

Enlivenment: Toward a Poetics for the Anthropocene.
Thinking with All Embodied Living Beings. By Andreas Weber.
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What it actually means to be alive seems to be one of the vital issues that have been put on the back burner by humans due to the attention fundamentally paid to a human-centered, efficiency-fixated, and dualistic worldview and practices. Such a divisive worldview and anthropocentric tendencies, escalating and prevailing since the historical Enlightenment, have resulted in the fictitious configurations of both human and nature, which not only have drawn allegedly impenetrable boundaries between the two but also have granted the former a superior position, justifying all atrocities committed against the latter. Such an ill-oriented policy about life and subsequent practices, having already resulted in human-induced climate change, ocean acidification, the significant loss of biodiversity, and the like, turn out to keep fanning the flames of impending extinction-level events that threaten the entire biosphere.

In this vein, Berlin-based biologist and eco-philosopher Andreas Weber sets out to develop a new, enlivening policy of life by rethinking and repudiating our prevailing policy of life that has established rigid boundaries between the human and the more-than-human as a result of denying the undeniable interconnectedness of the two in *Enlivenment: Toward a Poetics for the Anthropocene*. Weber's project of Enlivenment, a playful reconfiguration of "Enlightenment," serves as an alternative perspective about life, brought forth by reconsidering and attempting to reconfigure humans' deep-seated, biasedly configured, dualism-oriented, human-centered worldview. Therefore, Weber's vision is oriented towards enlightening what has been darkened/shadowed by our longstanding, unenlightening worldview. To do so, he seeks to put back the spotlight on the notion of *aliveness*, a fundamental and mediating component of existence shared by all embodied living beings participating in meaning-making processes within the biosphere. Thus, Weber's project of Enlivenment, which he playfully calls "Enlightenment 2.0" and, in a sense, "Romanticism 2.0," can also be playfully called "Aliveness 101" thanks to his worthy

endeavor of elaborating a fresh account of what it means to be fully alive and connected in the name of all embodied living beings.

What makes this volume truly valuable and unique is that Weber's aliveness-oriented project, *Aliveness 101*, not only seeks to challenge the deep-rooted and ironically unenlightening policies of a life based on scientific-only objectivity, rational-only thought, and efficiency-centered approaches that lead to a metaphysics of death, the economization of everything in the service of capitalist agendas, a mechanical conception of both the human and the more-than-human, and so on. It also seeks to bring forth an alternative enlivening perspective that has great potential to reshape our deep-rooted mindset by introducing and/or reminding us of what it means to be fully alive; what it means to be human with a non-dualistic mindset; what it means to be commoners co-existing with all living beings in a co-creative and co-transformative fashion; what it means to be free in and through reciprocal relations; and what it means to be non-anthropocentric through realizing both the unprecedented challenges and opportunities posed by the Anthropocene, and so forth. Thus, its eye-openingness, provocativeness, and favorableness make it possible for one to argue that it could be utilized to initiate a significant shift in our aliveness-defying, life-threatening perspective that is catastrophically causing our entire biosphere to become wide open to imminent extinction-level events, in this way embracing an enlivening perspective could potentially help us avert the acceleration of such matters of life and death in the foreseeable future.

In this sense, it is worth putting primary emphasis on one of Weber's most critically valuable points in his work, which is his effort to draw attention to both our current predicament that has resulted from humans' constant dismissal of aliveness and our potential mindset reset, which may be attained by recentralizing aliveness and embracing an enlivening perspective on life as a sort of an antidote to our centuries-old toxicity. The notion of aliveness is a keystone in Weber's vision of an enlivened picture of life because all his further theses in his project, which is oriented towards encouraging us to let our sterilized worldview and life-destroying practices be substituted with enlivening and life-fostering ones, revolve around the fundamentality of this very notion.

