

# Amsterdam School of Historical Studies

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## Annual Report 2020

### 1. Introduction and mission statement

The Amsterdam School of Historical Studies, based at the Faculty of Humanities of the University of Amsterdam, represents and fosters the study of the human past from Antiquity to the present, exploring historical topics in tandem with their contemporary implications. It brings together more than 200 academics, including PhD students, from the Faculty of Humanities, who participate in 16 research groups and 4 research centres.<sup>1</sup>

A relatively young school (established in 2014), ASH is proud to be a broad, interdisciplinary, and dynamic research environment. What unites our scholars and characterizes the school is the drive to better understand the past, both distant and more recent. ASH integrates a variety of (inter)disciplinary perspectives and disciplines, including history, history of art, literary studies, and religious studies. It encourages collaborations between scholars along thematic and conceptual lines (e.g. Religion, the City, Conflict), geographical focus (e.g. Mediterranean World, American Studies, Modern Germany) and in terms of period (e.g. Antiquity, the Middle Ages, Early Modern and Modern History). Since its foundation, ASH has developed particular strengths in European history (from ancient to modern), urban history and the history of migration. In recent years, a global approach, the integration of digital methods, and the history of health, gender relations, and of human-environmental relations have been strategic areas of growth.

ASH maintains an open, bottom-up approach, inviting its members to explore new research directions, instigate new projects through grant applications or collaborations with other UvA faculties, and start new research groups. The result is a dynamic research environment that stimulates new initiatives and research directions,

In addition to the smaller research groups, ASH is home to three larger research units: the Amsterdam Centre for Urban History (ACUH), the Amsterdam Centre for Medieval and Renaissance Studies (CMRS), and Amsterdam Centre for the Study of the Golden Age (ACSGA). Moreover, the Vossius Center for the History of Humanities and Sciences brings together researchers from all faculties; this centre functions independently but is administratively part of ASH.

ASH prides itself in being firmly rooted in contemporary society. Current political debate, societal challenges and cultural developments inform, or contribute to, our research agenda. ASH maintains strong ties with national and international museums, heritage institutions, libraries, and modern media, including national television and the local and national press.

This 2020 annual report offers a brief overview of developments within the School and lists a selection of the achievements of its members and research groups.

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<sup>1</sup> See appendix 1.

## 2. ASH in 2020: an overview

For ASH and its researchers, the Covid pandemic obviously has had significant impact: research and teaching were disrupted, travel and research trips became largely impossible, and conferences and seminars were cancelled. Most of all, the impact of Covid and the various lockdowns on the lives of all our members has been our main concern. As director, vice-director and support team – as well as the members of our Advisory Board – we have focused on the care for our PhDs and postdocs, discussing the options for possible extensions with the FGw, while also keeping the first-year pilot studies and annual meetings of the PhDs running on schedule. We are proud of the fact that the FGw responded quickly and was able to guarantee extensions for those PhD projects that had suffered delays.

At ASH, we are enormously proud of those PhD students, who defended their theses in 2020, often online. We were also impressed by the resilience of our community of PhDs and postdocs in general: even though they indicated that they sorely missed a normal work-life balance, we had several very fruitful meetings in which they exchanged best practices, including informal – but disciplined – Shut Up and Write groups and a system of digital office buddies. Our two PhD representatives, Wouter van Elburg (who stepped down in January 2021) and Rosa de Jong, who formally started in 2021 but who already contributed to all our discussions in the final months of 2020, played a crucial role in setting up a support system, as best as we could manage under the circumstances. Clearly, we could not have done so without all the supervisors, who went the extra mile in helping their PhDs and postdocs figure out how to cope with the changes in plans and activities.

For all members of ASH, 2020 meant having to reconfigure our teaching, admin duties and research plans, often while incorporating childcare and homeschooling. ASH wishes to thank all the colleagues, who kept our research centres, research groups, and seminars going (or even started new ones!). Finally, for those ASH members who had to take a step back from their research to focus instead on other tasks, from teaching to taking care of family. ASH wants to stress that foregrounding our own (mental) health during this crisis takes priority over research. If there ever was a year that forced us to readjust goals, this was it. We are glad that, as a school, we can conclude that our foundation – in terms of the research quality and viability, but also collegiality – is strong.

### Strategic choices

The external 'Visitatie' or research assessment in 2019 (regarding ASH in 2014-2018) mirrored that strong foundation. ASH was judged as:

- Research quality:                      excellent                      (1)
- Relevance to society:                      very good                      (2)
- Viability:                                      excellent                      (1)

This placed ASH as one of the three top-rated schools within the Faculty. This impressive result stems from the many and varied internationally and nationally respected activities of a large proportion of our researchers, whether they be PhD students, early career researchers, or more senior colleagues. This success is very much a collective achievement and a testimony to the creativity and activity of

ASH researchers. In 2020, ASH took the suggestions by the assessment committee on board in consultation with the Faculty of Humanities and the members of its Advisory Board. Among other things, we strive towards further sharpening our overall profile, by giving additional support to strong groups, such as ACUH and the History of Hermetic Philosophy and Related Currents-group, while also stimulating colleagues to start new initiatives. In 2020, for example, ASH members started new research groups, such as *Environment and Society: Contestation and Governance* (coordinator: Peter van Dam), which serves as an interdisciplinary platform to understand climate crises from a historical perspective, while also involving colleagues from other schools (ASCA). Moreover, we were able to strengthen our focus by hiring new colleagues, whose research focus chimes with ASH's strategic goals, such as a global approach, urban history, the integration of/reflection on digital methods in the Humanities, as well as environmental and health humanities.

