivered jointly by the UNEP's Environmental Cooperation for Peacebuilding initiative and the Afghanistan Country Programme in partnership with the EU-UN Global Partnership on Land, Natural Resources and Conflict with funding from the EU's Instrument for Stability.

Analysis

In the three reviewed documents, there is no direct reference to the expressions of 'environmental justice', 'environmental injustice', 'environmental equity' or 'environmental inequality'. However, there are some indications of environmental justice as equal distribution of environmental benefits, harms and power to affect environmental decision making. I analyzed these indications and the discourses that have been constructed around them. In my analysis, I identify three discourses: a) EJ through peacebuilding discourse, or the discourse of 'we are here to fix things up', b) elitist discourse, or the discourse of (you join) *us* versus *them*, and c) conditional silence discourse, or the discourse of 'no responsibility, no blame'.

EJ through peacebuilding discourse, or the discourse of 'we are here to fix things up'

The first discourse is that of 'peacebuilding'. As the topic of my research, this is the main discourse that encompasses environmental justice in UN documents. In fact, one of the arguments repeated in the sample documents is that natural resource management is closely related to building peace and preventing conflicts. A "better" (UNEP, 2013, p. 4) or an "effective" (UNEP, 2013, p. 43) environmental management includes equal distribution of environmental benefits, including water and soil, involvement of communities in making

decisions that affect them, and financial transparency (UNEP, 2013, p. 4). However, as Salazar (1996, p. 16-17) indicates, natural resource management is always political and we need to acknowledge this political essence in order to accomplish justice in environmental management processes. This characteristic means that we always need to ask 'better' for whom or 'better' for what. Therefore, we need to explore how the discourse of peacebuilding is articulated. It is *environed* or encompassed by stability, security, and "putting necessary safeguards in place" (UNEP, 2013, p. 5) providing a discourse understood through the concept of governmentality. While at first it seems that the writers use peace, stability and security interchangeably, further exploration of the word choice in documents reveals that each of them are used to serve different purposes. For example, building peace is formulated as preventing conflicts inside the country, with no reference to the need to stopping the militarization of the country by sending more foreign forces, or more importantly, questioning the initiation of war on Afghanistan at the first place. The peacebuilding discourse also does not include peacekeeping even in its broadest meaning. Stability is mostly used to contrast with conflict and is introduced as an outcome of natural resource management strategies ["Managing water resources effectively is critical for Afghanistan's development, security, and stability" (UNEP, 2013, p. 25)]. It is notable that when the whole region is suffering from destabilization caused by military interests and investments of Western powers, especially the United States, document no. 3 (*Natural Resource Management and Peace-Building in Afghanistan*) states that "Iran is simultaneously attempting to destabilize the region" (UNEP, 2013, p. 24). The notion of security is also used as a component or sometimes equivalent to peace when it comes to economy and especially to describe the appropriate conditions for foreign corporations which have started mining operations in

Afghanistan. For example, document no. 3 (*Natural Resource Management and Peace-Building in Afghanistan*) states that:

> "At the moment, given the prevailing security situation and the potential risks of mismanagement of exploration and extraction, some question whether the Afghan government should be pushing ahead with mining at all". (UNEP, 2013, p. 37).

One of the important characteristics of the peacebuilding discourse is its utilization of rationalities of normalization. For example, one implication of the documents is that those 'all the same' nations[25] in the region are "unable to negotiate their way" to shares of water (UNEP, 2013, p. 25); they always face problems with sharing natural resources and cannot stabilize or enjoy peace in their region *on their own*. Therefore, their disputes over water and land have always been resolved with violence (for example, see UNEP, 2013, p. 8). This simplification denies the historical fact that the colonial states made artificial borders in the Middle East in order to make it controllable and governable (governance without direct government). Such homogenization of 'the essentially simple and knowable' other is retractable with normalizing techniques that are used to describe how these *irrational* people who are in conflict over resources, need to be governed and to be stabilized by an external *rational* force, usually from the west. Especially regarding the position that the documents take towards militarized Afghanistan and Iraq, it is worthy to mention that both the Taliban against Mujahedeen and Saddam Hussein against Iran, it was the United States and its Western allies that armed them and militarized the region.

