

The Poetics of the Anthropocene

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It is suggested that we have now entered a new epoch in the Earth's history, namely the Anthropocene. This suggestion, still disputed among scientists but already applied in arts and critical theory, highlights the role of *Homo sapiens* as a geological force. Humans are altering the crust, the climate, the biosphere, the cryosphere, and the oceans. The complex environmental and societal effects of these alterations require a cultural analysis as anthropogenic environmental problems, the scarcity of natural resources, and the future changes in the distribution of these resources are always connected to culture (as shared meanings and forms of life), and they are conceptualized in and experienced through cultural texts.

“The Poetics of the Anthropocene” is a project focused on literature and philosophy about the traces humans are leaving on the planet. Thematically, these traces are approached through the motifs of waste, pollution, and noise—that is, harmful or distorting excessive materials and signs induced by human activities and depicted or discussed in poetry, fiction, and philosophical literature. The question of traces is also understood in terms of textual materiality and poetics. In poetry, the conscious play with typography and distinctive signs and markings is often a potent aspect of environmentalist poetics.

The primary literary sources of the research are works of Finnish contemporary poetry and fiction. The goal of the project is to make visible the Finnish literary history and poetics of waste and noise. To do this, the project will begin with a theoretical inquiry into the ideas and ideologies of waste, pollution, and noise.