Qeios

Peer Review

Review of: "Transcendence of Anthropocentrism in Education: Historical and Theoretical Analysis of a Nonhuman World and the Decolonization of Interspecies Education"

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Dr. Hourdakis has written a succinct, impactful piece that tracks the development of anthropocentrism in Greece through the science-related textbooks written and used in schools over the decades. I am not a scholar of Greek school texts, but the overall flavour and description of the development of thinking about the natural world seem consistent with Western neoliberal thought and the bifurcated thinking of the human/nature divide in modern times.

He highlights the ontological discord that has developed as a result, countering the often-cited Aristotelian critique of what he calls the ‘oppressive hierarchy’ and utilitarian view of the natural world, and does so forcefully. He presents a consistent and coherent ontological and pedagogical argument which has developed as an innovative multispecies school framework. I celebrate such an approach and the extent to which it represents a transformation of neoliberal education paradigms.

If any critique is to be put forward, it might be that the overall approach to this new way of knowing and doing education is very cognitively oriented – meaning it does not go far enough. The bringing together of the human and more-than-human worlds includes embodiment, sensory knowing, and ‘being with’ that goes beyond cognitivism. The social and cultural worlds we inhabit are part of the multiple elements of the posthumanist, postmaterialist assemblage in which we live. It follows that sensibilities and knowledges related to culture, sociability, and affect are ways of knowing and interpreting that need to be included when seeking to understand how to be with and flourish in coexistence with the more-than-

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human world. I believe these elements need to be part of the transformation in our education systems and would make a worthwhile addition to this commendable paper.

Declarations

Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.