

# Review of: "Planetary consciousness incites probably transcendent feelings and deepens the polarization of worldviews"

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This is an ambitious piece of work. The authors are aiming at a cross disciplinary rendering of a controversial subject, which is bound to be problematic. I congratulate them on daring to venture into this novel territory. There are lots of interesting points, however, some aspects of the paper would do with some improvement. To begin with, the basic premise is not clear: is it a vertical evolutionary view analysing how AI can contribute to rise in planetary consciousness and induce transcendent feelings (spiritual dimension). In that case very little space is reserved for the definition and analysis of the "transcendent feeling", and the argument in favour is not well supported. Or are the authors trying to show the horizontal/linear benefits (but not the downsides) of the human-machine interaction, which is not that novel, as it is widely dealt with in literature these days. There is a disconnect between these 2 dimensions (vertical and horizontal), a mismatch between a scientific and esoteric perspective, and there isn't enough clarity about the objective of the paper. The layout of the paper is complex, and the style is quite verbose. It would have been preferable (in line with the law of "brevity" in academic writing) to give only brief 1-2 sentence explanations of the basic concepts, rather whole paragraphs copied from websites or books. Readers are always able to look up the finer details if they wish. It would help clarity if the basic concepts like global brain, Gaia hypothesis, planetary consciousness, and personal planetary consciousness (it should be either personal or planetary?!), global consciousness, were defined briefly and not used interchangeably. Inclusion of the contributions of prior extensive works like The Global Consciousness Project (<https://global-mind.org/>) would have simplified the current paper, and grouping it around some major themes rather than spreading too thin (and complicate it) would enhance the flow and ease of comprehension. This approach would make the paper much more elegant. Besides, The Global Consciousness Project provides plenty of research data, that is lacking in this paper. They collect data from a global network across 70 host sites spread around the world. This may be a better source of research material than the Global Brain Institute, extensively quoted in this paper, which does not list any research data on their website, and none of their links are clickable.

Another central theme could involve the well-established "field theory of mind", or quantum physics/entanglement. The inclusion of this perspective would help to understand the processes enabling esoteric concepts like passing on transcendent feelings over vast distances or telepathic communication. There is an abundance of credible research data on the above to support this theory looking at vertical evolution of humankind. By vertical I mean higher and higher dimensions developmentally, which is looking at quality, as opposed to more and more accumulation of materials/knowledge (horizontally) that is quantitative in nature and does not usually lead to moral/emotional/spiritual

transformations. Following this line of inquiry could cut out some of the more speculative theories listed in this work. Among these is the presumption that “the planet is acquiring its own superhuman awareness”. This is akin to the Gaia theory, viewing our planet as a self-regulating biological entity, but this work also endows it with “human like” consciousness. It is a bit implausible (although not impossible), and a bit hard to prove. There is no serious attempt to prove it either.

Attributing the internet or ChatGPT with the power of lifting planetary consciousness is a bit far-fetched. Afterall, ChatGPT is not creating any new content to uplift humankind, it merely aggregates existing data available in global information resources. As the authors acknowledge, the internet encourages polarisation, as people selectively seek out information they can personally relate to and thus it creates echo chambers. When the internet was created it was believed that it would enhance democracy and over time would transform societies around the world to be wiser and more accepting. It seems like quite the opposite is happening. “Othering” is rampant on the net and in society. Yes, there is collective information in cyberspace about just about everything, but it is not necessarily making people wiser, or more emotionally intelligent, and did not result so far in a more peaceful world either. The internet is just a mirror of humankind, where the unbridled freedom and lack of control is giving platform to the loudest, richest, and possibly the most negative/aggressive voices. So, it is the case of quantity over quality. A lot of garbage. Therefore, how could it foster transcendental feelings such as compassion and a sense of unity with others, with nature, with God, or the universe – which are the hallmarks of transcendental feelings? Nevertheless, there are some Facebook groups (in a silo) who promote it, but they are mainly preaching to the converted. I doubt that they have a potential to reach those on “the other side”. Ultimately, only a massive planetary survey with “before and after” groups across many decades could definitively prove or disprove whether humankind is developing planetary consciousness that incites transcendental feelings. This survey should also include the 3rd world, not just the 1st world, to give the statement/conclusion planet-wide validity. Speaking about “conclusion”, this final part is totally missing from the body of the paper. With the recommendations at the end, it does not have a customary structure of an academic paper, rather it reads more like a “white paper” aimed at politicians etc. to follow. I’m not sure it that was the aim?

Esoteric features being interwoven with neuroscience, psychology, cybernetics, and other “hard” sciences is making this paper quite controversial, although admittedly to tackle this particular subject matter one has to venture wide and deep. To understand the laws underlying social change of the magnitude postulated by the authors they should look past the techno-optimist view (and literature) and delve into other disciplines like sociology, or futures studies. This perspective could potentially enhance the arguments and would help to explain, understand, or clarify the central ideas better. Somehow I don’t think that the machines alone will save us (from ourselves), or that they are capable of elevating consciousness of the planet or its people (presumably the argument of this paper). Authors like Graves (Spiral Dynamics), Sorokin (Social and Cultural Dynamics), Galtung and Inayatullah (Macrohistory and Macrohistorians), and Botta (Neo-collectivist consciousness), lay out evolutionary theories explaining the progression of humankind on a past-present-future continuum, and would be better equipped to address the “research question” that is represented by the title of the current paper. By the way, there is actually no question asked in this paper. But there is a lot of expectancy bias. The authors admit that they already know the answer, and this research is just gathering enough evidence to support it. Shouldn’t it be the other way around?

