Letting the proverbial genie out of the bottle is bad. Killing the genie after it has leaped out of the bottle is even worse. Now, and perhaps forever, the bottle is going to be empty. Our culture, to a significant extent, is a thoroughly disenchanted one. Apart from a *passé* and largely passing minority, notions of sacredness and divinity have mostly disappeared from the leading conceptual horizon. As Nietzsche famously asserted, God is dead—and it was us who killed Him. Academia, for one, cultivates a veritable graveyard of past 'irrationalities' and serves as an imposing bastion of practical atheism, especially in the Nordic countries, where the intellectuals' secular outlook is part and parcel of the broader conventional wisdom. On Sundays, people no longer go to church. Instead, they go to the shopping mall.

Yet, hence joining a growing chorus of perplexed educated wanderers (e.g., Arne Næss, Lauren Greyson, Brendan Myers), Huijbens' latest book reveals a thinking and feeling man who, faced with the depths and the vastness of the life-destruction brought forth by the ongoing human-made climate crisis, rediscovers a genuine sense of desecration and with it, hidden spiritual urges and half-grasped religious insights. His picture of the current state of the world is, in point of fact, worthy of the Apocalypse:

[W]e are all caught up in the climate crisis together and through globalised capitalism a veritable race to the bottom is unfolding where the rich simply float on top of the vortex funnelling the rest to a future of climatic ruin with no safeguard in the Enlightenment promises of technological fixes, public provisions of welfare or other promises of the Modern era. (119)

His picture of the correct relationship between humankind and Earth is, for its part, worthy of some time-honoured indigenous tradition, or of a younger New-Age creed:

"[A] non-social and more-than-human entity is making itself felt and heard: our planet Earth." (152)

[…]

"In our continual conativity with nature through the solutions we propose, we support nature's immanence. Adding deep time and the Earth itself as immanent to us, life on Earth becomes truly humbling." (153)

[…]

"Being kind to earth is for me not about reversing progress and that which has been gained by the human technological acumen. We need to judiciously build on the past, but at the same time make space for an expanded repertoire of reason, science and humanism, and moreover the Earth itself." (159)

As Huijbens himself admits:

"[O]ur current imagination and vocabulary betrays us. Therefore we need to reinvent the shamans of old, killed by the Moderns." (110)

Most of the book comprises a vast array of loose reflections about insightful theoretical influences and inspiring personal anecdotes (or "vignettes") explaining, at least in part, how Huijbens has come to think about the Anthropocene and the future of our suffering planet in ways that rub rather cruelly against the received categories of contemporary science, his own field of geography included. As Huijbens notes:

"The language of science and technology tends to obfuscate th[e human] connection [to Earth], or shroud it in darkness through the violence of abstraction and compartmentalisation of the challenges to be addressed." (111)

Thus, Chapters 1 and 3 list and discuss a plethora of learned suggestions (e.g., Latour, Olsson, Deleuze, Žižek and Eco) that can make us think of the human condition in the natural as well as cultural world that we inhabit, both individually and collectively, as a matter of "fluid being" or, paying due homage to some trendy '-isms' of our day, "post-humanism" (9 *et passim*) and fancy new forms of "empiricism" (21 *et passim*). As Huijbens writes:

"[W]e are very much creatures of the making of the strictures imposed upon us by a long history of decisions and things settled and seemingly fixed. Revealing their inherent fluidity does indeed provide 'wiggle room' and places emphasis on the moments of encounters, the abysmal lines where one becomes other or something else through our practices of naming and pointing and being believed in doing so." (31)

Icelandic echoes of this fluid conception of being constitute the bulk of the materials gathered in Chapter 2 and, to a lesser extent, Chapter 4, both of which emphasise how geology itself is indeed very mobile in Huijbens' country of birth, and how substantial human progress can be obtained without devastating the planet, e.g., by harvesting clean energy sources and by promoting "slow tourism" (104).

The fundamental challenge to the positive Icelandic experiences, and to life on Earth in general, is identified and debated in Chapter 4. The challenge being, perhaps unsurprisingly, the neoliberal institutions that pervade our world, both in tangible terms (e.g., the copious amounts of advertised junk around which orbits much of the world's economy) and in intangible terms (e.g., the acquisitive and emulative mentalities cultivated by our cultures and exacerbated since the times of mass consumerism).

Chapter 5 adds to the mix the positive experiences coming from another European country, where Huijbens is currently active as an academic: the Netherlands. With its long and complex history of transformation and protection of the land, this nation shows how destructive peat-mining turned into a bucolic bliss of sorts, protected by technologically innovative windmills "to propel pumps that would drain water" and avoid flooding (124), and now inspiring clean-energy transformations that, like the ever-present bicycles, are significant examples of a frequently sensible approach to the environment, both materially (e.g., as means of transport that do not require fossil fuels) and immaterially (e.g., as cultural symbols of successful political campaigns for a greener way of life).

Chapter 6 concludes the book by attacking once more the aforementioned fundamental challenge to life on Earth:

"Roughly framed 'neoliberal discourses' have been adept at naturalising environmental degradation as a collective responsibility that demands individual, privatised responses mostly to be attained through consumptive choices. According to dogmatic market logic it is up to me to seek out the 'earth-friendly' chocolate and if enough of us do, it will earn its place at the supermarket checkout." (142)

Much more is needed, as a matter of fact, according to Huijbens, who reviews and assesses a number of proposed solutions to the ongoing climate crisis. In particular, Huijbens

expresses his genuine doubts about "green ideas" that do not aim at "reducing our consumption or any kind of slowing down or reduced demands." (145) *Au contraire*, he advises "a further and deeper reorientation of our valuing and mindsets, rather than a simple redistribution of wealth and social egalitarianism." (152)

Like a river of lava, or a glacial flood, Huijbens' prose is far-reaching, unstoppable, and "meandering" (78). The logical structure and argumentative progression hereby reconstructed are certainly present in the book, but they require a fair amount of careful reading and patient ingenuity in order to be grasped. The book is, if anything, a very personal and uncommonly free-flowing account of how a secular Nordic geographer may come to realise that we need to show "responsibility, kindness and care" (162) towards Mother Earth, yet without possessing theological (e.g., siblinghood in God-the-Parent) and/or philosophical categories (e.g., life-value onto-axiology) that allow for the conceptualisation and clarification of the sacred and/or spiritual domain, to which Huijbens' concerns truly belong.

Without categories of this ilk, it is unlikely that Huijbens may ever ground successfully powerful universal normative and axiological claims such as the following: "at our current juncture we can well afford to prioritise the wellbeing of others. How well we can do that will indicate to what extent we can be true to the Earth itself." (158) Perhaps, this book is a first step in a much longer and much more complex journey.