

Peer Review

Review of: "Let the Transformative Anthropocene Be Positive!"

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This is a thought-provoking and well-written article by Pablo José Francisco Pena Rodrigues and Catarina da Fonseca Lira. I enjoyed reading the article and the authors' arguments about how human activities are having significant, and often negative, impacts on biological and non-biological systems. The authors focus primarily on biological systems and touch on several mechanisms by which certain human activities may influence the composition of ecological networks at all scales of organisation, from the genomic to the biospheric. A focus on urban ecologies, agricultural processes, and habitat fragmentation/destruction further demonstrates the scale and breadth of human impact. I would like to thank the authors for their work.

This article is classed as a 'commentary'. Although I enjoyed the article, I would encourage the authors to tease out more precisely what the contribution is. Is this intended as a high-level review of human influence on the planet, or is there a more normative dimension to the piece? Are the authors attempting to provoke thought, inspire action, or both? And, if so, what kinds of actions do they consider useful in the current situation?

Beyond this, my view is that the concept of the "Bio-Evolutionary Anthropocene" needs to be reviewed and explained more clearly. Moreover, the article almost unequivocally focuses on human agency as a determining factor in the reshaping and transformation of nonhuman organisms and physical environments. A large body of work demonstrates how human activity and evolution is itself influenced by nonhuman organisms and physical environments. The authors certainly touch on this when discussing feedback mechanisms between culture and organism evolution, but this can be extended even to the deeper biology of human life.

In that sense, could a re-evaluation of nonhuman and inhuman agency, as a generative and conditioning force, be one route to a 'good' Anthropocene? For instance, how do the ongoing changes in biological

systems nuance the view of 'human control' and mastery over nature? The GMO story is one example here, as is antimicrobial resistance, which the authors touch on.

Finally, as has been rehearsed many times, it is important to note that the 'Anthropos' is not one homogenous mass. Societies are highly differentiated at different scales of organisation, and this differentiation occurs through the exercise of power and oppression, mainly against women, people of colour, and poor people. The latter are less responsible for the Anthropocene but usually have to bear more of the burden. It is important, in my view, to at least touch on this in any analysis of the interactions between humans and nonhumans and inhuman forces.

Declarations

Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.