While these reports or programs are based on the support they get from different state and non-state donors, they are short-term. That is why they are occasionally produced (for example,

[25] To the extent that, in document no. 1, UNEP claims that we can "use this information to make estimates for non-reporting countries using comparative GDP as an indicator" (UNEP, 2003a, p. 36)

there is a report on 2003 and the next one comes out a few years later without any stated logic behind the gap in years). This donation-based logic also creates another problem: these reports are supposed to "be useful not only to the people of Afghanistan, but also to all donor countries and international organizations looking for facts, figures and the vision needed during the reconstruction phase" [Executive Director of the United Nations Environment Programme Foreword to document no. 2] (UNEP, 2003b, p. 4). Therefore, at least partially, these documents are produced to satisfy the foreign donor that never will go to Afghanistan/Iraq and to justify the activities that UN fulfills on behalf of them/international community. These reports are the main and trusted resources that can convince the generous donors (UNEP, 2013, UNEP, 2003b) to pay more for prospective projects or to make sure the donations they made can 'make a difference'. This discourse of 'ask for charity' is combined with the language of 'we are doing our best (keep trusting us)' and a genre of hope, sympathy and patience of Afghan and Iraqi people in facing hardship.

Therefore, there are many indications in the texts that a) we know what is needed to be done, b) we are doing absolutely necessary things, c) we are doing our best, d) what we are doing are the best things possible, and e) we are using all the capacities. Within this discourse of *god trick*, there is a language of legitimacy suggesting that 'we can and will determine what should be done by the international community and also by Afghan government and society for their best interests'. This language also implies how (to what goals) donors should give their money. This language of legitimacy is also combined with a genre of fear when it comes to Iraqi/Afghan audience: "Following this most recent conflict, Iraqi citizens may have fears about environmental threats from military activities" (UNEP, 2003a, p. 6).

The UN, as the legitimized knower and policy maker, shapes the representations of the country outside of it and at the same time, shapes the expectations from the policies inside the country. The UN does not see itself as being responsible to Afghans and this makes the situation more complicated: "Responsibility for implementing the recommendations contained in this report [document no. 2] lies with the people of Afghanistan and their government institutions" (UNEP, 2003b, p. 12). Even if I read it as a discourse of 'self-empowerment' for Iraqi citizens, then it would be more problematic in terms of not predicting the preconditions of the empowerment and it also serves to de-responsibilize the United Nation. This is one of the reasons that I cannot determine if they have addressed unequal distribution of power to affect environmental decision making as one of the main components of environmental justice. I will come back to this in my discussion on democracy.

Elitist discourse, or the discourse of (you join) 'us versus them'

The second discourse is the elitist discourse. It is important to examine this discourse as the development elite who have produced the reports frame the situation both for insiders and outsiders, determine policies, define problems, problematize the conflict and post-conflict conditions, and normalize the particular context. The elitist discourse is notable for its a) lack of local knowledge and b) top-down language.

The United Nations documents are not derived from direct contact with rural and local people. In the cases where it was possible for practitioners to go into the field, they interviewed stakeholders and international agency staff, and not regular people. This is a key reason the solutions they propose for Iraq and Afghanistan's environmental problems are not feasible. They mainly present a utopia with undamaged or perfectly designed infrastructures and through

normative phrases on how to behave environmental-friendly in this utopia. However, urgent and basic human needs should be at the centre of any development intervention (Omar, 2012, p. 47). The documents present an unrealistic approach, which is a result of the lack of understanding of the characteristics and conditions of people's lives in Iraq and Afghanistan and a dramatized perception of environment in development plans, and in doing so forgets the basic needs of people.

One of the major forms of elitist discourse expressed in EJ contexts is as disinterest in working with communities of color (Lee, 1992). In these cases, however, it is Afghani and Iraqi scholars who are engaged in the production of each UN report. Nonetheless, they are elites of their respective societies who may be hired into well-paid UN positions in the first place and after engaging with United Nations practices may increasingly lose their connection to and understanding of that aspect of society. In the case of Afghanistan, the reason is that because of insecurity in the country the UN may be required to pay substantial amounts of money for its employees' life insurance in Afghanistan. Where they cannot afford it, they may prohibit their Afghan employees to go out of the secured buildings they have designated for them.[26] As a result, environmental policies are often written behind closed doors either in Europe or in Kabul. In the case of Iraq, as the conflict had not been finished in the time of conducting document no. 1 (*Desk Study on the Environment in Iraq*), it was not possible for the authors of that document to work in the field, or even to contact Iraqi scientists and scientific institutions (UNEP, 2003a, p. 6-7). In those cases where they had access to the field, "due to the security situation -ongoing conflict and dangers of mines and other unexploded ordinances- the UNEP mission was not able to cover all parts of Afghanistan" (UNEP, 2003b, p. 8). Therefore, the limited access to field