It is worth noting that it is not fair to regard Weber's project that puts forward a new, enlivened picture of the phenomenon of life as a fully novel or earth-shattering one. The reason is that relatively recent findings in many diverse fields in the life sciences—which have paved the way for centuries-old reductionist science to be challenged—have made it possible for a range of critical thinkers interested in biology¹ to rethink, rediscover, and reconceptualize the phenomenon of life within

1 For more see Kauffman, *The Origins of Order*; Deacon, *Incomplete Nature among others*.

the biosphere. However, as a biologist and eco-philosopher, Weber goes beyond providing merely biological discussions about the phenomenon of life and proposes a sort of a political-philosophical perspective (the enlivenment perspective) that is oriented towards urging human beings to rediscover the substantiality and irreducibility of aliveness, connecting all embodied living beings that share it, and recentralizing it at the heart of the living world. That is to say, his advocacy of embracing and integrating his proposed perspective into our everyday lives is predicated on his argument that both the aliveness of those residing in the more-than-human world and the human understanding and experience of being alive have been under threat of extinction. In short, it is shared aliveness that has been disparaged and is now under the threat of extinction, which makes Weber's *Aliveness 101* far more worthy of notice. According to him, one of the subtly life-threatening issues that puts aliveness at risk and rings alarm bells is the capitalist ideology along with its economic agendas that are oriented towards transforming what is alive into economically utilizable resources that can be "fairly" exploited and used for commercial purposes by eliminating the lived experience, shared aliveness, and reciprocal relationships from the picture. In a broader sense, *Aliveness 101* untenderly asserts that our prevailing economic systems and models have failed to be in the service of a life-fostering approach to life.

As a biologist and eco-philosopher, Weber further attempts to draw attention to the toxically established connection between biology and economics that underlies our current bioeconomic ideology, according which human civilization is programmed to operate and designate the most economically efficient ways in which supposedly inanimate, dead matter can be thoroughly organized (p. 53). As Weber argues, biology and economics, two diverse fields, have been merged into one, called bioeconomics predicated on the nineteenth-century Victorian² and/or even pre-Victorian³ observations, understandings, and practices that set forth allegedly unchallengeable facts of life. In this way, our current perspective, prepensely dismissing the reciprocity and relationality of network of our existence, came into existence as a result of the deliberate intertwining of basic principles based on microevolutionary processes and economic theories/models. That is to say, growth, efficiency, competition, and scarcity, which are some of the fundamental categories predicated and privileged by Victorian industrial society and culture, have come to serve as predesignated cornerstones of our prevailing bioeconomic worldview.

In other words, as Weber stresses, our current ideology, based on the scientific-only, rationality-centered rules established centuries ago, is devoid of an understanding of the world's dynamic and poetic processes and leads to a massive

2 See the works of Charles Darwin and Thomas Robert Malthus for more.

3 See the works of Thomas Hobbes for more.

misunderstanding and/or a misinterpretation of them as non-dynamic, non-poetic, inanimate, merely mechanical processes. It inevitably results in an overvaluation of scientific objectivity as the sole foundation of our reality and an eradicated devaluation of shared aliveness and a wide range of mutually creative and transformative relationships among all embodied living beings who actively participate in the meaning-making processes and the co-creation of the shared biosphere. This is why Weber makes it crystal clear that bioeconomics is one of the momentous threats to aliveness and serves as a solid reason why a second Enlightenment is urgently needed.

As Weber articulates, an ontological framework based on bioeconomics has led to a machine-like conception of humans, devoid of sentience, governed by aforementioned bioeconomic categories and engaged in an ever-lasting, individualistic battle of survival. Accordingly, the nineteenth-century economic thinkers' attempts⁴ to amalgamate economic concepts and models with concepts from the life sciences have led to a defective understanding of human beings as *homo economicus*, also referred to as economic, utility-maximizing, non-sentient man. This is why, according to Weber, aliveness experience of being alive of humans has been deliberately put on the back burner by the biased dogmas of our prevailing bioeconomic perspective. His project of Aliveness 101 seeks to highlight the fact that human beings *are* sentient, subjective, creative, expressive, full of physical and existential needs, and active participants in reciprocal and transformative relations with the natural world have been deliberately put on the back burner. In a similar vein, the prevailing utility-enhancing and efficiency-fixated bioeconomic worldview has also led to, as Weber puts it, "an economic ideology of nature" (p. 58). Operating under a metaphysics of death, regarding the natural world as non-living, and disregarding the aliveness shared by all embodied living components of the natural world and rendering them inanimate as well as insentient have become among the standardized undertakings prompted by such an ideology to justify a variety of exploitative agendas. This is why not only does Weber provide arguments regarding why human beings need to sever all ties with such an infertile, one-sidedly utilitarian ideology, but he also draws attention to relatively recent findings in the life sciences that bring forth an emerging new picture of the phenomenon of life. Considering the aforementioned categories that are utilized to draw a picture of how things in the natural world merely mechanically operate, Weber argues that they can easily be proven to be outdated and deficient because nature cannot be fairly said to be efficiency-fixated; it cannot be said to grow unceasingly; competition in the natural world cannot be empirically said to lead to the proliferation of new species; and scarcity in the natural world cannot be said to have enriching effects on biodiversity (pp. 71–75).