The impact of the Covid pandemic will extend beyond 2020, affecting our research and research-related activities. This will obviously be taken into account when assessing ASH members' research in the coming years and when discussing their research plans. We are particularly grateful to the Faculty that the possibility for extensions for our PhD students and postdocs is guaranteed also for 2021. At the same time, we look forward to re-establishing a research environment, through digital, hybrid, and hopefully – when possible – on site activities, such as workshops, seminars, and conferences.

### **3. ASH management, support, and organisation**

As set out in its founding white paper, ASH starts from the idea that researchers with different qualities complement, inspire, and reinforce each other. ASH aims to support and encourage all active and ambitious researchers and to enable them to make a contribution to the School as a whole.

In February 2020, Maartje van Gelder took over from Guy Geltner (who himself started in Autumn 2019) as academic director; Sofie Remijns continued in her position as vice-director and thus guaranteed continuity for the PhD candidates. The director is responsible for the quality of ASH research, its overall coherence and output, and the implementation of Faculty policy. The director is also the liaison between ASH and the chairs of the departments of GER, ACASA, NLD, MVTC, and K&C (respectively the departments of History, European Studies and Religious Studies; Ancient Studies; Dutch Studies; Modern Languages and Cultures, and Art History and Cultural Studies) for all matters concerning research, including the hiring of new faculty members and providing input for promotion files. Furthermore, the ASH director is a member of the Research Council of the Faculty, which discusses research policies and the general research strategy of the Faculty, and liaises with the Department Chairs. The vice-director is responsible for all matters related to the PhD students, including the annual evaluations, the pilot studies, and the selection of new PhD candidates. Both the director and vice-director sit on the Advisory Board of ASH and are responsible for the admission of new external PhD candidates. They are supported in all practical and budgetary matters by the coordinator, Simon Speksnijder, and Margreet Vermeulen, ASH's office manager.

An interdisciplinary Advisory Board advises the Director on ASH strategic and operational matters (e.g., assessment procedures, the shortlisting of PhD candidates for NWO-funded PhD positions, developing/implementing new research policies, and the awarding of annual prizes). The Advisory

Board also establishes and evaluates the strategic research priorities, which serve as a departure point for the development of new research groups, collective initiatives, and the preparation of research profiles for new hires.

In 2020, the Advisory Board consisted of the following academics from the different disciplines within ASH and a PhD researcher:

- Professor Remieg Aerts – Dutch History (GER)
- Dr. Petra Brouwer – Architectural History (K&C)
- Dr. Kristine Johanson – English Literature (MVTC)
- Dr. Djoeke van Netten – Early Modern History (GER)
- Professor Manon Parry – Public History/Health Humanities (GER)
- Dr. Marco Pasi – Western Esotericism (GER)
- Rosa de Jong – PhD representative

The ASH PhD representative represents the ASH PhD community on the PhD Council Board and the ASH Advisory Board. In regular academic years, the PhD representative organises a meeting for the ASH PhD community twice a year to discuss topics relevant to PhD candidates.

ASH currently is home to 18 research groups (listed in Appendix 1). Their main responsibility is to provide a dynamic and inspiring home for their members. They can take on different forms, from informal reading groups and seminars focused on the discussion of ASH members' work-in-progress to more formally organized platforms for seminars and lectures. ASH sees these groups as crucial, bottom-up building blocks, providing members with a place to develop their individual and collective research agendas, discuss grant proposals, present their own work, and organize workshops and symposia. Moreover, the research groups and centres foster regular exchange between postdocs, PhD students and advanced MA students with more senior staff members. For a detailed overview of the profile and activities of the groups and centres, please see ASH's website ([ash.uva.nl](http://ash.uva.nl)). ASH members are kept up to date about developments and activities within the School through a twice-monthly newsletter, which aims to inform and connect different research groups and research areas. Due to the Covid pandemic, in 2020 the newsletter appeared less often.

#### **4. ASH PhD community & policies**

PhD students represent the core of our School. In 2020, ASH had around 60 PhD students who were employed or formerly employed by the Faculty, and 70-75 self-funded PhD candidates or 'buitenpromovendi' (these numbers fluctuate slightly throughout the year).

In November 2020, ASH adopted new policies regarding the 'quality control' or monitoring of external PhD candidates. These policies were proposed for the whole Faculty through the Faculty's Research Council and established by the Amsterdam Institute for Humanities Research earlier in 2020. Most importantly, ASH now asks external PhD candidates to provide a pilot study (with the same requirements as for salaried PhD candidates, i.e. an independently readable text of 5,000-10,000 words that will eventually be incorporated into the dissertation) no later than 16 months after the

start of the research project, and which will be assessed by the supervisors, an external reader, and the vice-director. All assessments must be provided in writing to the research school. If the assessments are uniformly positive, the candidate will automatically pass the pilot study. If the assessments are not uniformly positive, a face-to-face meeting to discuss the pilot will be organised by the coordinator; after the meeting, it is decided whether the pilot study is of sufficiently quality. If not, the candidate will need to provide a new version within 10 weeks. If the second version is again deemed insufficient, the candidate's PhD research will be terminated by ASH. Other stipulations made obligatory by new AIHR regulations, such as that external PhD candidates should be welcomed via a face-to-face meeting and should provide (with their supervisors) a Training and Supervision Programme, had already been common practice at ASH.