[26] Author's personal conversation with a former employee of UNEP in Afghanistan.

research, makes the writers' situation and location problematic in terms of being stuck between drawing on their previous knowledge about the cases or drawing on other documents about other places that have been experienced similar situations. Both of these two options may be alienated from the reality of peoples living in Iraq or Afghanistan.

Such alienation from the region or people produces polarizations (informed vs. uniformed) and enforces processes of othering (us vs. them) and foregrounding and backgrounding (North vs. South and governor vs. need to be governed). These processes lead to the second component of the elitism discourse that is the production of a top-down language. While a combination of a "local 'bottom-up' influence" with "a series of 'top-down' initiatives" can create a "policy architecture" that supports a just and sustainable environment (Agyeman & Evans, 2004, p. 161), the lack of recognition of local knowledge leads to a singular top-down policy making structure that contributes to social and environmental problems. Policy-making through elite-controlled institutions also plays a role in producing different environmental problems (Downey & Strife, 2010, p. 155-156).

Not only do the sample documents not incorporate local environmental knowledge but they also do not acknowledge it as a rational way of understanding the world, or at least the environment. For instance, there is no reference for investigating and building upon local environmental knowledge in future research and practice in any of the sampled documents. The inclusion of local knowledge, and validation of its importance in environmental justice oriented policy-making, is important in several ways from a postcolonial point of view. First, it affects the identification and processes of naming and problematizing of environmental inequalities (*power to define*) (Gosine & Teelucksingh, 2008, p. 68). Secondly, as local environmental knowledge is derived from people's perceptions and their lived experiences of their environmental risks, it

determines what is normal and what is not (*power to differentiate*) (Gosine & Teelucksingh, 2008, p. 67). Third, applying an environmental justice framework to research and policy-making, that draws on local environmental knowledge and is based on qualitative techniques such as interviews, focus groups, and oral histories of community members, is a form of resistance to dominant forms of knowledge production and distribution (*power to environ*) (Gosine & Teelucksingh, 2008, p. 68). Finally, the inclusion of local knowledge is essential in any peacebuilding related activity (Shepherd, 2015, p. 887). Therefore, the fact that local environmental knowledge is not included in the documents as a source of environmental knowledge and policy-making, addresses different forms of power exercise within and around the discourse of EJ.

Conditional silence discourse, or the discourse of 'no responsibility, no blame'

In this discourse, I demonstrate "how programs of improvement are shaped by political-economic relations they cannot change [and] how they are constituted, that is, by what they exclude" (Li, 2007, p. 4). Within this discourse of exclusion, we need to discuss the exclusion of assessments of environmental harms caused by invasions. The fact that the documents do not include any assessments of specific environmental problems and threats caused by invasions or not being clear on them causes the documents to be limited in terms of their ability to provide a holistic understanding of the situation to readers:

> "UNSCOM investigated the possible release of chemical and biological agents from key military targets. Only at Muhammadiyat and Al Muthana did UNSCOM find evidence that would lead them to conclude that chemical weapons were released as a result of coalition bombing. However, the long-term potential environmental consequences of the releases *were not assessed*". (emphasis added) (UNEP, 2003a, p. 63).

> "At the time of writing [document no. 1, Desk Study on the Environment in Iraq], the level and intensity of conflict is much reduced but not yet at an end, and *limited information is available on* actual environmental impacts and risks". (emphasis added) (UNEP, 2003a, p. 70).