4 For more, see Mill, "On the Definition and Method of Political Economy," and Jevons, *The Theory of Political Economy among others*.

In light of all this, it is safe to assume that such an infertile perspective as well as consequent practices that are equally unproductive are fueling the world's accelerating sixth mass extinction, also referred to as the Anthropocene extinction, because the former follows in the footsteps of the infertile tenets of Enlightenment thought and disparages the poetic dimension of our reality. Therefore, Weber's arguments draw attention to the groundlessness of the fundamentality of the aforementioned, flawed dogmas that underlie our prevailing bioeconomic worldview and are quite provocative and have the potential to drive humans to put the long-deferred deconstruction of this ideology in motion sooner rather than later to keep the biosphere alive and fertile. In this way, embracing the alternative life-fostering perspective that Weber proposes can be a plausible way to help avert the acceleration of imminent extinction-level threats that are mostly caused by the dismissal of aliveness, and can serve as a building block for building and maintaining abundantly fertile ways of co-existing with all embodied living beings.

At this point, Weber's Aliveness 101 provides an elaborated, counter perspective called "biopoetics." As a counter perspective that can potentially substitute bioeconomics, biopoetics is based on an emerging new biological paradigm that positions the notion of aliveness at the centre of a living world consisting of living, feeling, desiring, and expressive subjects. In other words, biopoetics, fueled by relatively recent findings in the life sciences, especially in biology, rejects the construal of living beings as non-sentient components of a machine-like natural system and reality. Instead, it proposes to reconstrue all embodied living beings as sentient subjects with a variety of necessities. At this point, it is important to note that French Caribbean critical thinker Édouard Glissant's advocacy of the creativeness and transformativeness of contradictions that are parts of our poetic reality and our self-contradictory living world in his influential book *Introduction to a Poetics of Diversity* (1996) has significant influence on Weber's advocacy of biopoetics. According to Weber, who also stands for the fundamentality of mutually creative and transformative relationships that bring forth our living reality, the "poetics" part of his idea of biopoetics stand for an imaginative practice that seeks to imagine and create a new, enlivening way of life based on the relationality and reciprocity of all embodied living beings. As he puts it, "any thinking in terms of relationship" can be regarded as a poetic practice (p. 11). In contrast with our prevailing bioeconomic worldview that constantly seeks to divide the world into two by focusing solely on rationality and separateness, Weber's proposal of biopoetics is oriented towards focusing on relationality and togetherness among all embodied living subjects to dismantle the dualistic thinking that overlooks and overshadows our poetic, paradoxical lived existence (the enlivened idea of "dependent-freedom-in-incompatibility"—which will be elaborated soon—puts emphasis on both the independency

and interdependency of all embodied living beings and serves as an instance of the paradoxes of our poetic reality that Weber suggests we embrace through embodying an enlivening mindset).

