

Metropolises are the Best ‘golden spike’ of the Anthropocene

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Abstract:

I propose that metropolises are the best ‘golden spike’ for the Anthropocene. Based on six selection principles with three ideas, I have identified seven metropolises in seven countries as sites for the Anthropocene’s ‘golden spike’ symbols and museums. I hope that the United Nations will artificially design and build identical Anthropocene’s ‘golden spike’ and museums in these seven metropolises as permanent stratigraphic markers of the Anthropocene.

Bauer et al. (2021) published a correspondence in Nature which proposed that the Anthropocene should be defined as an ‘event’ rather than a geological ‘epoch’. Is the Anthropocene an event or epoch? I prefer it is an epoch. From the selfish point of view of human beings, I think human beings have to exist on the earth forever. The process of human transformation of the earth’s landscape is also everlasting. I therefore believe that the formal definition of the Anthropocene is at a scientific and political juncture. The present scientific methods cannot find the ideal ‘golden spike’ from the stratum.

The Anthropocene is challenging many areas of research in a variety of ways (Crutzen and Stoermer, 2000; Crutzen, 2002; Zalasiewicz et al., 2008; Steffen et al., 2016; Bauer et al. 2021; Zalasiewicz et al., 2021; Gibbard et al., 2022; Voosen, 2022). The concept of the Anthropocene as a new epoch following the Holocene was explored further by the Stratigraphy Commission of the Geological Society of London (Zalasiewicz et al., 2008) leading, in 2009, to the establishment of the Anthropocene Working Group (AWG) within the Subcommission on Quaternary Stratigraphy (SQS) of the International Commission on Stratigraphy (ICS). Since then, the AWG has been working towards a definition of the Anthropocene as a new series/epoch beginning around CE 1950 (Zalasiewicz et al., 2017, 2019, 2021), and appears to have reached an internal agreement that this is marked by the Great Acceleration (Head et al., 2021). At a meeting in Berlin, starting on 18 May 2022, the teams will present the case for their site to serve as the golden spike. Bogs, lakebeds, and sea floors compete to become Anthropocene’s ‘golden spike’ (Voosen, 2022).

Human activities are pushing our earth into a new state of functioning. The cumulative impact of human activities has pushed the earth system away from the conditions that defined the Holocene. The popularity of the term Anthropocene has become one of the most influential and controversial scientific concepts in the new millennium. Changes in the earth’s system caused by human activities are so large that many lasting features have left in the layers of rock on the earth’s surface. The ‘Great Acceleration’ since the 1950s has left traces of human activities all over the world (Shoshitaishvili, 2021.). However, these

characteristics challenge and question the applicability of traditional discipline methods. It is difficult to find satisfactory ‘golden spike’ in the stratigraphic records. Therefore I suggest that metropolises are the best “golden spike” of the Anthropocene.

Six principles for selecting a metropolis to set up a ‘golden spike’:

The pioneer of modern science and technology: the marker is New York in the United States.

The countries with a large population: the markers are Beijing or Shanghai in China and Delhi or Mumbai in India.

The cradle of humanity (*Australopithecus afarensis* was found): the marker is Addis Ababa in Ethiopia.

The cradle of the Industrial Revolution: the marker is London in England.

The largest country by land area: the marker is Moscow in Russia.

The cradle of Western civilization and the birthplace of the modern Olympic Games: the marker is Athens in Greece.

The metropolitan ‘Golden spike’ is marked by three ideas:

People all over the world are members of one big family; Humankind has entered a new era of civilized metropolis; humankind should take the road of peace, stability and sustainable development.

I am looking forward to approving the metropolitan ‘Golden spike’ and museums of Anthropocene

In 2016, the Anthropocene Working Group (AWG), a group of several dozen geoscientists convened by the International Commission on Stratigraphy (ICS), settled on the early 1950s as its starting point. I am looking forward that the International Commission on Stratigraphy (ICS) and the International Union of Geological Sciences (IUGS) can transform ideas, and broaden horizons, and break the old rules, and identify Metropolis as the ‘golden spike’ of the Anthropocene. These ‘golden spike’ and museums of the Anthropocene set up in seven metropolises around the world are a link to unite the people all over the world, and take the dissemination of scientific ideas of the human world as an important goal, and accelerate the integration of the concept of Anthropocene and the political system, and stimulate political change, and eradicate wars that consume human life, and make scientific research serve the society and contribute to the healthy development and civilization progress of human society.

The construction of metropolis ‘Golden Spike’ and museum of the Anthropocene

I hope that the United Nations will coordinate the relevant 7 countries and artificially design and build identical Anthropocene’s ‘golden spike’ symbols and museums in these seven metropolises as permanent stratigraphic markers of the

Anthropocene. The Anthropocene’s museums collect and propagate relevant anthropocene’s information and ideas including many UN initiatives such as the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Climate Agreement.

Conclusion

”Metropolises are the Best ‘golden spike’ of the Anthropocene” is a new idea. The ‘Great Acceleration’ since the 1950s has left traces of human activities all over the world. However, these characteristics challenge and question the applicability of traditional discipline methods. It is difficult to find satisfactory ‘golden spike’ in the stratigraphic records. I think human beings have to exist on the earth forever. The process of human transformation of the earth’s landscape is also everlasting. Therefore I suggest that metropolises are the best ”golden spike” of the Anthropocene.

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