Another discourse that is related to this silence and, in fact, makes it conditional is the discourse of responsibility which is identifiable in two areas: invasions and UN sanctions against Iraq. The reviewed documents take different positions regarding naming the invasions. In the case of Iraq, document no. 2 (*Afghanistan: Post-Conflict Environmental Assessment*) uses "the conflict of March/April 2003" (UNEP, 2003a, p. 8) or "the conflict in March 2003" (UNEP, 2003a, p. 16) instead of possible alternatives including 'war on Iraq', 'invasion of Iraq', or 'occupation of Iraq'. However, the word "invasion" is used[27] in the case of the invasion of Kuwait by Iraq in 1990 (Persian Gulf War): "the 1990 invasion of Kuwait" (UNEP, 2003a, p. 17). Interestingly, document also uses "the war with Iran" (UNEP, 2003a, p. 19) instead of 'the invasion of Iran' given that Iraq had invaded Iran in 1980. This strategic use of the terms reveals the power relations within and around wars and their legitimacy in the eyes of United Nations as the 'legitimate representative' of international community.

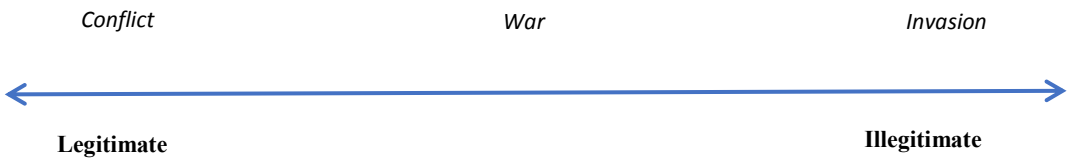

Figure 2-Naming Language

Within this discourse there is also a discourse of time which speaks to the problem of legitimacy. It is notable how the writers consider time and duration of invasions (when the war is started and

[27] Not exclusively

whether/when it is finished), choosing the title of "the conflict of March/April 2003" (to indicate that it was brief) and contrasting it with "decades of conflict" that is repeated in both cases of Iraq and Afghanistan, mostly as responsible for the environmental degradation in the countries (UNEP, 2003a, p. 8, UNEP, 2003b, p. 4, 48, 56, 104, UNEP, 2013, p. 3, 4, 13). Situating the invasion in contrast to 'decades of conflict' associates with the language of apologia is something that I will explain later.

The way the UN documents formulate the war on Iraq and Afghanistan is significant from a postcolonial point of view. The documents do not present and discuss the invasions clearly and directly; this is important in that the UN chooses not to situate invasions and occupations as the main causes of the current environmental situations and therefore, it refuses any responsibility to assign the responsibility of starting the war to aggressors. At the same time, the United Nations, as the legitimate representative of international community, refuses the responsibility to accuse the aggressors, as a justice oriented discourse would suggest. This rhetorical strategy of 'no responsibility, no blame' sometimes is directly expressed:

> "The approach of this Desk Study is environmental and technical. The intent is not to attach blame for various environmental problems. Rather, it is to provide an overview of chronic and war-related environmental issues, and to identify the steps needed to safeguard the environment". (UNEP, 2003a, p. 6).

The way that documents frame UN sanctions against Iraq (1990-2003) is also important; the documents do not blame sanctions or their designers but, at the same time, place responsibility on sanctions for the environmental degradation in Iraq. Sanctions are important to address from an EJ framework analysis as they are seen as a tool to collectively punish civil society and

middle and lower classes instead of the responsible states. There is also evidence[28] on how this collective punishment imposed by UN sanctions on Iraqi society not only destroyed the country's infrastructures, but also sharpens inequalities in different areas including environmental inequalities. For example, document no. 1 indicates that:

> "[S]ince the imposition of UN sanctions, waste collection and disposal has been significantly reduced. For example, […] anecdotal evidence indicates that waste was only collected from wealthy residential areas and government buildings, with the remaining population carrying waste by hand to informal dump sites within the city. Rural communities had no formal collection systems and either burnt their waste or deposited it in a wadi or village dump." (UNEP, 2003a, p. 35).

In the case of Afghanistan, there is a genre of blaming China, India, Russia and Iran (all 'others' that are contrasting 'our' efforts). Chinese and Indian corporations which hastily signed contracts and started their mining operations in Afghanistan, unjust water agreements with Soviet Union in 1946 and their war against Mujahedeen (1979-1989), and Iran who is interrupting the reconstruction plans, are all seen responsible for environmental degradation in Afghanistan. Interestingly, the documents no. 2 (*Afghanistan: Post-Conflict Environmental Assessment*) and 3 (*Natural Resource Management and Peace-Building in Afghanistan*) never blame the war on Afghanistan as the cause of postponing stability in the country, let alone in the region.