In this regard, Weber draws attention to empirical subjectivity and poetic objectivity, two significant terms that are oriented towards not substituting but enriching/expanding the scope of Enlightenment-style rationality-fixated scientific approaches and their interpretation of the phenomena of life and reality. On one hand, empirical subjectivity moves beyond centuries-old, incomplete interpretations of what life is, predicated on empirical objectivity. By doing so, it strongly advocates the irreducibility of the subjectivity of all embodied selves in interconnected and interdependent relationships. Also, it stresses that the subjective, lived experience of interrelated living beings that are meaning-generating and co-participants of our poetic reality is an integrating element of the lived, felt, and shared existence. On the other hand, poetic objectivity, whose objectivity stems from the fact that aliveness, the integral component of life, is shared by all embodied living beings, needs to be in cooperation with scientific objectivity to draw an enlivened picture of the phenomenon of life.

That is to say, Weber's proposal of an enlivenment perspective, striving for biopoetics, does not seek to dim the significance of scientific objectivity, which is undeniable, but it highlights the latter's solely rational orientation and incompleteness, which needs supplementation with poetic objectivity. Through poetic objectivity, Weber seeks to shed light back on the shared experience of being alive, giving rise to a relational meshwork of existence in a fertile cosmos consisting of living agents who actively participate in meaning-making processes and share basic desires and existential needs such as being, unfolding, connecting, flourishing and so forth. In other words, scientific objectivity and rationality-centered approaches fail to grasp the poetic dimensions of our living reality by suppressing aliveness, the fundamental component of life. Therefore, the collaborative partnership of scientific objectivity and poetic objectivity is desperately needed to depict an enlivened picture of life.

This biopoetic perspective can be fairly regarded as a fascinating lens through which we can call into question our prevailing worldview and centuries-old conceptions of the human and the more-than-human world. Through embracing this perspective, we can also begin to fully recognize and be in alignment with a relational web of existence consisting of a myriad of interrelated and interdependent subjects who are active participants co-creating the poetic dimension of reality within the biosphere. That is to say, the biopoetic perspective, a viable alternative to the prevailing bioeconomic perspective, can serve as a much-needed antidote to the toxic dogmas of the latter, which ends up subtly fueling imminent anthropogenic calamities and extinction-level threats in biological, ecological, and experiential senses.

Furthermore, Weber's *Aliveness 101* promises a new enlivened framework of what it means to be human with a non-dualistic mindset and worldview. As a rejuvenating perspective, the enlivenment perspective urges human beings to rethink the validity of the deficient driving forces of Enlightenment thought, one of which is conspicuously dualistic thinking. In direct contrast with monism, which refers to a single kind of reality predicated on one single principle, and pluralism, which refers to a multiplicity of reality that is constituted by multiple principles, dualism, which has different varieties such as substance dualism (also widely known as the Cartesian dualism advocated by Rene Descartes), basically refers to the view that two essentially opposing principles constitute reality. In this sense, the dualist mode of thinking, which especially reigns in the Western worldview, draws a lamish picture of reality that is supposedly fairly split in two by irrevocably separating basic principles that constitute reality – such as mind and body, human culture and nature, animate and inanimate, and the like, and fanatically valuing one of two supposedly radically different principles/substances over the other. That is to say, reality constituted by the prevailing dualistic worldview is a manipulated one, dividing our world into two and advocating for separateness rather than togetherness.

Considering Weber's investigative association of dualism with capitalism (p. 61), it is safe to assert that Enlightenment thought and capitalist ideology, whose hearts are embedded with dualism, deliberately reinforce the dual spheres of human culture and nature so that humans can objectify and gain justified dominance over the natural world in an attempt to meet their species-specific needs and sustain their unsustainable-in-the-long-run systems rather than acknowledging the life-enabling interdependency between the two and attempting to build reciprocal relationships. Such an either/or mentality consequently overshadows the profoundly poetic aspect of the phenomenon of life while orienting humans to embody a normalized and standardized dualistic mindset so that they can keep defining what life is through categories like comparison rather than cooperation, opposition rather than connection, differentness rather than togetherness, and the like. Dualistic thinking, operating in binary systems, premeditatedly draws rigid boundaries between the human and nonhuman, nature and culture, and so on. As a result, it brings forth an oversimplified and exclusionary narrative concerning what life is and brings down the broad spectrum of life, which is rendered unintelligible by the dualistic mind.

