

Kitap Değerlendirmesi
Dialogues on Climate Justice

Stephen M. Gardiner and Arthur R. Obst, Routledge, 2022, xxxii + 338 pp

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The destructive and transformative impact of human activity on nature has been known for almost a century. But it wasn't until the late 1970s that humanity recognised climate change as a serious problem. Since then, many important scientific studies have been carried out on climate change and its effects on nature. Different sides of the problem are discussed by scientists and politicians. All these discussions created an awareness about the upcoming climate crisis and the ways to prevent it. However, climate action fell behind all the discussions, and little has been done about solving the actual crisis (Weart, 2008). As an introductory book, *Dialogues on Climate Justice* aims to introduce the reader to the major discussions on the climate issue by aiming to explain the major problems preventing effective climate action and ways to overcome them. In this book, the authors Stephen M. Gardiner (a Professor of Philosophy at the University of Washington) and Arthur R. Obst (a PhD candidate studying

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climate change at the University of Washington) prefer to look at these discussions and possible solutions from an ethical perspective. The book is part of Routledge's Philosophical Dialogues on Contemporary Problems series. Like all the other books in the series, the authors of this book follow in Plato's footsteps and use the philosophical dialogue format to recreate the major debates on climate justice. In this way, readers can experience different discussions, examine various arguments, and develop their own points of view. Because of its unique approach to the subject, this book is a good starting point for those wishing to learn more about the climate crisis. It also serves as a comprehensive guide to further reading.

Each of the six dialogues in the book focuses on a different discussion subject about the climate issue. The events in the dialogues sets in different times and mostly different places. The book follows a character named Hope, who introduces herself as an ethicist (1). In each dialogue, Hope engages in a philosophical discussion with various characters who represent different points of view. Some of these characters are scientific experts who share information about the climate crisis and suggest different methods to solve the existing problems. Some characters represent people living in different parts of the Earth. They emphasize existing and future problems caused by the climate crisis -such as famine, health problems, poverty, and the upcoming destruction of whole civilizations-. Besides these, there is a character who represents climate sceptics and a character representing future generations.

The first chapter makes an introduction to climate science and the problems of climate politics. After introducing fundamental concepts, characters discuss the causes of the climate crisis. They examine Hardin's famous 'the tragedy of the commons' metaphor and Stephen Gardiner's 'perfect moral storm' analysis to provide a basis for ethical discussion. The second chapter focuses on climate scepticism. The characters discuss the reality of the climate crisis, scientific scepticism, and the role of ethics in different methods of climate action. The third chapter focuses on the issue of responsibility. The characters discuss the extent of individual responsibility, the necessity of collective responsibility, and the issue of carbon offsetting. The fourth chapter examines the issue of responsibility on a larger scale. The characters (who are junior climate negotiators coming from all around the world) discuss the different principles of responsibility-sharing in climate action (the beneficiary pays principle, the ability to pay principle, the equal per capita principle etc.) and seek a just way to share the burden. The fifth chapter introduces the concept of geo-engineering, presents different strategies, and discusses on the morality of these strategies. Lastly, the sixth chapter describes a future that climate action has failed. The characters discuss barriers before a successful climate action. By examining the concept of the social discount rate, they find out that conventional economics

cannot solve the problem. After that, they try to find out whether a similar problem exists in contemporary moral philosophy or not.

The book proves that dialogue is the most suitable form of writing for philosophy. Through well-designed dialogues, the authors recreated the major philosophical discussions about the climate crisis and made the reader a part of the conversation. The dialogues are set in carefully designed settings making the reader feel like an observer of a real conversation. The only exception is the sixth chapter, which is set in the 2060s. This chapter uses fiction more than any other. However, the authors depicted this future setting based on the most probable scenarios, based on recent scientific studies. The setting works as a warning of the consequences of continuing with current policies and habits.

The dialogues between the characters are written objectively. The authors carefully present different perspectives and leave the decision to the reader. Despite being the main character of the book, even Hope does not always represent the opinions of the authors. She is not a Socrates-like character who is always right about everything. She is simply the representative of the moral philosophy, bearing the responsibility to bring ethical considerations into the conversation. Each character has a different function in the dialogue and most of them successfully represent their perspectives. However, I believe some characters are not the best possible representatives of the views they support. Hope's father is the most obvious example of this problem. He represents views of the climate sceptics quite well. But in other areas of science, he is not a sceptic at all. He also cares about the world and the future which makes him easy to persuade. These qualities make him a weak opponent for Hope.

In general, this well-written book is an adequate introduction to the climate issue. The definition of fundamental concepts is made quite clear. Different perspectives are expressed and explained sufficiently. As the authors expressed in the introduction, the book covers "only a small fraction of the picture" (xxi). However, the book encourages readers to develop their own perspectives, to engage in dialogue with others and even to write their own dialogues. So, the reader should be aware that this book is only the beginning. It is a good starting point for those who are interested in climate issues (especially for college students). The authors have also designed this book to be a sourcebook for the classroom. In the introduction, they advise lecturers on how to use the book in their courses. With its annotated bibliography at the end, the book can also be useful as a guide to further reading on climate issue.

REFERENCES

Weart, S.R. (2008). *The Discovery of Global Warming (Revised and Expanded Edition)*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.