There is a language of apologia and a genre of justification both regarding UN sanctions against Iraq and the invasions:

> "When reviewing this preliminary summary [document no. 1, Desk Study on the Environment in Iraq] it is essential to keep in mind that Iraq's environment was already subject to a range of both chronic and acute environmental problems arising from:
> - impacts of the Iran-Iraq War and 1991 Gulf War, […];

[28] Joy Gordon (2010) has provided a wholistic summary of the evidence in his book *Invisible war: the United States and the Iraq sanctions*, Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press.

- low priority attached to the environment by the Iraqi government;
- unintended effects of UN sanctions" (UNEP, 2003a, p. 70).

Mentioning "*unintended* effects of UN sanctions" (emphasis added) (UNEP, 2003a, p. 70 & p. 84) as one of the causes of environmental problems, or indicating that "no big development programme, whether from the government or international community, is entirely immune from the impacts of natural resource related conflict, nor to making the situation *inadvertently* worse" (emphasis added) (Foreword to document no. 3, UNEP, 2013, p. 3) illustrate the language of apologia. In terms of justification of illegal invasion to Iraq, the document (*Desk Study on the Environment in Iraq*) again refuses to take a humanitarian side and pseudo-neutrally argues that:

> "As of 22 April 2003, there is no evidence that chemical or biological weapons have been used at any time during the conflict, *though the discovery of protective clothing at Iraqi military positions, and – in a Nasiriya hospital – of drugs used to counteract the effects of chemical weapons, led to coalition speculation that the Iraqi regime was prepared to deploy such weapons.* Several reported finds by coalition forces of chemical weapons facilities were later discounted. On 22 April, the US stated that no weaponized chemicals, biological agents or any nuclear devices had so far been found. Some potential 'dual use' materials had been located, but the quantities and substances did not indicate weaponization". (emphasis added) (UNEP, 2003a, p. 82-83).

Discussion

The analysis on the sampled documents reveals how the documents respond to the implementation of 'democracy', 'sustainable development', and building 'environmentalized nations' as different articulations of the civilising mission of development. These three *missions* are based on colonial and neocolonial assumptions about 'the Other'. My analysis of the environmental justice discourse in the documents explains how colonial assumptions are reproduced and represented by discursive power relations. The three discourses that I identified in the documents, EJ through peacebuilding discourse, or the discourse of 'we are here to fix things up', elitist discourse, or the discourse of (you join) *us* versus *them*, and conditional silence discourse, or the discourse of 'no responsibility, no blame', are shaped by colonial and neocolonial assumptions about *the Other* as peoples who need to be governed and whose environments needs to be rebuilt (environed) by *our* resources and policies. As I demonstrated in my analysis, these discourses fail to acknowledge and/or mention why the infrastructures have been damaged and how rebuilding them is a massive economic opportunity for the corporations and governments who have guaranteed their military and economic presence in the region by wars.

Regarding democracy, it is notable that United Nations documents illustrate that the responsibility for implementing the recommendations they make for Iraq and Afghanistan lies with the people and their governments (UNEP, 2003b, p. 12). While this reserves the power of making environmental decisions independently to the governments, as the infrastructures are not ready for democratic decision-making, it may have paradoxical outcomes for environmental justice in the countries and also in the region. In the current situation, being dependent on a variety of foreign donors and the United Nations, as a non-democratic elite-controlled institution,

environmental planning in Iraq and Afghanistan is not based on democratic decision making. As sociologists have linked injustice and undemocratic institutions to environmental harm (Downey & Strife, 2010, p. 155), we may also argue that the process cannot guarantee sustainability in the programs that are planned and implemented by the United Nations. Given the post-conflict situation in Iraq and Afghanistan, it is unrealistic to expect that UN practices could be based on equal distribution of power to affect environmental decision-making as the third pillar of environmental justice since the basic needs of people has not been met yet. However, as long-term recommendations they should have considered the prerequisites of valuing local environmental knowledges and involving community members in various levels to be able to achieve environmental justice in terms of distributing power to affect environmental decision-making. Not only should a justice-oriented environmental planning require a step-by-step involvement of civil society actors (Gemmill & Bamidele-Izu, 2002), but also every peace-building activity needs to include meaningful participation of local and external stakeholders (Omar, 2012, p. 47). The active involvement of local actors is more than having people's "free, prior and informed consent to projects" (UNEP, 2013, p. 26) as is articulated in the documents. Rather, it means to incorporate and build upon local environmental knowledge and to acknowledge the importance of modifying operational definitions based on the needs and norms that these knowledges introduce and produce.