Conversely, Weber's *Aliveness 101* is aimed at eradicating such a longstanding reality-twisting mentality by underscoring the deeply fertile and poetic aspect of reality that cannot be simply divided into the dual spheres of human versus nature. According to Weber, what the living reality is based on is a subjectivity- and interdependency-oriented network of affiliations between human and more-than-human components of the biosphere that are in ceaseless, reciprocal relationships.

In a simpler sense, Weber aims to put emphasis on the long-dismissed notion of the connectedness among all embodied living agents who are in incessant exchange so as to flourish. Such non-negligible interrelatedness, interdependence and cooperativeness leads to togetherness among all embodied subjective selves within a shared biosphere of abundance, fertility, and productivity, which tends to overthrow dualistic thinking by blurring the premeditatedly divisive line between the human and the more-than-human.

That being said, it is fair to assert that Weber's advocacy of an enlivening perspective is considerably relevant and beneficial because it strives for a non-dualistic, all-encompassing, and life-enabling way of living that is contrary to our prevailing perspective predicated on divisive foundations. The enlivening perspective matters because our dualistic (also bioeconomic) perspective prepensely disparages aliveness and perpetuates a non-connective, separatist world order in which humans are kept being urged to treat what is alive as inert matter to keep all sorts of exploitative agendas of man-made systems on track. Such a continual dismissal of aliveness has already played a crucial role in bringing about our current predicament and seems to keep fanning the flames of impending catastrophes, which are not inevitable. Weber's project becomes more relevant for that matter because our world, wounded by the divisive mindset, attacking aliveness, can be healed and revitalized by severing all ties with this toxifying either/or mentality, embracing and embodying the enlivening worldview, and recentralizing and honoring the notion of aliveness, as *Aliveness 101* suggests.

Through refusing to be governed by the dualistic mind, as Weber keeps arguing, humans with a non-dualistic mindset can manage to comprehend not only the poetic dimension of the living existence but also what it means to be "commoners" (p. 112). Actively participating in unceasing negotiations and renegotiations of necessities concerning all living embodied selves and building reciprocal as well as life-enhancing relationships with the animate Earth are regarded by Weber as common undertakings of commoners. In this vein, Weber's perspective strives for reconfiguring our existing understanding of the economy by configuring an enlivened idea of the economy that he calls "the economy of the commons" (p. 90). As Weber's *Aliveness 101* outlines, the recentralization of aliveness at the core of the living existence makes it possible for the economy of the commons to thrive and grapple to position reciprocity as one of the pivotal principles of an enlivening way of life (also of an enlivened economy) for the sake of all commoners.

Significantly, Weber's proposal of a non-reductionist and life-enabling economy of the commons holds nature up as an exemplary model of "an authentic, primal commons" (p. 103), which he also calls "natural anticapitalism" (pp. 89–109), consisting of living agents-in-relation, ceaselessly fostering reciprocal relationships between one another, which enables more aliveness.

Hence, a commons-based economy plays a significant part in annulling dualism because it focuses on restoring aliveness and reciprocity, vital and mediating components of life, at the center of not only a new, enlivened way of life but also a new, enlivened picture of economics. In this vein, Weber provides a range of examples of commons-based economies witnessed in some of the pre-modern tribes and indigenous cultures (pp. 91–94) in an attempt to demonstrate that an economy based on the commons dismantles dualism because the line between the user and the used is blurred. Instead, nothing can be rightfully owned, and/or colonized, and/or exploited to meet any sort of economic interest/fantasy of the allegedly superior participants of the biosphere. As Weber emphasizes, “everything is open source” (p. 101) in a shared biosphere of copiously fertile, productive, and reciprocal relationships. Therefore, in such an enlivened economy that is in alignment with the natural world surrounding us, all embodied selves-in-interrelation that serve as active co-creators of the living biosphere engage in the continuous negotiation of necessities and reciprocal relationships that enable more life. In other words, as Weber keeps arguing, the annulment of dualism can be achieved by a commons-based economy, guaranteeing reconfigured roles for all selves-in-interrelation. This way, human beings can come to comprehend what it means to be commoners who are not detached from the natural world. By rethinking and reorganizing the ways in which they are connected to the animate Earth, humans can come to terms with the fact that they are already commoners/active participants of a relational web of existence and the main way to keep the shared biosphere alive, fertile, and hospitable to all living beings is to begin to build reciprocal and life-enhancing relationships with all embodied selves-in-interrelation with whom we already share the basic desire of meeting our metabolic as well as existential needs.

