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"'Bringing Humanity Full Circle Back into the Sea': *Homo aquaticus*, Evolution, and the Ocean"

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Futurists have recognized the ocean's depths as resembling space in its promise as a setting for human success, survival, or redemption. Imagined futures of the ocean have been intertwined with reflections on human evolution and what it means to be human. In 1962 Jacques Cousteau announced *Homo aquaticus*, a vision involving both technological intervention and natural adaptation to intentionally evolve a species of human to live underwater. The story of *Homo aquaticus* reveals the extent to which humanity's future has become tied to the ocean. This article historicizes the casual and common understanding that humans are connected to the sea by investigating the precursors to the *Homo aquaticus* idea, the attempts to realize this prediction through technology, and the legacies emerging from it. *Homo aquaticus* and its allied visions, while animated by older traditions, flourished in the historical context of intensely optimistic post–World War II hopes for human exploitation of the ocean, especially its depths. In the face of environmental change and awareness, subsequent versions reflect yearnings merely for survival of the human species. The origin, shape, and fate of the *Homo aquaticus* idea offer insights into our human relationship with the rapidly changing ocean environment, while its persistence may reflect hope for prospective solutions to encroaching, human-caused disasters. (Abstract)

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