Building upon local environmental knowledge means to accept the fact that *our* definitions and ways of understanding and building nations are not universal and to challenge the top-down language and way of thinking that have been used in the predominantly discursive definition of development. Local knowledge is essential in planning and implementation of participatory and sustainable development programmes (Agrawal, 1995, p. 417, Sillitoe &

Bicker, 2004, p. 1). We need to go beyond the dichotomy of scattered low prestige local knowledge versus centralized high prestige Western scientific knowledge (Agrawal, 1995, p., 423). Any (unconscious) desire to hold this dichotomy, and other sharp contrasts that have been constructed in the discourse, namely rational vs. magical, universal vs. particular, theoretical vs. practical, and modern vs. traditional should be analyzed with the intimate links between knowledge and power (Agrawal, 1995, p. 430, Nygren, 1999, p. 271). A postcolonial understanding of environmental justice and power relations opens the possibility for addressing different forms of these conscious and unconscious desires and invites us to think about sustainable development in broader context.

Conclusion

Rebuilding practices in Iraq and Afghanistan as practices of development should be understood by the old logic of the 'civilising mission' *accomplished* by the West for the best of the 'rest'. The civilising mission after regime change led to a shift in new articulations: missions to implement 'democracy', 'sustainable development, and building 'environmentalized nations'. In this chapter, I analyzed United Nation documents on post-invasion Iraq and Afghanistan and explained their discursive practices through a Foucauldian power analysis. I especially focused on implementing environmental justice to address unequal distribution of environmental benefits and burdens and unequal distribution of power to affect environmental decision-making.

The selected UN documents, namely *Desk Study on the Environment in Iraq*, *Afghanistan: Post-Conflict Environmental Assessment*, and *Natural Resource Management and Peacebuilding in Afghanistan,* have not addressed environmental justice directly and meaningfully in their representation and policy making of rebuilding Iraq and Afghanistan. Environmental justice is understood as a component to a 'better' natural resource management that is perceived as a tool

for peacebuilding not only in Afghanistan, but also in the region. There is also a discourse of elitism in the documents that expresses in a lack of acknowledgement of local environmental knowledge/knower and a top-down language in documents. This discourse contributes to unsustainable environmental planning and decision making. Being dependent on a variety of foreign donors rather than a responsible national government, environmental planning in Iraq and Afghanistan is not based on democratic mechanisms. It may challenge notions of environmental sustainability and justice, as there is no equal distribution of power to affect environmental decision-making. Finally, there is a conditional silence discourse that reveals double-standards and choices of 'not to act' within the documents.

Building environmentalized nations as well as building peace and keeping peace cannot be achieved by external forces; a regime change may not lead to democracy and active civil society where a concern for the natural environment is central in decision making. As "the relative failure of externally introduced development initiatives has impelled a shift toward a participatory and decentralized motif in development" (Agrawal, 1995, p. 416), rebuilding countries based on outside interests, forces, and finances needs to be shifted to a justice oriented structure, and justice should be defined and practiced in the broadest way to be able to include justice between the rest and the west. The shift cannot get started anywhere but in the critical examination of existing power relations.

Chapter Four - Conclusion

Producing knowledge about and planning implementation of environmental justice is intertwined with power relations which discipline the way it is defined, differentiated, and environed. Through a study of discourse, I explored power relations within and around the concept and implementation of environmental justice (EJ) as equal distribution of environmental benefits, threats and harms and equal access to affect environmental decision making. Applying a postcolonial approach, I showed the limits of the concept of environmental justice and the need and rationale for critical theoretical studies on environmental justice conception and policy implementation. As a critique of the mainstream EJ scholarship based on the work of power theorist, Michel Foucault, and especially the way that his understanding of discourse and power/knowledge have been used in postcolonial theory, this thesis questions the way environmental justice is defined and understood in academic arenas and how this strategic act of defining shapes framings and claim-making processes in the real world. The research consists of two distinct, yet complementary efforts: a) a postcolonial critique of academic environmental justice discourse and b) a postcolonial analysis of United Nations documents on environmental aspects of rebuilding Iraq and Afghanistan. This research was guided by a Foucauldian understanding and theorizing of power, environmental justice, and postcolonial literature.