That is why, despite showing a subtle tendency to mystify/idealize nature by suggesting that man-made systems/models need to be inspired by the exemplariness of the natural world, or as he puts it, natural anticapitalism, Weber’s proposal of an enlivening, non-dualistic commons-based economy can be regarded as a viable alternative to the deadening, dualistic bioeconomy. It can be said that the former’s advocacy for active engagement, connection, cooperation, and reciprocity among all embodied, interrelated, and interdependent living beings strives for togetherness, which can have a potentially preventive impact on imminent extinction-level events (in biological, ecological, climatic, and experiential terms), fueled by the latter’s fixation on separateness.

Furthermore, Weber, through his vision of an enlivened world, brings forward another enlivened, solidarity-oriented idea, which he calls “freedom-in-and-through-relation” (p. 106). As opposed to the longstanding attention paid to the alleged normalcy of total freedom of the individual, Weber’s proposal of an enlivened

idea of freedom draws significant attention to the fundamentality of negotiations as well as renegotiations among embodied selves, co-existing with and depending on one another to thrive fertile. Considering the fact that all are co-creators and co-participants of a relational web of existence, Weber's project urges humans to reconsider what it means to be free in a conventional sense and to reorient them to grasp what it means to be free in relation to one another. Through his advocacy for an enlivened idea of freedom arising from continuous negotiations and alignment between humans' species-specific needs with those of embodied selves residing in the more-than-human world, Weber not only disparages the Enlightenment idea of freedom arising from individualistic and absolute autonomy granted to humans but also draws attention to "a precarious balance between autonomy and relatedness to the whole" (p. 107). Although it is fair to regard humans as independent agents, as Weber keeps arguing, it is unfair to turn a blind eye to the undeniable dependence of humans on the natural world and interdependence between the two. Weber's tendency to disregard the problematic understanding of freedom springing from the individual's complete autonomy makes it possible for him to regard integrating freedom springing from being connected to and in ceaseless negotiations and mutually transformative relationships with all embodied selves as one of the core principles of his project of enlivenment.

It is worth noting that Weber's enlivened idea of freedom springing from connectedness, relatedness, and interdependence is not completely a unique one, as Weber himself gives Édouard Glissant, one of the influential French Caribbean critical thinkers, credit for his emphasis on the significance of beginning to think in productive paradoxes, bringing forth the poetic dimension of life, which can allow one to grasp the integrating idea of "dependent-freedom-in-incompatibility" (p. 160) in the living world, and act accordingly. Nevertheless, Weber's endeavor to limit the individual's self-appointed limitless and absolute autonomy by underscoring the cruciality of relatedness through integrating his enlivened idea of freedom into our enlivened-to-be worldview is favorable, vital, and worthy of appreciation. It can be suggested that, in this way, humans who unlearn to strive for absolute freedom and are most likely to reconcile with the natural world and grasp the integrating principles of the relational and interdependency-oriented network of existence that they are a part of are less likely to keep adding fuel to the flames of potential catastrophes through completely individualistic and anthropocentric activities.

At this point, it can be inferred from Weber's *Aliveness* 101 that embracing an enlivening perspective goes hand in hand with grasping what it means to be non-anthropocentric because just as the former is oriented towards enabling more aliveness within the living world, the latter, non-anthropocentrism, is similarly oriented towards reorienting humans to build and sustain more life-living relationships with

all embodied living beings and the animate Earth. Hence, non-anthropocentrism can be regarded as a significant component of Weber's proposal of an enlivening perspective on life because each and every deeply rooted problematic matter that Weber seeks to substitute and/or supplement is directly related to the longstanding anthropocentrism that is called into question by a wide range of critical thinkers.⁵ Considering the lack of life-giving quality of our prevailing bioeconomic, dualistic, (and anthropocentric) perspective, which, according to Weber, fans the flames of our current predicament, Weber's proposal of an enlivening, biopoetic, non-dualistic, (and non-anthropocentric) perspective could be a stepping-stone toward building a sustainable future and sustaining life-giving relationships with all the other animate co-participants and co-creators of the animate Earth.