As noted above, ASH – together with PhD representatives Wouter van Elburg and Rosa de Jong - tried to lessen the impact of the COVID-pandemic for our PhD candidates. First, together with communications from the University and the Faculty, we tried to inform candidates of the direct impact of COVID with regards to working in university buildings and travel for research (both became impossible for long periods of time), as well as the possibilities of contract extensions for salaried candidates (which thankfully were set up quickly by AIHR). More informally, we asked candidates to flag and contact ASH and the PhD representative about practical issues but also mental challenges they faced. Second, we repeatedly asked supervisors to intensify the contact with their PhD candidates to monitor their research progress and their wellbeing, not simply via e-mail but preferably via phone or a video call. Third, we organized a number of virtual meetings and invited all PhD candidates to share their challenges of the pandemic as well as their 'best practices' in dealing with those challenges; the latter were shared via e-mail as well. ASH also set up a dedicated ASH PhD page within MS Teams facilitate communications with and between PhD candidates in an accessible or informal way. Fourth, a 'support system' was set up by PhD candidates themselves too, via e.g. shared virtual 'office space' and virtual 'shut up and write'-sessions which we open to all PhD candidates of ASH. In short, ASH tried to respond to the pandemic as best as we could manage under the circumstances for our most vulnerable researchers.

#### 4.1 New ASH PhD Candidates

ASH welcomed four employed PhD candidates in 2020. For the first time in years, thanks to the improved financial position of the Faculty, ASH was able to advertise one 'open' paid PhD position in 2020. ASH received over 60 applications, and eventually Maroesjka Verhagen was selected for this position. The other employed candidates mentioned below are financed via externally funded projects.

Kerrewin van Blanken – *Ambassadors in Print: Public Diplomacy in Franco-Dutch Relations*. Supervised by Prof. Geert Janssen and Dr. Helmer Helmers. Employed by the Huygens Institute for the History and Culture of the Netherlands.

Jeroen Kemperman – *Onderzoek naar de gemeente Amsterdam in de periode 1930-1950*. Supervised by Prof. Peter Romijn and Dr. Hinke Piersma. Employed by the NIOD.

Anne van Mourik – *Heritages of Hunger: Conflicting legacies of Hunger in Germany*. Supervised by Prof. Peter Romijn, Prof. Marguerite Corporaal (Radboud University) and Dr. Ingrid de Zwarte (Wageningen University). Employed by the NIOD.

Maroesjka Verhagen – *Feeding the city: A bird's-eye view of Amsterdam's food supply from its hinterlands, c. 1550-1800*. Supervised by Dr. Danielle van den Heuvel and Dr. Djoeke van Netten.

ASH welcomed 14 self-funded PhD candidates in 2020:

Joris Ammerlaan – *1914-1915: "International Year of Peace"*. Supervised by Prof. Ruud Janssens and Dr. Samuël Kruizinga.

Margreet Boomkamp – *Vier case-studies naar Italiaanse beeldhouwkunst uit de 19<sup>de</sup>-eeuw*. Supervised by Prof. Frits Scholten and Prof. Gert-Jan Van der Sman (NIKI).

Osman Ciner – *The Translation of the Geoponica from Greek into Arabic: Analysis and Assessment of its Place in the Abbasid translation movement*. Supervised by Prof. G. Wiegers, Dr. F. Doufikar-Aerts (VU) and Dr. P. Joosse (VU).

Mohamed El Moursi – *The traumatic burden of history: 'Abd Allāh B. Buluggīn's Character in His Book 'al-Tibyān*. Joint Doctorate, supervised by Prof. Pascal Buresi (EHESS, Paris) and Prof. Gerard Wiegers.

Michel Hoebink – *The Modern Mystical Reform Theology of Mahmud Muhammad Taha (1909-1985)*. Supervised by Prof. G. Wiegers and Prof. Herman Beck (Tilburg).

Misagh Javadpour – *Revolution in Rasht: A Local History of the Iranian Revolution, 1978-82*. Supervised by Prof. Liz Buettner and Dr. Peyman Jafari.

Eva van Kemenade – *Political communication through discourse and urban space: popular festive rituals in early modern Lyon and Bologna*. Joint Doctorate, supervised by Prof. David Lines (Warwick), Prof. Ingrid de Smet (Warwick) and Dr. M. van Gelder.

Yvette Kopijn – *Migratie, identiteit en overlevingskunst in de levensverhalen van drie generaties Javaans-Surinaamse vrouwen*. Supervised by Prof. Rozemijn Höfte and Prof. Geertje Mak.

Hedvig Martin-Ahlén – *Hilma af Klint and the Art of Higher Dimensions*. Supervised by Dr. Marco Pasi and Prof. Raphael Rosenberg (Vienna).