In the second chapter, I explored the potential and limitations of applying postcolonial theory to environmental justice. In this regard, I drew on the Foucauldian conceptualizations of power/knowledge and discourse, to examine how power operates in EJ contexts. I conducted a content analysis on 109 books and 84 articles that utilized the term ‘environmental justice’ in their titles to explore whether and how they define EJ in their research. I found that the three most referred definitions of environmental justice originate in the Unites States. I applied a

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to analyze how the most referred definitions understand and frame environmental justice. I used Fairclough's approach to CDA and revealed different levels of intertextuality and interdiscursivity in the discourse of environmental justice.

The most cited definitions of EJ address different elements as its main focus and combine various genres, including racism and exploitation of the environment as a way to reproduce or change the order of the discourse of environmental justice. My discussion on the homogeneity and heterogeneity in the discourse of environmental justice addressed the theoretical limitations of the concept in academic discourse. Therefore, this research highlighted the need to expand definitions of EJ to be able to understand and analyze it in different contexts and showed why filling this gap is important. From the viewpoint of this research, ignoring 'diversity' and 'history' as two of the most essential elements of a postcolonial approach in the practice of defining environmental justice deprives us from understanding and considering other important issues in the field of EJ. As such, I showed that there is theoretical potential in applying a postcolonial approach to environmental justice scholarship and criticism. This approach highlights the importance of valuing and taking to account the diversity of peoples and their cultures and histories and the need to rekindle ideas of development, sustainability, and environmental justice.

The third chapter concerns the implementation of EJ by global administrative powers as a practice of environmentalizing nations. I considered this practice as an articulation that affects and is affected by the discourse of sustainable development and as a form of the civilizing mission (which where once appeared in the form of direct and indirect colonialism) that the West takes and represents as its 'responsibility towards the rest' (along with the mission to implement democracy). In this context, I examined how the concept of EJ, is perceived and reproduced by

United Nations (UN) policy makers when reporting the post-invasion situation in Afghanistan and Iraq (2001 and 2003, respectively) and when recommending future actions. I analyzed UN documents on environmental aspects of rebuilding the two US invaded countries to explore how EJ is framed and represented. I applied a modified version of Fairclough's approach to Critical Discourse Analysis and identified three discourses: a) EJ through peacebuilding discourse, or the discourse of 'we are here to fix things up', b) elitist discourse, or the discourse of (you join) *us* versus *them*, and c) conditional silence discourse, or the discourse of 'no responsibility, no blame'. This research demonstrates the potential in studying environmental justice practice from a postcolonial point view. The comparison between the way EJ is defined in the mainstream academic discourse and the way it is perceived and portrayed in the UN policy documents reveals that a logic of exploitation prevails.

In conclusion, through this research I argue that environmental justice is a matter of power. It is a matter of power both as an academic discourse and as a goal designed to be implemented and aimed for. Unfolding the close and structural discursive relationship and relatedness between power and environmental justice leads to a better understanding of how the environment is perceived and portrayed by different actors. This thesis also illustrates that environmental justice is not an asocial and/nor apolitical subject of study or policy and it needs to be always understood with regard to social and political power dynamics. Indeed, those actions that aim for or try to characterize environmental justice as asocial and apolitical issue should be understood as fields for power exercise, too. This research also provides insight into the consideration of the environment as a phenomenon that can be seen not only from a postcolonial point of view, but also as a postcolonial issue. The first part of the research (chapter two) shows how postcoloniality helps to unpack EJ critically. By addressing the importance of

challenging the universality of one definition of EJ, this chapter highlights the problem of the universality of the understandings of the environment and justice in order to show the importance of raising new and diverse definitions of the term environmental justice. However, the second part of the research (chapter three) illustrates why and how these new definitions affect the lives of people. This research suggests that although there are potentials in the application of postcolonial theory to understand and uncover the fundamental power dynamics in EJ, there are barriers in this process. These barriers include (1) the legitimacy associated with the mainstream discourses and genres which makes it 'abnormal' to think and write critically about EJ scholarship, (2) limited access to theoretical critical perspectives produced by non-western scholars (the 'rest') including the fact that not all of them are written in or translated to English, and (3) the breadth of the existing EJ literature which induces the academic public and common-sense belief that there are sufficient definitions, theories, and conceptualizations of environmental justice to cover and understand different forms of environmental injustices in diverse and global contexts.

