



EGUsphere, referee comment RC1  
<https://doi.org/10.5194/egusphere-2022-577-RC1>, 2022  
© Author(s) 2022. This work is distributed under  
the Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 License.

## **Comment on egusphere-2022-577**

Anonymous Referee #1

---

Referee comment on "Brief communication: Climate science as a social process – history, climatic determinism, Mertonian norms and post-normality" by Hans von Storch, EGU sphere, <https://doi.org/10.5194/egusphere-2022-577-RC1>, 2022

---

I find this a slightly difficult paper to review. I have suggested major corrections, but it would be useful to have a bit more context as to why the article was requested. The subject matter is not new and has been written about by several people, notably Mike Hulme, Sheila Jasanoff, David Livingstone, Matthias Heymann and the author himself. The content is therefore not new. This isn't in itself necessarily a problem, as the author implies that the editors specifically asked him to submit this journal for a reader based in non-linear dynamics. I can certainly see a useful re-writing of this relatively well-trodden path for an audience with this training, but I don't necessarily see that here.

At the very least the piece requires a re-write as there are several editorial issues. I've made a few specific questions below. More significantly, the conclusions seem to fade away. I was expecting from the abstract an argument along the lines of Hulme's 2011 paper on climate reductionism, i.e. that the politicisation of science and scientisation of politics has meant that determinism has appeared again, perhaps because scientists are now claiming legitimacy to speak about climate-related issues that do not match their 'CUDO' training. However, this argument isn't specifically made, and the argument instead comes to quite an abrupt end.

Some minor points:

Line 46 – it would be good to add a little more detail about 'the catastrophe of racial determinism and colonialisms' and how this related to climatology. It would perhaps also be useful to explain why the Second World War was the apex of this thinking. This also isn't really explained when it comes around again in the narrative, around line 95.

Line 113 – should be 2021

Line 117 – the narrative takes quite a shift here, from a historical account to a discussion of epistemology in climate science. At the very least this needs to be signposted

Lines 148-158 – can you add references here (e.g. for the 'gap model')?