

Writing history in the Anthropocene

PhD Workshop with Sandra Mass (Ruhr-Universität-Bochum), organized by Peter van Dam (Universiteit van Amsterdam) and Mario Daniels (Duitsland Instituut Amsterdam), in cooperation with the DAAD

Amsterdam, April 26, 2024

While geographers have debated for quite some time whether the Anthropocene as a geological epoch started 500, 250, or just 70 years ago, historians have only just begun to notice the epoch. Broadly defined as the era in which humans have come to constitute a geological force capable of impacting the global climate, the concept among other things challenges us to rethink the ways in which historical actors related to their environment, to people in other parts of the world, and to reconsider the timescales in which we situate our histories.

How do we relate to the Anthropocene in our scholarship? Does the concept inspire or terrify us? Do we employ it as a conceptual framework, a loose collection of questions, or as a counterpoint to our own approach? During this workshop, we explore what the Anthropocene means to us in writing histories. We thus probe what it means to write history at this moment of confluence of many environmental crises, to what extent present concerns productively inform our work.

We invite participants of this workshop to reflect on the ways in which their work grapples with these problems and questions. The workshop takes its cue from the work of Sandra Mass, Professor of Transnational History at the Ruhr-Universität Bochum. She will present insights from her upcoming book *Clio contaminated: Geschichtsschreibung im Anthropozän*. We welcome participants whose work implicitly considers the concerns which come to the fore around the notion of the Anthropocene or explicitly addresses the concept of the Anthropocene.

The workshop will be centered around the discussion of pre-circulated papers (no more than 5000 words) which will be due on April 16.

Applicants travelling more than two hours to and from Amsterdam can apply for accommodation.

If you are interested in participating, please send a title and a short outline of the paper you would like to present to p.h.vandam@uva.nl

The workshop will be hosted in conjunction with a lecture on 'Writing history in the Anthropocene' by prof. dr. Sandra Mass on April 25, 2024, 17-19 at the academic-cultural podium Spui 25 (Spui 25, 1012 WX Amsterdam).