

Review of: "The Anthropocene Borderline Problems"

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This essay presents a hot topic that deserves careful attention within scientific communities, ONGs, educational institutions, and governmental spheres. Despite comprising a long-standing discussion, key issues still wait to be attended and/ or need to be re-think. In this sense, the title looks attractive and well-chosen as a first statement.

The Anthropocene, or the recognition/ acceptance of high-magnitude anthropogenic impacts on the Earth system, is already unneglected. As with any uncomfortable idea, particularly for Capitalism, it just needs time and more and more arguments from different sectors of the society (academy, ONGs, private economy, states...) to persuade and promote actions. Fortunately, institutions such as the IPCC are playing a decisive role in this regard.

I echo most of the comments made by other reviews, such as the need for more accurate definitions from the beginning or avoiding broad statements. On top of this, few observations are made below, from a general to a specific point of view.

1) I cannot see (with my background and after reading the text) a significant and somehow "tangible" difference between the Anthropocene as an 'event' or as an 'epoch'. I do note the conceptual distinction that the author states, though I cannot imagine particular socio-political impacts/actions associated with the acceptance/use of one or other term, beyond discussions given among geological stratigraphers. Hence, it would be useful if the author provides -at least hypothetically- any real scenario to illustrate the factual implications of such "different views of human agencies". If the author is referring to paradigmatic problems, this comment is likely meaningless but better to be more explicit when defining and discussing both terms.

2) The debate concerning the idea of "present" (in the ICC) is very attractive and it would deserve to be deepened in the text, maybe under a singular title. It is, undoubtedly, a euphemism for the Anthropocene.

3) Definitions of the three key terms which appear together in the abstract (i.e., episode, epoch, event) should be presented only in the introduction, with the corresponding quotes. Re-definitions or redundancy of phrases related to them, subsequently in the text, may conduce readers to misunderstand differences among those concepts. This comment is also valid for the idea of "borderline problems" and "economy of knowledge". Perhaps better to define only once and at the beginning.

4) Section 2 ("Materials and Methods") should be re-named as "Theoretical issues" or similar. You could also compact some ideas above, in the introduction. Since this text has not a traditional scientific paper structure, there is no need to follow specific sections. Indeed, information under the "Material and Methods" section is not related to methodology -

stricto sensu-, but it would also match better under a “discussion” title. I would break the traditional section scheme and organize the text under different sub-debates derived from the main one (i.e., the false dichotomy between the Anthropocene as an epoch or an episode).

5) The text should be understood in itself. It seems to me that some ideas mainly depend on the information that should be searched in the quote. For instance, this sentence may need references data to be entirely understood: “Scholars of international politics, law and global (Earth System) governance argue that the political institutions of the Holocene are insufficient for the Anthropocene (Biermann 2014) (Vidas et al. 2015) (Dryzek and Pickering 2019).”

6) Finally, the text may gain fluency if abbreviations and footnotes are reduced or completely avoided.