

THINKING THE ANTHROPOCENE

Paris, 13-14-15 November 2013

Jointly organised by Sciences Po, EHESS (Centre Alexandre Koyré), the University of Versailles Saint-Quentin-en-Yvelines, the National Museum of Natural History and the Ministry of Ecology, Sustainable Development and Energy

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WEDNESDAY 13 NOVEMBER

VENUE: NATIONAL MUSEUM OF NATURAL HISTORY, GRANDE GALERIE DE L'ÉVOLUTION
(JARDIN DES PLANTES, 36 RUE GEOFFROY SAINT HILAIRE, 75005 PARIS)

ENVIRONMENTAL HUMANITIES, A NEW CHALLENGE FOR RESEARCH

An event convened by Donato Bergandi, Patrick Degeorges and Grégory Quenet

Note: This event will be held in French

14.00-14.10 Welcome

Thomas Grenon, Director General, National Museum of Natural History

Vincent Graffin, Director of the sustainable development, conservation of nature and expertise

14.30-15.45 Environmental humanities, a state of the art and of the stakes at play

Grégory Quenet, Professor, University of Versailles-Saint-Quentin-en-Yvelines
Etat des lieux de la recherche internationale et européenne en humanités environnementales

Donato Bergandi, Professor, National Museum of Natural History
Les humanités environnementales au Muséum national d'histoire naturelle

Patrick Degeorges, Representative of the Ministry of Ecology, Sustainable Development and Energy
Humanités et politiques environnementales

Guillaume Blanc, Post-doctoral fellow, University of Versailles-Saint-Quentin-en-Yvelines
Présentation du portail des humanités environnementales réalisé pour le Ministère de l'Écologie

15.45-16.00 Break

16.00-17.30 Which mobilisation of the French research community for research in environmental humanities?

*Roundtable with the managers of the different axes of the web portal
Discussion with the audience*

Conclusion: *Presentation of the Paris Declaration for Environmental Humanities with John Crowley, Team Leader, Sector for Social and Human Sciences, UNESCO.*

THINKING THE ANTHROPOCENE

14-15 November

An international conference convened by
Christophe Bonneuil, François Gemenne and Clive Hamilton

If humankind now rivals the great forces of nature in its impact on the Earth system—so that the history of the Earth and the history of humans have converged—the Enlightenment foundations of the social sciences and humanities are called into question. The conception of the natural world on which sociology, political science, history, law, economics and philosophy rest—that of an inert backdrop to the drama of human affairs—is increasingly difficult to defend. And in an epoch in which “Gaia” has been reawakened, the “social-only” conceptions of autonomy, agency, freedom and reflexivity that define modernity, and the idea of the human on which these disciplines have been constructed, must be rethought.

This conference is designed to begin the rethinking of the social sciences and humanities demanded by the arrival of the new geological epoch, the “Age of Humans”. It will attempt to open new vistas by drawing together scholars with an intuition that something fundamental has shifted.

Important: Registration is free and required. It should be made here by clicking [here](#) (registration is valid for the 14th and 15th)

Note: This event will be held in English

THURSDAY 14 NOVEMBER

VENUE: SCIENCES PO, LECTURE HALL CHAPSAL (27 RUE SAINT-GUILLAUME, 75007 PARIS)

14.45-15.00 Welcome address and presentation of the Environmental Humanities programme

Philippe Martin, Minister for Ecology, Sustainable Development and Energy

15.00-15.15 Presentation of the conference

Christophe Bonneuil, François Gemenne, Clive Hamilton

15.15-16.15 Keynote lecture: WILL STEFFENExecutive Director, Climate Change Institute, Australian National University *The Anthropocene. Living in a new geological epoch*

Chair : Valérie Masson-Delmotte, CEA Senior scientist, LSCE

16.15-17.30 Which (hi)stories for the Anthropocene?

Earth system scientists tell us that the earth has entered into a new geological epoch, the Anthropocene, born perhaps two centuries ago with the industrial revolution powered by burning fossil fuels. How do we tell ourselves this story of the human species becoming a geological force? Who is the «we» that transformed the atmosphere, the biosphere, and even the lithosphere? Are the categories of race, class and gender to be replaced by the human species as the object of history? Are we moving from a “simple modernity” in which we did not think enough about the environmental impact of human technical and industrial actions, to a new more reflexive modernity? Or should we abandon this progressive narrative and rather revisit the environmental reflexivities of the past, understand how early warnings may have been silenced so as to disinhibit the Moderns? How can historians rethink time and historicity when historical time has merged with the deep time of the Earth?

Christophe Bonneuil, CNRS Research Fellow, Centre Alexandre Koyré, EHESS*A time for stories. Anthropocene, the Earth, History, and us.***Jean-Baptiste Fressoz**, CNRS Research Fellow, Centre Alexandre Koyré, EHESS*Historicizing the Anthropocene***Alf Hornborg**, Professor, Human Ecology Division, Lund University*Let Us Not Throw Out Power with the Bathwater: Rescuing the Social in Post-Cartesian Understandings of the Biosphere*

Chair: Grégory Quenet, Professor, University of Versailles-Saint-Quentin-en-Yvelines

17.30-18.00 Break**18.00-19.15 Political futures: collapse, violence and democracy in the Anthropocene**

Will climatic and ecological emergencies and resource penury lead to authoritarian political regimes? Or can scarcity and transition enhance strong democracy at local and global levels? How can we rethink democracy while avoiding externalizing its material basis? How can we compose a common world that includes the non-human elements of Gaia? How can we reconcile the timescales of the

planet with the political timescales of decision-making? Can utopian political visions survive in the Anthropocene, or will the imperatives of survival render all yearning for total liberation, indefeasible freedom and universal justice to be the naïve dreams of modernity? How can we explain that our societies know about the global ecological crisis but keep nevertheless locked in a politics of unsustainability?