At this point, one other relevant matter Weber addresses in his work, which is also related to anthropocentrism, is sustainability issues. It is worth noting that Weber does not seek to overlook the considerable progress that has been made relatively recently related to providing solutions to ongoing sustainability issues. However, the lack of full effectiveness of existing solutions, according to Weber, stems from the fact that humans have failed to position the human race and all embodied living beings residing in the more-than-human world on the same plane because of the assumption of their superiority, and acting accordingly (thinking and acting anthropocentrically) (pp. 34–35). Therefore, existing solutions to sustainability issues have been provided by humans who have failed to get to the bottom of the problem by realizing their toxic perspective and shifting it entirely, which is why they are only temporarily effectual solutions. As Weber keeps arguing, attaining long-lasting sustainability directly depends on how life-fostering the relationships among all living beings within the living biosphere are and will be and how aliveness-driven human practices are and will be. That being said, the stepping-stone for building and preserving sustainability in the long run is, according to Weber's *Aliveness 101*, a much-needed recentralization of aliveness, connecting and mediating the components of life, shared by all embodied living beings inhabiting the animate Earth, at the heart of our relational web of existence.

In this regard, Weber's critique of current sustainability policies is solid and agreeable because most of the crises that they have set out to put an end to still exist and have not taken a turn for the better, while many of them have even taken a turn for the worse. Also, it can be said that studies and/or practices carried out in certain fields such as geoengineering, also known as climate engineering, and terraforming do not seem like fully non-anthropocentric endeavors. Considering humans' prevailing dualistic and anthropocentric worldview, it seems like such endeavors

5 See the works of Amitav Ghosh, Christophe Bonneuil, Dipesh Chakrabarty, Kate Marshall, Tobias Boes, and Timothy Clark to name a few.

are made by humans who have not experienced a shift in their perspective but still assume that as a supposedly superior species they can assume control over nature through a range of advanced, man-made technologies and maintain so-called order. In other words, solutions to sustainability issues seem to have been provided by humans who have not fully realized that humans' failure to think and act like interdependent participants in a relational web of existence consisting of embodied living beings transforming humans and transformed by them is one of the major issues that caused current the sustainability crisis to emerge in the first place. Therefore, Weber's proposal of reorienting ourselves towards a new enlivening perspective can be beneficial for getting to the root of our current sustainability crisis, but how to attain long-lasting sustainability is blurry due to the lack of provision of an adequate number of concrete examples and/or models in the text, and is consequently in need of more thorough/less abstract elaboration.

Despite the challenges of the Anthropocene, our current human-dominated epoch, and its fuel-adding impact on our current predicament, as discussed so far, Weber's project also contributes to the Anthropocene debate by noting a silver lining that it has unanticipatedly created. It is worth highlighting that Weber's emphasis on some opportunities that have transpired with the Anthropocene is not a unique or groundbreaking contribution to the literature because this has already been addressed by a range of critical thinkers who are interested in environmental and/or Anthropocene studies.⁶ Nevertheless, Weber critiques optimism and the utopian aura surrounding the current thinking of the Anthropocene while underscoring the lack of understanding of and/or emphasis on "mutuality that ignites our aliveness" (pp. 8–9). That is why, the silver lining that Weber addresses can be regarded as a stimulating contribution to the ongoing debate because he points out that the Anthropocene can refocus our attention on the ways in which we are connected to the animate Earth and to the mediating quality of aliveness shared by all living beings. Considering the fact that a wide range of relatively current crises, including ecological and climatic crises, the loss of biodiversity, the planet's accelerating sixth mass extinction, are anthropogenic and the unprecedented outcomes of such anthropogenic crises pose extinction-level threats to both the human and more-than-human world, the Anthropocene paves the way for humans to fully recognize mutually creative and transformative relationships among all interdependent living beings within the biosphere. In other words, the Anthropocene comes to serve as unprecedented evidence that unearths the ways all embodied living beings, clearly including humans, are dependent on one another to be alive, to survive, to flourish, to meet their metabolic as well as emotional needs in a relational web of existence. Therefore, Weber's standpoint in the Anthropocene debate is favorable, influential, and eye-opening.