Daniella Mauer – *Refue-Bikher – Yiddish medical books in the 17th and 18th Century in early Modern Askenaz*. Supervised by Prof. Irene Zwiep and Dr. Bart Wallet.

Anna-Rose Shack – *Languages of Vulnerability in Early Modern Women's Poetry*. Supervised by Prof. Carrol Clarkson and Dr. Kristine Johanson.

David Stienaers – *Textual strategies in Caesar, Sallust and Tacitus*. Supervised by Prof. Caroline Kroon and Dr. Suzanne Adema.

Mariel Urbanus – *Prestige and Privacy in the Houses of the Dutch Republic (1710 – 1790)*. Supervised by Prof. Lex Bosman and Prof. Gabri van Tussenbroek.

Frans Vermeiren – *Een revisie van de chronologie van het ontstaan van het Christendom en de daaruit volgende lezing van het Nieuwe Testament als een collectie gecodeerde anti-Romeinse geschriften, met de eerste Joods-Romeinse oorlog als kerngebeurtenis*. Supervised by Prof. Jan Willem van Henten and Dr. M. Klinker-De Klerck (Kampen).

#### 4.2 ASH doctoral defenses

The following sixteen PhD projects were completed in 2020:

**Josephine van den Bent** – *Mongols in Mamluk Eyes. Representing Ethnic Others in the Medieval Middle East* (31 January 2020; supervised by Prof. Guy Geltner and Prof. Maaïke van Berkel). Awarded with distinction - *cum laude*.

**Suzanne Luger** – *Lost in Latin Translation. Teaching Students to Produce Coherent Target Texts* (7 February 2020; supervised by Prof. Caroline Kroon, Prof. Gert Rijlaarsdam and Dr. Suzanne Adema).

**Christian Greer** - *Angel-Headed Hipsters: Psychedelic Militancy in Nineteen-Eighties North America* (11 March 2020; supervised by Prof. Wouter Hanegraaff and co-supervised by Dr Marco Pasi). Awarded with distinction - *cum laude*.

**Suzanne Roggeveen** – *Jewish-Muslim Relations in Amsterdam: Cooperation and Tension in Times of Turmoil* (13 March 2020; supervised by Prof. Gerard Wiegers, Prof. Judith Frishman and Dr. Sipco Vellenga).

**Henk de Jong** – *Kennst du das Land? Italië-reizigers, Rome-ervaringen en Duits historisch besef in de negentiende eeuw* (15 April 2020; supervised by Prof. Remieg Aerts and Prof. Wessel Krul).

**Jan Rotmans** – *Enlightened Pessimism. Republican Decline in Dutch Revolutionary Thought, 1780-1800* (23 April 2020; supervised by Prof. Niek van Sas).

**Gerrit Oomen** – *Werk in uitvoering. Het functioneren van de Tweede Kamer tijdens, voor en na de grondwetsherziening (1840-1853)* (20 May 2020; supervised by Prof. Niek van Sas and Prof. Remieg Aerts).

**Erik Olsen** – *Privacy, Wiretapping and the Citizen: Congress' Battle to Set Legal Boundaries on Government Wiretapping in the 1970s* (25 June 2020; supervised by Prof. Ruud Janssens and Dr. Eduard van de Bilt).

**Jack Wever** – *Geschiedenis van de Nederlandse drugsbestrijding (1961-2011). Het Dirty Harry-probleem* (30 June 2020; supervised by Prof. James Kennedy and Dr. Guus Meershoek).

**Joost Michels** – ‘... the fiction that Holland is a fortress’. *Fortification by Dutch combat engineers, 1914-’40* (16 September 2020; supervised by Prof. Wim Klinkert and Prof. Herman Amersfoort).

**Marlies van der Riet** – *Haagsche quaesties. Een studie naar de ontwikkeling van de culturele infrastructuur in Den Haag 1890-1920* (22 September 2020; supervised by Prof. Frans Grijzenhout).

**Leonard van ’t Hul** – *Besloten. Politieke onderhandelingen tussen de Nederlandse overheid en religieuze organisaties, 1946-1996* (7 October 2020; supervised by Prof. James Kennedy, Dr. Peter van Dam and Dr. Hans-Martien ten Napel).

**Erik Jacobs** – *Hartslag van een Revolutie. Pers en politiek in de Bataafse Republiek (1795-1802)* (29 October 2020; supervised by Prof. Niek van Sas, Prof. Wyger Velema, and Prof. Ida Nijenhuis).

**Susanne van Esdonk** – *Jews and Muslims in London. Navigating between Commonalities and Differences in a Superdiverse City* (27 November 2020; supervised by Prof. Gerard Wiegers and Dr. Sipco Vellenga).

**John Smit** – *Tussen Leger en Maatschappij. Militaire muziek in Nederland 1819-1923* (1 December 2020; supervised by Prof. Wim Klinkert and Prof. Ton Koopman).

**Brian Hübner** – “*The Ghostly Shadow*” in the Archives: *Creating and Recreating the Hamilton Family fonds at the University of Manitoba Archives & Special Collections* (14 December 2020; supervised by Prof. Theo Thomassen and Prof. Eric Ketelaar).