Ingolfur Blühdorn, Reader in Politics and Political Sociology, Bath University

The Sustainability of Democracy: Does the Anthropocene represent a challenge to democratic governance?

Luc Semal, Research fellow, CERAPS, Institute for Political Studies, Lille

Anthropocene and green political theory: constraints and perspectives for post-growth democracies

Yves Cochet, Member of the European Parliament, Former Minister of the Environment

Local Simple States

Chair: François Gemenne, Associate expert, CERI-Sciences Po; Research fellow, UVSQ / ULg

19.15-20.45 Keynote lecture: PETER SLOTERDIJK

Professor, University of Art and Design, Karlsruhe

Chairs and discussants:

Clive Hamilton, Professor, CAPPE, Charles Sturt University

Bruno Latour, Professor, Sciences Po

FRIDAY 15 NOVEMBER

VENUE: INSTITUTE FOR HUMAN PALEONTOLOGY

(1 RUE RENE PANHARD, 75013 PARIS, M° ST-MARCEL, au coin du Bld Saint Marcel)

9.00- 9.15 Welcome address

Gilles Boeuf, President of the National Museum of Natural History

9.15-10.15 Keynote lecture: CLIVE HAMILTONProfessor, CAPPE, Charles Sturt University and University of Melbourne
*Human destiny in the Anthropocene*Chair: **Oliver Morton**, author; Briefings Editor, *The Economist***10.15 -10.45 Break****10.45-12.15 What does the Anthropocene do to philosophy and theology ?**

What does the advent of the new epoch mean for our conceptions of the human being? Can the Enlightenment vision of the human as the being with a special capacity of world-making and spontaneity, and so the modern project of progressive self-liberation, be sustained? Is it still our prerogative to create worlds of meaning, the 'objective spheres we experience as beautiful, moral, and true'? Or is the Anthropocene a profound challenge to all human-centred thinking so that we arrive in the midst of conditions that we played no conscious part in determining? If so to be human is to be gifted not with reason or creative spontaneity but with a special sort of receptivity. The Anthropocene invites us to discover the mutual dependence of the human on the cosmos and the cosmos on the human. Instead of the world-making being of Modernity, the deep entanglement of our future with that of the earth imposes on us recognition of our essential receptivity. Is it true, as Heidegger claimed, that 'only a god can save us'?

Jean-Pierre Dupuy, Professor, Stanford University; Professor Emeritus, Ecole Polytechnique
Playing God and the Artificialization of Nature

Virginie Maris, CNRS Research fellow, CEFE, Montpellier
Back to the Holocene: A conceptual, and possibly practical, return to a nature not intended for humans.

Michael Northcott, Professor, University of Edinburgh
Cosmopolitical Ethics in the Anthropocene

Chair: Patrick Degeorges, Representative of the Ministry of Ecology, Sustainable Development and Energy

12.15-13.15 Keynote lecture: BRUNO LATOUR

Professor, Sciences Po

Chair: François Gemenne, Associate expert, CERI-Sciences Po; Research fellow, UVSQ / ULg

13.15-14.45 Lunch**14.45-16.15 Who counts and acts in the Anthropocene? Agency, reflexivity and accountability in the time of “Gaia”**

If humans now rival the great forces of nature, “Gaia” has her own designs and can no longer be regarded as unresponsive to human provocation. In the Anthropocene can it still be claimed that agency belongs to humans alone? How are the social sciences questioned by the anthropocène in their conception of agency? And who is this “Anthropos” in the Anthropocene? How are the issues of responsibility and liability reframed?

Bronislaw Szerszinski, Senior Lecturer, Department of Sociology, Lancaster University
Decision CC87966424/49: The Onomatophore of the Anthropocene

Isabelle Stengers, Professor, Free University of Brussels
Thinking now: Escaping the black hole rhetoric of the Anthropocene

François Gemenne, Associate expert, CERI-Sciences Po; Research fellow, UVSQ / ULg
Agency and responsibility: The Anthropocene and its victims

Chair: Agnès Sinaï, Journalist, Founder and President, Institut Momentum

16.15-16.45 Break**16.45-18.30 Representing the Anthropocene**

Our response to global changes is also shaped by our representation of these changes. How can we represent these changes to ourselves, and communicate about them? How can art, technology and media help us represent this new epoch to ourselves?

Roundtable with:

Christoph Rosol, “Anthropocene Project”, Haus der Kulturen der Welt & MPIWG, Berlin

Grégory Quenet, Professor, University of Versailles-Saint-Quentin-en-Yvelines

Oliver Morton, Briefings Editor, *The Economist*

Bruno Latour, Professor, Sciences Po

Chair: Donato Bergandi, Professor, National Museum of Natural History

18.30-19.00 Conclusions:

Clive Hamilton, Professor, CAPPE, Charles Sturt University

Bruno Latour, Professor, Sciences Po

Chair: Christophe Bonneuil