Call for Papers

13th AHM Annual Conference | Amsterdam, 23-25 June 2027

Critical Ecologies of Heritage, Memory and Material Culture

Landscapes, Infrastructures, and the More-than-Human

Critical research in heritage, memory and material culture studies has typically focused on human-centred processes of inheritance, memorialisation, stewardship, care, and meaning-making. In the wake of climate change, biodiversity loss, debates around the Anthropocene, and the emergence of generative AI, scholarship has begun to consider the more-than-human dimensions of heritage and memory as fields of practice and sites of political struggle. Artists, activists and scholars have questioned the separation of nature and culture in heritage landscapes, the lingering effects of toxicity on bodies and material worlds, the role of non-human actors in (digital) ecologies of remembrance, the fragility of infrastructures, and ways in which ecosystems have been impacted by colonialism, genocide, violence and conflict. As planetary boundaries are exceeded and the intersecting threats of extractivism and ecocide rupture worldly relations at all scales, it is vital that we consider how more-than-human forces constantly make and unmake heritage and memory, but also how critical thinking and practice in these fields might begin to repair, restore and even regenerate such relations. These lines of enquiry are not just theoretical: they invite new strategies of care, responsibility, storytelling and active political engagement to collectively shape a more just and livable world.

For its 2027 annual conference the Amsterdam School for Heritage, Memory and Material Culture (AHM) invites scholars and practitioners across a range of fields to reflect on the more-than-human entanglements shaping heritage landscapes, sites of memory, digital heritage and memory, conservation practices, museum displays and other domains where the politics of the past are actively negotiated and materialised. The conference aims to highlight the different ways in which work in critical heritage studies and memory studies intersects with the environmental humanities, political ecology, and critical infrastructure studies. Contributions from diverse geographical contexts, especially from marginalized or underrepresented regions, as well as practice based, artistic and experimental formats, are particularly encouraged.

We invite proposals for individual papers, thematic panels, roundtables and other creative formats (e.g. film screenings, performances, pop-up exhibitions, site-specific installations) critically examining the ecological / more-than-human dimensions of heritage, memory and material culture.

Possible topics may include:

- New concepts and methods centering the more-than-human in heritage, memory. and material culture
- Indigenous and majority world perspectives and cosmologies
- Grassroots struggles for environmental, climate and multispecies justice
- (New) materialist perspectives on extractive landscapes, "sacrifice zones," and (post-)industrial heritage sites
- Critical infrastructure studies & elemental approaches to materials (concrete, plastic, sand, cement, glass, cables, etc.)
- Ecologies of digital heritage, memory and archives
- Decay and decomposition as generative processes
- Thinking care, trauma, genocide, witnessing, stewardship, cultural transmission and inheritance beyond the human
- Decolonial, feminist, anti-racist and anti-fascist approaches within environmental heritage and museology
- Oceans, rivers, coastlines, deltas, wetlands and archipelagos as sites of heritage and memory making
- Toxicity and "slow violence" across landscapes, bodies, objects and ecosystems
- Experimental, creative and activist responses to the planetary crisis
- Case studies and reflections on the challenges and possibilities of dealing with the more-than-human in practice (e.g. in design, architecture, museums, archives, preservation and restoration, engineering etc.)

Submission Details

Please submit your abstract (in English) through this form.

The form will guide you through the submission. Please ensure to include the following in the form:

- Name(s) and affiliation(s) of all participants in case of panel or round table
- Email address
- Title of paper, panel, roundtable or other creative format
- Abstract (250 words)

The conference is free and open to attend for anyone interested. It will be held in-person at the University of Amsterdam (UvA). Participants are responsible for arranging and funding their own travel and accommodations. Please ensure you book your transportation and lodging well in advance. If you have any question, do not hesitate to email us at: ahmannualconference@gmail.com

Submission Deadline

Monday, February 1, 2027 (mid-night Central European Time). Notification of acceptance will be sent by mid-March 2027. The organizing committee might invite some of the accepted contributors to submit full papers to be published as part of a special issue or edited volume. Deadlines will be communicated later.

Organizing committee

Anita Halim Lim, MA.
Dr. Colin Sterling
Dr. David Duindam
Maria Suarez Caicedo, MA.
Dr. Maryn Wilkinson
Dr. Tessel Bauduin