## 5 Research and impact

In 2020, ASH members wrote or contributed to well over 300 publications. Among these were 80 peer-reviewed articles and over 45 peer-reviewed chapters, popular publications, 9 monographs and 5 edited volumes; additionally, they wrote or contributed to dozens of other publications, e.g. published conference papers, encyclopedia entries, editorials, websites and articles aimed at the general public. Many peer-reviewed publications were published with leading international presses or high-ranking journals. A full list of publications by ASH members can be found in the University of Amsterdam's [Digital Academic Repository \(DARE\)](#). This repository contains digital copies of many articles, books, book chapters, reports, dissertations and inaugural lectures. Overall, it seems that already by late 2020, the effects of the Covid pandemic are shown to have had an impact on the number of publications, which is in line with the conclusions of various reports on the effects of the pandemic on academia.<sup>2</sup>

### 5.1 New ASH researchers

ASH welcomed the following new permanent staff members in 2020:

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<sup>2</sup> See the report by the Jonge Akademie and the Landelijk Netwerk Vrouwelijke Hoogleraren (the Dutch Young Academy and the Dutch Network of Women Professors respectively), published in October 2021: [The impact of the COVID-19 pandemic first lockdown period on the work and well-being of academics](#).



Houssine Alloul, Assistant Professor in Modern History/Ottoman History.  
Nicholas Carr, Assistant Professor in English Literature.  
Maaïke Voorhoeve, Assistant Professor in Arabic Language and Culture.  
Melvin Wevers, Assistant Professor in Urban History and Digital Methods.

## 5.2 Key publications & research

Given the number of publications by ASH researchers it is impossible to list all of them. Below, groups of researchers at ASH and their work will be highlighted because of their significant publications in their fields and impact beyond their fields in 2020. Moritz Föllmer's 2016 monograph was published in English translation as *Culture in the Third Reich* by Oxford University Press. Furthermore, an article by Moritz on 'the sociology of individuality and the history of urban society' appeared in *Urban History*. Danielle van den Heuvel, together with Bob Pierik and colleagues at the UvA and in China, published a programmatic methodological article on gendered mobility and street use in historical studies in *Cultural and Social History*, a publication stemming from – but with a chronological scope much wider than – her VIDI-project on the *Freedom of the Streets*, awarded in 2016 by NWO. The history of art of the 'Golden Age' of the Netherlands is a particularly strong field of research within ASH. Frans Grijzenhout, Elmer Kolfin, Judith Noorman and others published a number of important works in 2020, including *Art, Honor and Success in The Dutch Republic: the Life and Career of Jacob van Loo* by Noorman, *Gouden Vrouwen van de Zeventiende Eeuw. Van Kunstenaars tot Verzamelaar* edited by Noorman and the students (!) who took her class on this subject (women and the arts in the Netherlands in the 17<sup>th</sup> century), as well as *Zwart in Rembrandts tijd* ('Black in the Age of Rembrandt'), co-authored (by Kolfin for an exhibition at the Rembrandthuis with the same title. This group and subfield was significantly boosted by a prestigious VIDI-grant awarded in 2020 by NWO (see section 6) for Judith Noorman for *The Female Impact*, a research project on the impact of women - as artists and consumers - on the art market in the seventeenth-century Netherlands.<sup>3</sup> The project will start in 2021, and a PhD candidate and a postdoctoral researcher will further strengthen this group of researchers.

## 5.3 Impact and valorisation

In line with tendencies in international scholarship and the requirements for external funding, ASH seeks to develop and stimulate the valorisation of research results. Many ASH researchers already have close connections with societal partners, and ASH encourages them to make these partnerships more visible, to foster and broaden their agenda and, where possible, to formalise them. As such, ASH researchers share their expertise with peers, with colleagues from other disciplines or working on different periods or with a different geographical focus, and to the general public, be it via appearances in media, as contributors or curators of exhibitions, or experts consulted by the state sector.

A large number of ASH scholars, including Sanne Frequin, Peyman Jafari, Niek Pas, and Tim Verlaan, were regularly invited to share their expertise with newspaper, radio, and television audiences, being highly valued for their ability to comment on and place contemporary issues into historical perspective in an accessible fashion. ASH members are regular contributors (as speakers,

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.nwo.nl/en/projects/vividi191043>.

interviewers or panelists) to the Amsterdam debate centre SPUI 25.<sup>4</sup> With regards to museum exhibitions and cultural activities, Mathijs Boom co-curated the exhibition '[Kijken in de Aarde](#)' at Teylers Museum in Haarlem, while Anique Hamelink lend her expertise to consult on research done by the Rijksmuseum voor Oudheden (Dutch National Museum of Antiquities) and two art works by the artist Janneke Kornet.

Lastly, ASH researchers contributed to the state sector. The following is merely indicative of the various ways in which members lent their (research) expertise to advice on research, research policies and research grants.