Contributions

This thesis makes contributions to the existing literature on environmental justice. First, I bring to the fore and explicate the importance of examining and understanding power within and around the notion of EJ. While the literature on EJ mainly focuses on specific examples and particular contexts (usually from the North but always examined with Eurocentric definitions), my research demonstrates the need for critical theoretical studies on environmental justice scholarship that may be possible by adapting a non-western and creative view where different alternatives might be considered. It suggests the importance and need for the recognition of power dynamics that (re)produce specific understandings of the environment and accordingly,

environmental justice. It also raises questions about the universality and inclusiveness of EJ definitions and meanings and illustrates the need to develop alternative definitions of EJ, including a postcolonial definition.

Second, this research project demonstrates that power relations that affect academic definitions and ideational conceptualizations of the term environmental justice contribute to environmental management and therefore, affect people's lives and livelihoods even in distant places.

Third, I highlight the need to examine, from a justice-oriented point of view, 'missions' and actions to rebuild post-invaded countries along with development practices in general. Researchers have paid insufficient critical theoretical attention to the global institutional actions and policies (and power associated with their legitimacy) in post-conflict situations. This thesis is one of the few postcolonial studies that focuses on power relations in an environmental justice context. My analysis provides a postcolonial critique on environmental justice academic discourse and a postcolonial analysis on environmental aspects of rebuilding Iraq and Afghanistan by global administrative powers, and United Nations specifically.

Study Limitations

There are several limitations for conducting this study and addressing its research question. First, related to the first part of the research (chapter two), making and having access to an exhaustive list of all the books and articles that include the term 'environmental justice' was a never-ending task. It was the time-consuming part of the research project to download or order all of the texts and conduct a content analysis over them. It was inevitable that I could not access all books that might have satisfied the mentioned conditions and I may have missed them. Another limitation

of my study was that I needed to choose one definition of environmental justice as my working definition.

Related to the second part of the research (chapter three), it was unrealistic to include socio-cultural practice in my CDA as Fairclough requires for his CDA framework. His approach to CDA highlights the importance of including the processes of production, distribution, and consumption of the texts in the study; yet the time limit to conduct a master's thesis did not allow me to go beyond a text-based analysis. Therefore, I had to modify the way I adapted CDA as excluding an analysis on the socio-cultural practice for United Nations documents involved interviewing not only the writers of the documents, but also those project managers and United Nations staff that use the documents in their projects and predictions.

Future Directions

This thesis suggests two directions for future research. The primary power analysis and critique that arises from this research invites postcolonial researchers to suggest new ways for defining and theorizing environmental justice based on valuing local environmental knowledge and norms in non-western societies. This is also an important theoretical move that might be addressed if environmental sociologists and policy analysts are to explain the relationship between power and environmental justice. Suggesting new definitions of environmental justice based on non-western understandings of 'the environment' and 'justice' can be also addressed in future postcolonial scholarship in the EJ context. Postcolonial scholars might also investigate the neglect of history in the western reactions towards the 'rest' by considering, for example, an Ibn-Khaldunian understanding of history which encourages careful contextualization of historical events. Moreover, the case study illustrates that there are several research projects that can be designed

to critically examine sustainable development and environmental rebuilding practices inspired by justice-oriented scholarship.

In conclusion, this research investigates power relations within and around the notion of environmental justice from a postcolonial point of view. It examines the limitations and potential of adapting postcoloniality to the academic discourse of environmental justice. The first part of this research indicates that environmental justice could and should be seen from a postcolonial point of view. However, the second part of the research explains how implementing environmental justice, primarily in the South and by the Northern countries, is a postcolonial issue and should be analyzed critically in respect to history of colonization and diversity of approaches towards the environment and justice around the globe.

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