

The Anthropocene is the world we live in. It is also a buzzword for many a thing. A proposed geological epoch, a historical discontinuity, the human-driven disruption of the earth system, an ecological catastrophe with heavy implications on how we view our social world. Despite its many renderings, it is always discussed as a big picture concept. This project is an attempt to bring the Anthropocene down, from the global, to the local level and to offer a different standpoint for looking into the Anthropocene, that of the locality. Through a bottom-up approach, I aim at establishing a link between the locality of the human activities and the globality of the Anthropocene.

Two heavily polluted localities in Greece, Skouries and Attica, serve as case studies for investigating the local level. As the industrial activity has intensified during the Anthropocene times (1950 to the present), those regions have experienced the impact of the massively increasing pollution. The micro-climate has changed substantially affecting both the environment and the lives of the people. In fact, the presence of the chemical byproducts (residues) of the industrial activity in the ground has changed the ecosystem as much as people's social practices. Such socio-natural entanglements, which are only visible on the local level, are also part of the Anthropocene story, as this piece argues.

The pollutants themselves, the residues, are the link between the locality and the global level of the Anthropocene. Residues have their own life cycle; they travel, passing through many localities and ecosystems, they resist regulation and they add up. The locally produced residues all around the world end up constituting a global environmental problem, climate change. In that sense residues are tiny bits of particularized, meaning place and context specific, climate change, a fact that links them directly to the Anthropocene. They are also the same chemical substances that can be found in the earth's substratum and are being used as indicators to date the Anthropocene epoch.

The goal of this research are threefold. Firstly, it makes use of the residues concept in order to localize the, otherwise global, Anthropocene concept. Secondly, it aligns with a relatively

recent trend to implement the concept of environment into historical studies and argues for the benefit of a historical focus in environmental/ climate change research. Thirdly, it attempts to bring together the “scientific conceptualization” of the Anthropocene with its many conceptualizations coming from the social sciences, which, more often than not, are proposed in order to criticize the Anthropocene rather than enrich it. This last goal is arguably achieved by localizing the Anthropocene, since locality creates the space for the social concerns to become part of the same story Anthropocene puts forth.