- Sanne Frequin and Arjan Nobel formed part of an 'expert group' that consulted the Rijksdienst voor het Cultureel Erfgoed (or Cultural Heritage Agency of the Netherlands) in 2020 on searching for the remains of the Dutch statesman Johan van Oldenbarnevelt at the Binnenhof in The Hague; they subsequently gave numerous interviews and wrote a letter to the newspaper NRC Handelsblad.
- Bram Mellink is a member of the Amsterdam Young Academy, an independent platform for talented young scientists at the UvA and the Vrije Universiteit that – among other things - regularly shares views on academic policies in the Netherlands, via e.g. official publications on policies, contributions on their own website, and Twitter and other social media.<sup>5</sup>
- Danielle van den Heuvel is a member of one of the 'tables' that brings together representatives from various fields within the SSH-domain and as such advises NWO (the Dutch Research council) on their policies, procedures, and grant programmes.<sup>6</sup>
- Maartje van Gelder is member of the Scientific Advisory Board of the KNIR or Royal Netherlands Institute at Rome.<sup>7</sup>

Two different strands of research activities, societal impact and outreach from ASH members and groups are highlighted here; a third is presented in the context of the ASH valorisation Award 2020 below.

### **Reacting and reflecting on Covid: the Healthscaping project, Manon Parry and Arjan Nuijten**

The Healthscaping-project, funded via an ERC Consolidator-grant awarded to prof. Guy Geltner, brings together a number of scholars who study the 'physical, social, legal, administrative and political process of regulating and managing the built and natural environment to promote wellbeing' in cities in Medieval Europe.<sup>8</sup> Members of the project team reflected and commented on the past and present pandemics and public health in numerous ways. For example, Janna Coomans discussed the Covid-outbreak on national radio (NPO Radio 1).<sup>9</sup> Also, team members organized the online symposium *The Testimony of History: To Live and Overcome the Epidemic in the Present* (with colleagues in Portugal at the Universidade de Lisboa and the Universidade NOVA de Lisboa) to

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<sup>4</sup> <http://www.spui25.nl/programma/archief/archief.html>.

<sup>5</sup> <https://amsterdamyoungacademy.nl/>.

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.nwo.nl/en/advisory-structure-nwo-domain-social-sciences-and-humanities>.

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.knir.it/nl/wie-zijn-wij/war-nwib/>.

<sup>8</sup> <https://healthscapes.humanities.uva.nl/home/>.

<sup>9</sup> <https://www.nporadio1.nl/nieuws/geschiedenis/9e739fe9-546b-4a87-82dc-0facc4245574/wat-je-van-middeleeuwse-leren-kan-pandemie-proof-stedenbouw>.

debate responses to health crises from the perspective of Health Humanities, and with the aim to recourse to historical knowledge to understand and help to live the difficult present time.<sup>10</sup>

Manon Parry is a senior lecturer in American studies and Public History, and works at the intersection of health, medicine, and the humanities. Via the PULSE network, directed by Parry, she reflected on measures to 'contain' the Covid-pandemic by the Dutch government, shared a summary of a class (taught for MA students at the Free University) on Covid, and shared other insights on public health today from the perspective of Health Humanities.<sup>11</sup>

Lastly, Arjan Nuijten is a PhD candidate in Dutch history, working on local drug practices and local drug policies in the Netherlands since the Second World War. He was interviewed by *VICE* about the effects of the pandemic on the drug consumption and drug testing in the Netherlands.<sup>12</sup> Later, he appeared on national radio (NPO Radio 1) to discuss the pandemic, substance use and the cancellation of festivals in the summer of 2020.<sup>13</sup>

### **Crossover activities by classicists at ASH**

Researchers in the field of Classics at the UvA (all members of ASH) stand out with regards to their 'crossover'-activities that bring together and share knowledge among academics, teachers and students of Greek and Latin at secondary schools, and the general public. A prime example is *Lampas*, is a peer-reviewed Dutch-language journal for the study of Greek and Roman Antiquity (including literature and linguistics, philosophy, history, archaeology and reception studies) as well as the teaching of Classical languages and culture in secondary schools; four volumes appear each year. Rodie Risselada is the chair of the editorial board of *Lampas*, of which Mark Heerink and Sofie Remijnsen are also members.

Lidewij van Gils is a member of the network 'Cicero gaat Verder', which aims to publish Dutch-language commentaries on texts by Cicero aimed at those who have learned Greek and/or Latin in secondary school. In 2020, the network published a commentary on *Pro Sectio Roscio Amerino*, a text that was part of the final national exam in Latin in 2021 and as such consulted by about 7000 students.<sup>14</sup>

Piet Gerbrandy is the lead editor of the translation project 'Cicero's brieven in vertaling', which aims to publish a Dutch translation of all of Cicero's letters by 2024 (to be published by Van Oorschot).

For the annual 'Week van de Klassieken' or 'Week of the Classics' in September 2020, Lidewij van Gils and Luuk Huitink contributed to numerous activities around the theme of 'Controverse: gebruik en misbruik van de klassieke wereld.'

## **6. Grants, awards, and honours**

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<sup>10</sup> <https://premodernhealthscaping.hcommons.org/?p=452>.

<sup>11</sup> <http://www.pulsenetwork.nl/author/mparry/>.

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.vice.com/nl/article/y3mk7v/drugs-mdma-coronavirus>.

<sup>13</sup> <https://www.nporadio1.nl/radioeenvandaag/onderwerpen/536326-voor-drugsdealers-zijn-het-ook-zware-tijden>.

<sup>14</sup> <http://www.cicero gaat verder.nl>.

