

The Anthropocene: from boundaries to bonds

Interdisciplinary crossovers in knowledge development

CONFERENCE: 19-20 October 2023
CONVENERS: Olga Tokarczuk Ex-Centre, Academic Research Centre,
University of Wrocław,
Academia Europaea Wrocław Knowledge Hub

Our conference aims at investigating the potential of inter/trans/multidisciplinary alliances in research on the Anthropocene and the importance of such disciplinary border-crossings for producing knowledge that can not only meet the challenges of the scientific kind, but also be transferrable to the social sphere. The Anthropocene defies the cognitive, imaginative, affective and ethical systems underlying our perception and understanding of reality. We propose to see the knowledge on/of the Anthropocene as a borderland where many turning points (crises) meet and coalesce. Such a perspective exposes the necessity to think beyond the dualisms of science/humanities. The project seeks spaces for mutual inspirations and new bonds between systems, methods and classes governing science and knowledge.

In particular, we invite crossing disciplinary boundaries. While expert knowledge remains at the core of examining the Anthropocene, its resultant commitment to devise guidance for policy makers and to develop social awareness based on verified knowledge requires involvement from other fields of expertise. Scholarship tackling the Anthropocene spans, apart from earth sciences, social science, the humanities, human geography, and other disciplines. By bringing together scholars from many areas of research inquiry, the seminar aims at exploring the possibility of inter- and multidisciplinary scholarly work on developing accountable knowledge that needs to be subsequently translated into social and cultural narratives. How do we cooperate across the boundaries within academia, in politics and social organizations, as we strive to address the Anthropocene?

That the Anthropocene poses an unprecedented challenge urging political action at global and local levels has been already evidenced by activists, NGOs, political groups and researchers across the world. Governance models so far have been involved in the crucial conflict between the harshness of data forecasting catastrophic scenarios and the fear to decrease consumption and extraction of resources. How do we create new ways of relating (intra- and interspecies) and turn the shattering experience of boundary-crossing into active bond-making through science, politics and various forms of activism?

We want to explore what narratives are being developed to provide viable solutions at the level of politics and governance, including institutions for educating society and expanding the civic sense of responsibility and new planetary awareness. What new lexicons are being developed to accommodate the cognitive, ethical and ontological challenges of the planet in crisis? What new forms of thinking, doing and telling do we need to create a new semiotics of crisis, catastrophe, accountability, agency, and hope that cannot be contained within the known paradigm of human mastery over of the earth? How do we confront the limits of our understanding and devise new ways of sense-making in light of (rather than despite) the Anthropocene? How to promote knowledge based on the idea of reciprocity?

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The topics and questions below, by no means exhausting the range of concerns, encourage an inter- and multi-disciplinary reflection on the Anthropocene. We invite individual presentations, thematic panels and roundtables on the following:

- **The geopolitics of modernization:** capitalist (Capitalocene) and socialist (communist) models; extractivism and coloniality
- **Cartographies of Anthropocene-generated displacements**
- **Anthropocene(s) in critical thought, arts and cultural narratives:** apocalyptic narratives; ecomodernism and narratives of hope; the role of art in imagining better futures; the Anthropocene art
- **Social temporalities (political, cultural, etc.) and planetary (geological) temporalities**
- **Programs promoting climate care:** forms of intervention, the appealing value, viability of plans, translationality/transferrability of premises
- **Local struggles and resilience:** decarbonization, transition to renewable energy, grassroots and cross-border practices of sustainability and restoration
- **Anthropocene pedagogies:** how and what to teach about the Anthropocene to various social and age groups?
- **Affective Anthropocene:** anxiety, grief, mourning, denial, hope
- **Indigenous knowledges as models for sustainability and environmental justice struggles**
- **Planetary of ecological imagination and thought vs. globalism of consumer markets**
- **New ontologies:** ecological catastrophe as an example of “hyperobjects”; materials and their processes; interdependencies of life and non-life; non-human (more-than-human) agencies and the possibilities of new relationality for the human, the non-human and more-than-human

Keynote speakers:

- **Professor Dipesh Chakrabarty**, University of Chicago
- **Professor Orit Halpern**, TU Dresden
- **Professor Seán Hand**, University of Warwick
- **Professor Jeremy David Bendik-Keymer**, Case Western Reserve University
- **Professor Peter Kraftl**, University of Birmingham
- **Professor Valerio Lucarini**, University of Reading, MAE
- **Professor Juan Carlos Cruz Suárez**, Stockholm University
- **Professor Mark Williams**, University of Leicester
- **Professor em. Jan Zalasiewicz**, University of Leicester

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Scientific Board:

- **Professor em. dr. Lars Walløe**, University of Oslo, MAE
- **Professor Göran Bolin**, Södertörn University, MAE
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- **Prof. Mark Williams**, Leicester University
- **Dr. Benjamin Dew**, Coventry University
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Conference
website:



Important information:

- There is no conference fee.
- The Organizers may offer a small travel refund to a limited number of PhD students and emerging scholars.
- The conference will take place at the University of Wrocław, the venue tba. Wrocław is a beautiful city in south-west Poland.
- Deadline for abstract proposals (20 min individual papers; 60 min panels; 45 min roundtables): 31 May 2023.
- Please send abstract/panel proposals with a short bio-note to: anthropoceneconf@gmail.com
- Conference website:
https://www.ae-info.org/ae/Acad_Main/Events/The%20Anthropocene%20from%20boundaries%20to%20bonds