6 See the works of Timothy Clark and Timothy Morton to name a few.

In light of this, it can be said that one last aspect of Weber's project that makes it valuable is its lack of a utopian nucleus. On one hand, Weber's vision does not convey utopian hope because it is not oriented towards drawing an enlivened picture of life, attained through stability, which is a dystopian element disguised as a utopian one in classical utopian thought. Instead, it strives to build and maintain an enlivened way of being and living in which all embodied living beings continuously negotiate and renegotiate their life-fostering relationships with one another, which puts stability (and perfectibility) outside of the picture (p. 16). On the other hand, considering the conventional conceptions of utopia and utopianism as a sort of social dreaming, envisioning radically different, relatively better, and mostly unattainable ways of life in fictitious and far-off lands,⁷ Weber's envisioning is not utopian because his vision of integrating reciprocity-oriented, commons-based systems and models into our everyday lives is not an unattainable and/or unsustainable one; it is gradually unfolding in the present (p. 113).

To conclude, Weber's project/vision of the much-needed integration of the enlivenment perspective, a new, alternative political-philosophical perspective, into our ways of being and living is eye-opening, beneficial, provocative, and somewhat incomplete. It is widely eye-opening because Weber seeks to invite us to reevaluate our prevailing worldview by rethinking the ways in which concepts from our biological observations have been intertwined with our economic theories/models and both have dissolved into a toxic cocktail called bioeconomics with which human beings have made toasts to the allegedly inexorable facts of life and dismissed the deeply poetic aspect of it for centuries. His advocacy of the cruciality of an enlivening perspective for an enlivened world is profoundly beneficial because he invites us to come to embrace a life-fostering, all-encompassing, and open-ended rather than a utopian perspective, which has great potential to reorient us towards reclaiming our own aliveness, reacknowledging that of all embodied living beings, reconciling with the natural world, renouncing our alleged right to claim complete autonomy by recognizing an enlivened idea of freedom in connection, and rebuilding reciprocity- and negotiation-oriented relationships with all embodied selves to honor and help sustain what is alive. Weber's project is also thought-provoking because of the engagement in the Anthropocene debate and suggestion that, despite its unprecedentedly life-threatening effects, the Anthropocene, from an enlivening perspective, can be quite beneficial for helping us recognize and then reorganize the ways in which we are connected to the animate Earth. Thus, it is a vitally provocative project; it urges us to take certain steps after coming to realize that everything he critiques throughout his work, including scientific-only objectivity, bioeconomics, dualism, anthropocentrism, and the like, is part and parcel of our current predicament and

7 Sargent, "The Three Faces of Utopianism Revisited," 3.

adding fuel to the flames of imminent, anthropogenic extinction-level events in every possible dimension. His standpoint in the Anthropocene debate makes it possible to deduce from his work that such anthropogenic events are not inevitable—they are likely to be averted by developing an enlivening perspective that advocates for the recentralization of aliveness at the heart of our being, living, and doing within the living biosphere and helps us recognize the ways in which we actively participate in a relational web of existence consisting of embodied selves that depend on each other to keep flourishing. Having said that, it is a somewhat unclear and/or an incomplete (and mostly an abstract) project because it is blurry how we should successfully enact and integrate his proposal of the enlivenment perspective into each and every aspect of our lives, apart from embracing a radical shift in our deep-rooted mindset. Overall, it is truly a valuable work due to its primary focus on bringing humans and all embodied living beings residing in the natural world onto the same plane by urging the former to begin to think in a new, enlivening fashion and engage in full cooperation with the latter to keep the animate Earth alive, fertile, and hospitable for the sake of all.

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