ASH is very proud of its ongoing record of grant applications and honours or grants awarded to its members across all levels. In particular, we want to acknowledge those who in 2020 submitted grant applications to NWO, European Research Council, or other bodies. We remain grateful to all ASH researchers who undertaken this commitment and appreciate that their efforts – as well as the effort of the colleagues, who read draft applications and participate in mock interviews, and sit on the various grant committees. Regardless of whether the applications obtain funding, they are crucial in helping colleagues move forward with new research project ideas that often involve important national and international collaborations. For ASH, especially the larger projects offer early career researchers an opportunity to conduct a PhD or postdoc project. As such, these applications and projects are instrumental in maintaining the viability and flourishing of our School.

## Grants

In 2020 the following projects and members received external funding:

Researcher	Grant	Title project	Funding
Alessandra Cianciosi	Marie Curie Individual Global Fellowship (incoming)	<i>Isolation and Segregation Landscape. Archaeology of quarantine in the Indian Ocean World</i>	€ 253.052
Janna Coomans	NWO VENI <sup>15</sup>	(In)flammable Cities: How fire risks and prevention transformed the Low Countries (1200-1650	€ 250.000
Samuel Kruizinga	DANS KDP – Data Archiving and Networked Services, Klein Data Project	<i>War dummies</i>	€ 20.000
Judith Noorman	NWO VIDI	<i>The Female Impact. Women, the Art Market and Household Consumption in the Dutch Republic, 1580-1720.</i>	€ 800.000
Gulnaz Sibgatullina <sup>16</sup>	Marie Curie Individual Global Fellowship (outgoing)	<i>The White Islam: A New Religion of the European Far Right</i>	€ 271.052

Various ASH members received smaller personal grants, for example Anna-Luna Post (Research fellow, Vossius Centre, for her project *Corruption and Fraud in the Scholarly and Mercantile World of the Seventeenth-Century Dutch Republic*) and Maartje van Gelder (Patricia H. Labalme Fellowship,

<sup>15</sup> Applied for as member of ASH; the project will be executed at Utrecht University.

<sup>16</sup> Applied for as member of ASH; the project will be executed at the Amsterdam School for Regional, Transnational and European Studies (ARTES).

Renaissance Society of America, for her project *Protest in the Piazza: Popular Politics in Early Modern Venice*).

ASH is also proud to continue to host part of the NWO Zwaartekracht-project *Anchoring Innovation*, including Work Package 1 “Rhetoric & Discourse Linguistics”, coordinated by professor Caroline Kroon and also including Lidewij van Gils, Merlijn Breunese, Luuk Huitink, Rodie Risselada, and Boris Hoetjes, and Work Package 2 “Literature & Art”, of which professor Irene de Jong is the co-coordinator, and which includes Lola Bos, Caterina Fossi, and Boris Hoetjes.

### **Awards and honours**

ASH itself awards two annual prizes: the ASH Dissertation Prize and the ASH Valorisation Prize, awarded respectively to the best dissertation completed and to the best valorisation project undertaken in the previous academic year. The winners are selected by the ASH Advisory Board at the end of the academic year.

The ASH Valorisation Prize 2019-2020 was awarded to Anne-Lot Hoek for her work on the Dutch colonial period in Indonesia and the decolonization of Indonesia. She is an external PhD candidate at ASH and a journalist, and regularly publishes in written media, such as *Vrij Nederland*, *NRC* and *De Groene Amsterdammer*, and she has also appeared on radio and TV (Buitenhof, Nieuwsuur). Under the supervision of Peter Romijn and David Kloos (KITLV), she is working on a study on the anticolonial struggle on the island of Bali, with a particular focus on the Indonesian independence war (1945-1949); her research will lead to a dissertation and a book by De Bezige Bij, in 2022. With her *promotor* Remco Raben (also a member of ASH) and others, she took part in a debate (organised by SPUI25) on Dutch colonial history and the impact of Dutch colonialism on the present day.<sup>17</sup>

The ASH Dissertation Prize 2019-2020 was awarded jointly to Josephine van den Bent and Sander Govaerts. Josephine van den Bent was awarded the prize for her dissertation *Mongols in Mamluk Eyes*, written under the supervision of Guy Geltner and Maaïke van Berkel (Radboud Universiteit). In her thesis, she investigates the representation of the Mongols in the Mamluk sultanate of Egypt and Syria, and the ways in which contemporary scholars were involved in processes of ethnic identification, categorisation and othering and the ways in which such representations of the Mongols were used for various purposes in response to, and in interaction with, the sultanate’s complex ethnic and political contexts. Sander Govaerts was awarded the prize for his dissertation *Mosasaurs: interactions between armies and ecosystems in the Meuse region, 1250-1850*, written under the supervision of Mario Damen, Guy Geltner, and Mieke Aerts. Govaerts argues that armies’ conscious and concerted protection and conservation of ecosystems long predates the rise of modern environmentalism, and that this supposedly modern behaviour is just one element in a complex web of interconnections between armed forces and their surrounding world. The focus on the Meuse region avoids the common emphasis on political structures, and the study reflects the emphasis on continuity between the High Middle Ages and the Early Modern period. For *Mosasaurs*, Sander was also awarded one of the Dissertation Prizes of the Praemium Erasmianum Foundation. The jury praised his work as a mature book, original in subject and methodology, and surprising in its conclusions; and concluded that his work is a beautiful and highly original book that deserves a wide audience.

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<sup>17</sup> <https://www.spui25.nl/programma/welke-voc-mentaliteit>.

Many ASH scholars received an award or were honoured for the work:

- Janna Coomans received the Pro Civitate Prize from the Royal Flemish Academy of Belgium (KVAB) for excellent work on urban history for her dissertation (defended in 2019) *In Pursuit of a Healthy City: Sanitation and the Common Good in the late medieval Low Countries*.
- Guy Geltner received the American Association for Italian Studies 2019 book prize in Medieval Studies for his monograph *roads to Health: Infrastructure and Urban Wellbeing in Later Medieval Italy*.
- Piet Gerbrandy was awarded the Homerus Prize by the Dutch Classical Association for his translation of Boëthius' *Consolatio*.
- Michiel van Kempen received the Pro Cooperazione-award by the Hungarian Academy of Sciences for his teaching at Hungarian universities, his contributions in Hungarian journals and the Erasmus partnership he co-initiated between the UvA and the University of Debrecen.
- Elmer Kolfin was one of the authors of the exhibition catalogue *Zwart in Rembrandts tijd* (WBooks, Zwolle 2020), which was awarded the first prize at the *Festival International du Livre d'art et film* in Perpignan for publications in Art History.
- Tim Verlaan was awarded the Opler Grant for emerging scholars in the field of architectural history and its related disciplines by the Society of Architectural Historians (SAH).
- Taylor Zaneri and Guy Geltner were awarded the Dyos Prize, awarded annually for the best article submitted to the journal *Urban History*, for their article *The dynamics of healthscaping: mapping communal hygiene in Bologna, 1287–1383*, which appeared in *Urban History* volume 49 (2020).

## 7. Research groups & financial support

ASH seeks to support the activities of its members and groups through small grants. Each individual researcher, research group, and centre may apply for financial support. Applications are considered by the director and are based on formal guidelines, available on the ASH-website, to allocate the funding in a clear and transparent manner. The results usually take the form of academic events, such as conferences, workshops, public lectures. ASH also earmarks a significant portion of its annual budget for events organized by PhD students that will benefit their research, help expand their scholarly networks, and enrich their CVs.

Sadly the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic caused many scheduled events to be cancelled, postponed or transformed into digital events. As a result, ASH funded very few such events: in 2019 over 40 activities (conferences, seminars, workshops, lectures, symposiums, and masterclasses for PhD candidates) were funded or co-funded by ASH; in 2020, only a handful of events that took place in January and February were funded by ASH. These included three lectures organised by ASH's Research Centres through their Golden Age Study Seminar Series and Urban History Seminar Series (the Vossius Center has its own budget), the international conference 'Time and Society in the Ancient World' (organised by Sofie Remijnsen) and a seminar by the Modern History Research Group.

Still, research groups showed a remarkable resilience. For example, the group 'Classical (con)texts' organized 18 virtual 'research labs' throughout 2020, relatively informal meetings during which

senior researchers, PhD candidates and students of the Research Master Classical Studies presented their works, and with national and international colleagues in attendance. Comparable virtual events were organized through 2020 by the 'Early Modern Mobilities'-group for its 15 members, and by the newly formed 'Environment and Society'-group.

## Appendix 1: Overview of research groups and centres in 2020

### Research centres:

- Amsterdam Centre for the Study of the Golden Age (ACSGA)
- Amsterdam Centre for Medieval and Renaissance Studies (CMRS)
- Amsterdam Centre for Urban History (ACUH)
- Vossius Center for the History of Humanities and Science

### Research groups:

- America in the World
- Changing Identities: art and architecture as bearer of meaning
- Classical (con)texts
- Cultural Memory, Rhetoric and Literary Discourse
- Early Modern Mobilities: migration, communication and knowledge in the Early Modern world
- Emotion and Subjectivity, 1300 – 1900
- Environment and Society: Contestation and Governance
- Historical Theatre Research: Text, Performance, and Production of Knowledge
- History of Hermetic Philosophy and Related Currents
- Medicine and Society
- Modern History
- Natura Artis Magistra
- Networks of the Dutch Republic
- Power and Society in the Later Middle Ages
- The Public and its Discontents
- Public Health in Premodern Cities
- Religious Dynamics and Cultural Diversity

### Research Groups that were closed in 2020:

- Boundaries and Identity Formation in the Premodern World
- History and Philosophy of the Humanities



## Appendix 2: Overview of activities sponsored by ASH in 2020

<i>Activities supported by ASH in 2020 were few due to the COVID-19 restrictions</i>	<i>Date of activity</i>
Seminar/lecture series: <a href="#">ACSGA 'Golden Age Studies'</a> (1 event)	February
Seminar/lecture series: <a href="#">ACUH 'Urban History'</a> (3 events)	January February September
Seminar/lecture series by the Modern History Research Group (1 event)	Febr.2020
Conference proceedings for KNAW Seminar "Psychedelics and Science"	July
Seminar series: 'Ancient History Research Seminar' (2 events)	February March
Conference: Shared European History	12/3/2020
Conference: Time and Society in the Ancient World	9-11/3/2020